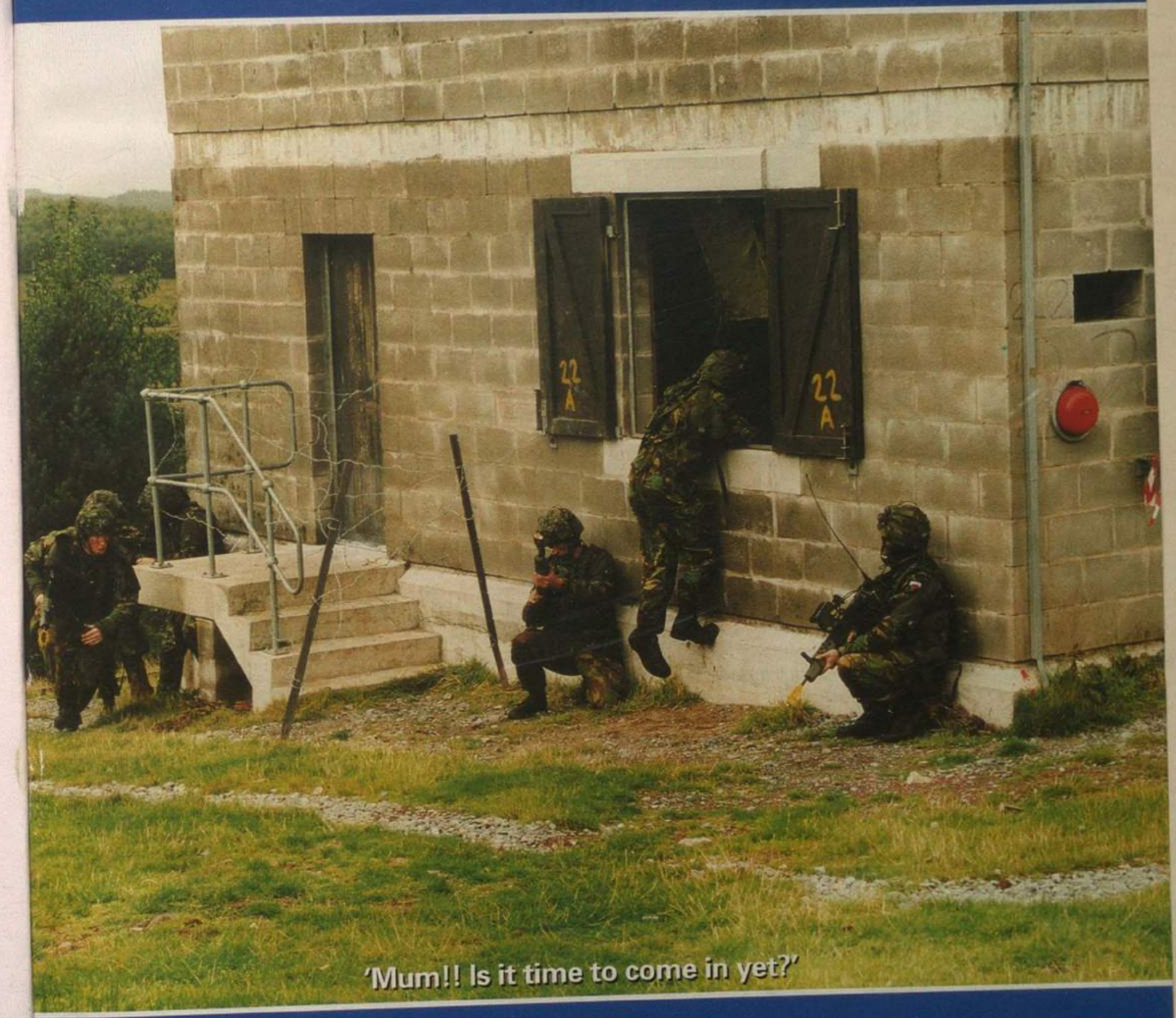
THE Wire

February 1997



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The Territorial Army, Freepost, 4335 (Ref: 9000), Bristol BS1 3YX.

The Royal Signals Magazine

February 1997 Vol. 51 No: 1

The Wire

All correspondence and matter for publication in **The Wire** should be addressed to **The Head of Publications, The Wire,** RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, DT11 8RH Dorset. Tel No: Blandford mil 2079 STD 01258 48 2079

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Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder
Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

The Wire **is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers**

FORECAST OF CORPS FIXED EVENTS–1997

1. **18 March 1997**
   The RSI/British Computer Society Sponsored Lecture–London
2. **19 April 1997**
   Association Branch Reps Meeting & Association AGM
3. **13 May 1997**
   London Dinner
4. **21 June 1997**
   Corps Luncheon–Blandford
5. **28/29 June 1997**
   Association Reunion
6. **7 September 1997**
   Corps Luncheon–Catterick
7. **6 November 1997**
   Opening of Field of Remembrance
8. **7 November 1997**
   Scottish Dinner
9. **9 November 1997**
   Remembrance Sunday
10. **27 November 1997**
    Institution London Lecture
11. **18 December 1997**
    Corps Carol Service

FRONT AND BACK COVER

Our thanks go to 21 Sig Regt for the Front Cover–FIBUA with a smile, and to 1 (UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt for the Back Cover, with the Colonel in Chief during her visit to Bosnia.

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NOTICE **For: ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS FUND**
Read: ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

A VISIT TO RUSSIA BY 40 OFFICERS OF THE BRITISH ARMY

7-12 OCTOBER 1996

By Capt Neil Makepeace

PREPARATION, TRAVEL AND FIRST IMPRESSIONS
ON MONDAY

As part of the reconciliation between Russia and the Western powers, a biannual exchange has been established between the British and Russian Armies and this year, 1996, it was the turn of British officers to visit Russia. Four officers from the Corps were selected to take part in the visit: **Maj Derek Weir** (School of Signals), **Capt Neil Makepeace** (38 Sig Regt (V)), **Capt Chris Wood** (30 Sig Regt) and **Capt Ian Blower** (3 (UK) Div Sig Regt).

The process of obtaining visas turned out to be more difficult for some than for others. Initially, the Russian Embassy rejected 26 visa applications on the grounds of unsatisfactory photographs. **Capt Neil Makepeace** was one of those unphotogenic souls to have been the subject of 'unsatisfactory photographs' and the final three days before the commencement of the visit was spent rushing to and fro attempting to have suitable photographs delivered to the Joint Service Travel Centre in London. The process culminated in a 4am train from Sheffield to London on the final day before departing for Russia. Needless to say, he did, at the eleventh hour, obtain the requisite visa.

So it was that, shortly before lunchtime on Monday 7 October 1996, 40 officers gathered in the north terminal of Gatwick Airport. This part was easy–British officers are somehow never difficult to identify! Following briefings and the usual airport formalities, the party embarked on a British Airways 757 and had an uneventful flight to Russia.

Arrival in Moscow was far from encouraging. We had, perhaps naturally, assumed that 'doors would be opened'\ and 'paths cleared' for a visit like this one. Unfortunately, this was not so at Moscow's Sheremetrevo-2 Airport. It took over two hours to clear immigration and customs and it was 11pm by the time we met the Military Attache on the far side of the various formalities. From this point onwards things looked up, beginning with the bus ride to the Russian Ministry of Defence's hotel. True, the buses were far from luxurious, but having 'shoe-horned' ourselves into them, the ride through Moscow was memorable. Although one or two of the party had been to Russia before, most of us had not and felt both humbled and privileged to gain this first view of, of all cities, Moscow. Seeing Moscow for the first time, having in almost all of our cases grown up in an army organised and committed to fight the Soviet Union and her allies, was extraordinary.

The Russian Ministry of Defence hotel was a pleasant surprise and, having been paired off, we all took lifts to what turned out to be well equipped, spacious and clean double rooms. Following this it was back downstairs for a low key reception at which the soon-to-be ubiquitous bread, ham, and salami were served with strong coffee and mineral water which seemed to contain a little too much mineral for our palettes. Later the same evening some, though by no means all, of the party partook of their first vodka. More–much more–about vodka later. Having been briefed both by the Military Attache and by our Russian hosts, having met our interpreters and mourned the lack of beer in this particular bar, most of us were in bed by about 1 o'clock in the morning. By this time, the realisation had come to **Maj Derek Weir** that, although he was not normally nominated as an interpreter for this visit, his language skills would be called upon often. Although one of the interpreters, Sergei, was very good, the rest left a lot to be desired; interpreting is a difficult linguistic skill to master and the rest of our interpreters had not mastered it. 'But my first language is Swahili,' one complained.

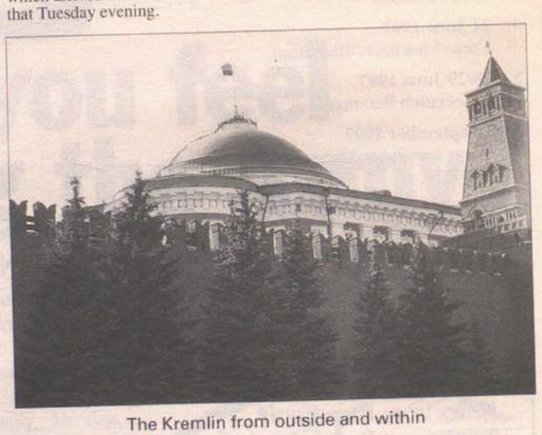
TUESDAY

Day one of the visit-proper involved, first, a visit to the Moscow Higher Combined Arms Command School. This was to be the first of three successive mornings and lunchtimes spent at Moscow training establishments. A two hour tour of the Academy revealed training resources and methods not entirely dissimilar to our own. However, as is often the case with armies other than our own, all of the instruction tends to be performed by officers rather than by Senior NCOs as is the case here. The impression which we gained throughout our visit was that soldiers and NCOs of the Russian Army are entrusted with much less than those of our own. Decision making, training and genuine command rest entirely in the hands of the commissioned officers. Having said this, their commissioned officers were clearly very well trained in both the technical aspects and the mechanics of their tasks. It was interesting, however, that we saw very little evidence of the instruction or indeed existence of tactics or doctrine. Of course tactics and doctrine exist in the Russian Army, but it was unclear at what level they were taught and understood.

We also visited some of the Russian officer cadets in their accommodation. Surprisingly, although this accommodation wasn't particularly similar to that of officer cadets at Sandhurst or even that of British soldiers, it wasn't too bad. Each platoon had its own gymnasium, classroom, recreation room as well as sleeping accommodation. They were a varied group; some well educated, other not; some seemed to be pleased to see us, some clearly not; but all sharing the same slightly shell-shocked demeanour of British soldiers or officer cadets undergoing training.

As I mentioned above, this first day saw the first of a number of lunches. The first of some eight or nine helping of steak or schnitzel and chips to be eaten during the week; this, it seemed, was their idea of the kind of Western food which we would appreciate. We did appreciate the sentiment. It was also the first of several helpings of Borsch, which is a soup of beetroot, cabbage and oil. The quality of the Borsch varied throughout the week, but this first helping was not good! Again, plenty of bread and salami and, for the first but not the last time, there was plenty of vodka. This 'vodka' drinking business proved to be a bit of a problem. The Russians have a traditional way of drinking vodka at meals. It goes something like this: The senior host, who in this case was the Academy Commander, a Major-General, stands to make a toast, which is supposed to be followed by a 'bottoms-up' downing of a glass of vodka (about two or three imperial measures). Following this the senior guest stands to make another toast, followed by another measure of vodka. Then the next senior host, followed by the next most senior guest, and so on. This continues until either the vodka or the guests fail. There are, of course, a number of ways to avoid the inevitable results. Some of the party were often observed pouring water into vodka glasses. Others found that the hard brown bread we were given was extremely absorbent. Others simply threw the vodka onto the floor. It is pleasing to note, however, that most of the party and all of the Royal Signals did their best to observe local tradition. This made for some long and tiring afternoons throughout the week.

This particular afternoon involved a tour of the Kremlin. The Kremlin is magnificent and our feelings of awe returned as we toured the seat of Russian power. Having said this, the tour was long and the commentary detailed, which made the tour hard work for a tired group of vodka-soaked British officers. It was also our introduction to icons–more later. It was an excellent 'photo-opportunity' and several Russian guardsmen were subject to groups of British officers trying to pose with them. How embarrassing! There followed a short excursion to exchange our dollars for roubles, or 'Barney Rubbles'. It was certainly an exhausted group which arrived back at the Ministry of Defence hotel by about half-past six that Tuesday evening.



The Kremlin from outside and within

There was little time to rest. By half-past-seven, we were off for dinner at the Taganka Restaurant. We were treated by the British Embassy to an excellent meal which included Russian delicacies and caviar as well as more recognisable dishes. With the crates of German beer and French wine which had been brought from the Embassy an excellent time was had by all. The floor show was excellent. There were dancers, a magician and folk singers, all of whom were very entertaining. Above all, though, was a classical singer who looked as beautiful as her voice and who consequently was extremely popular with most of the assembled crowd. By about 11 o'clock, most of the company, in good cheer, boarded the buses for the journey back to the hotel and its 10th floor bar. Most but not all; a small number of officers, in even better cheer, fled in taxis with some of our interpreters to a 'down-town' night club. Claims that Moscow prices (Westerner versions) were higher than those of central London proved to be entirely true. This small group were to be found for the remainder of the week lamenting the cost of this first evening. Needless to say, however, all had a good time for which they suffered throughout the following day, Wednesday.

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday morning saw the group travel to Solnechnogorsk to visit the Vystrel Advanced Officer Training Centre. Again, we toured the Academy Museum, numerous training facilities and local training area. We also met students on a United Nations Monitoring Officers (UNMO) Course; this course would be joined in a few days by a group of students from the British Army, including a TA officer from 38 Signal Regiment, Makepeace's Regiment. This was followed by yet another lunch. The menu was similar but the vodka flowed in considerably greater abundance. The general in command of the Academy was the archetypal Russian general: big, loud, red faced and a serious vodka drinker (this is no reflection on his qualities as an officer; we were simply amused to see such a recognisable senior figure of the Russian Army). More water, more vodka-soaked bread, more wet feet!

That afternoon, having returned to Moscow, we visited Victory Park which contains Russia's new Second World War memorial and museum. We were shown around the museum which, despite our somewhat befuddled state of mind, was extremely interesting. It is important for us to note that, despite the sacrifices made by the other nations and peoples involved in the War, estimates of Russian dead range now between 20 and 30 million. Not for nothing do the Russians call it the 'Great Patriotic War'. Again, an excellent photo opportunity, which had one problem: when the Russians build to impress, they build big. Getting all of it into a picture was impossible.

Having returned to the hotel and eaten dinner (steak, chips, bread and salami), we were taken into Moscow for the night off. Not everybody had been able to recover from the exertions of lunch-time; less than a full complement boarded the bus that evening. However, all four Signals officers ended up in the Sports Bar. The Sports Bar is unashamedly American in style and is yet more evidence of the entrenchment in Russia of Western culture. The evening was quiet but it was interesting to talk to some self-confessed Mafioso. The Mafia in Moscow operate openly and with impunity, and there are an awful lot of them. Later in the trip a couple of the party would observe the sale of a pistol taking place openly in a bar in the centre of Moscow. Ordinary Russians, with whom we also spoke, lamented the 'old days' when men in leather coats didn't come to their doors demanding protection money and when you could go anywhere in Moscow without fear of being beaten up or shot.

(*L to R*): Ian Blower, Chris Wood and Neil Makepeace in the Sports Bar

THURSDAY

Thursday saw a visit to the Tank Troops Military Academy. The visit and subsequent lunch was similar to those of previous days. This time, we spent the afternoon at the Tretyakov Gallery. We were treated to a guided tour of the paintings and icons. Icons are Russian religious figures painted several centuries ago onto wood. The paintings were interesting. The icons were also interesting at first but we did see an awful lot of very similar icons! It seems an insult to those artists of several centuries ago, but, for most of us, if we never see an icon again it will be too soon! Following the gallery was dinner at the hotel. Any guesses?

Thursday evening was spent at the Bolshoi Theatre watching an opera called 'The Tsar's Bride'. The Bolshoi Theatre is truly magnificent and for the experience alone this trip was well worth while. Opera, on the other hand, did not appeal to some of the group and the three Royal Signals captains, sat together in one part of the theatre, struggled throughout. The lunchtime vodka and evening (dreadful) Russian champagne did not help. More interesting than the opera was the clientele. True, there were some Westerners inside the theatre. However, there were far more Russians and, once again, one's attention is drawn to the vast gulf between the lot of ordinary Russians and those who can afford 30 or 40 US dollars for a night at the Bolshoi.

FRIDAY

On Friday morning we checked out of the Ministry of Defence hotel and departed for a visit to the Kantemirov Guards Tank Division. This was to be by far the best day of our time in Russia. For a start, we at last were able to put away the Service dress and to don instead combat kit. Second, from start to finish, we were made extra welcome and were shown almost everything there was to see. The morning was spent driving T80 and BMP 2 (none of us, unfortunately) and firing the Russian Army' s range of small arms, including RPG 7. Needless to say, this was very interesting and very enjoyable. Whatever problems the Russians do have, the standard of their equipment is not among them. Their weapons are simple and they work. One of our party's Armoured Corps officers–a Hussar, in fact–got into the T80 ('good tank–big drama') and was extremely impressed–it is nippy, fast and easy to drive. Questions were asked about T90 (Hussar: "bigger drama") but none were made available for us to see.

Mid-morning we were treated to the best the Russian military chefs had to offer as 'elevenses'. This was by far the best meal we had in Russia; consisting of all kinds of savoury food. It did cross our minds, however, that what we were eating was beyond anything that a Russian soldier might expect. The great thing was to observe the similarities which exist even between very different armies. When we asked how much training ammunition and fuel had been consumed by this one visit, they laughed and told us about a year's worth! Excessive time, effort and resources put into a visit . . . familiar? Once we had the opportunity to talk to officers 'on the ground', we found that their aspirations, fears, attitudes and beliefs were remarkably similar to our own. Most interesting of all during this day was the opportunity to speak with Russian soldiers. They were conscripts, far from home (which in Russia means thousands of miles), and poorly paid (although they *were paid* in this Division). Their morale was extremely low and we were aware that our gifts of badges, insignia and so on were of little interest to them. They seemed to say with their eyes: 'You Westerners have absolutely no idea of my problems and your trinkets will not help me to solve them.' At the end of the morning the usual lunch took place, although with significantly less vodka than usual–a serious organisation, this one.

The afternoon saw similar activities to those of the morning. We were treated to a display of unarmed combat by their recce troops–lots of screaming, kicking and brick-breaking. Definitely best to keep them at the wrong end of a gun if you happen to fall out with them! Later, we were given the chance to climb all over Russian military vehicles and machinery. Not many surprises to any of us who ever looked at recognition cards, to the great amusement of our hosts. The 'SP-70-ski' was there (they made it work) as were their excellent range of combat engineer vehicles. Their signals vehicles were largely absent–they were very reluctant to speak of communications and claimed not to be able to spell EW and other things too.

The British Royal Signals officers with a Russian equivalent (centre) and an antiquated Russian Communications vehicle

The dinner night took place that evening. Naturally, there was plenty of bread and salami followed by plenty of vodka. Little need be said about the night; it would have been recognisable to any of us as a military dinner night and was, as such, extremely enjoyable but painful next day. It is, incidentally, true; Russian officers really do like their Vodka and told us that night that we were, without doubt, the best mates they'd ever had.

The following morning, we were 'treated' to a tour of the Kubinka Tank Museum which, on this particular morning and by this stage in the visit,

did not go down particularly well. Following that, however, we returned to Moscow for an afternoon shopping at the Ismailova markets and wandering around Red Square and central Moscow. The markets were great but we all felt that we did not have the time required to do them justice. Our time at the markets was an opportunity to purchase all of those things which we had been instructed to take home; painted boxes, Russian dolls and other traditional Russian gifts. When we looked back to our less-than-interesting tour of the tank museum that morning, we lamented the time wasted. Anyway, shop we did, and we bought our souvenirs at vastly inflated prices, despite the 'help' of our interpreters (who were probably on commission).

From the markets we were driven to central Moscow and dropped off outside St Basil's Cathedral at the bottom of Red Square. For the previous couple of days, a circus had been taking place on the Red Square the Russians like their circuses–and the Square was closed. However, we were the guests of the Russian Army, and, therefore, after a bit of negotiation on our Russian colonel's part, we were allowed to walk on the Square amidst the partly disassembled remains of the circus. Lenin's tomb was closed but nonetheless, we were able to walk past the front of it. Circus or no circus, to walk across Red Square was one of the most memorable parts of our visits to Russia. This was followed by the opportunity to wander around central Moscow and to take a couple of extra photographs. Sad to say, most of us ended up either in MacDonalds or eating pizza that afternoon! Nevertheless, it was nice to do something at less than full speed and by the time we boarded the buses at the end of the afternoon we were content. Following this was a final dinner steak, chips, salami, bread and vodka–back at the MoD hotel, at which we said farewell to our Russian hosts and vice-versa. It then remained for us to travel to the airport, where we had an absolutely trouble-free passage through the diplomatic channel and eventually on to our flight. British Airways flight 2881 left Moscow on time at 9.25pm

The group in front of St Basil's Cathedral

FINALLY

Russia is a nation which has problems. It is also a nation of contrasts; the gulf between rich and poor 'businessmen' and ordinary Russians, is vast. Some part of Moscow are beautiful and magnificent, but most are dreary and dilapidated. Russia is not at the moment a place to choose as a family holiday destination but if the Army gives you the opportunity–take it.

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NOTICE

For: ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS FUND
Read: ROYAL SIGNALS
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AFCEA LONDON (UK) PROGRAMME

for

FEBRUARY 1997 to JUNE 1997

AFCEA London are pleased to announce their meeting programme for February, March, April, May and June 1997. Except as otherwise shown, events will be held at the Duke of York's HQ, Kings Road, Chelsea, starting at 18.00 (for drinks followed by dinner).

AFCEA members and their guests are welcome. Reservations must be made at least one week in advance by contacting the AFCEA London Secretary, John Mead, at 20 Beehive Lane, Binfield, Berkshire FG12 8TU. Tel: 01344 422325 or fax: 01344 481035 (from outside the UK, replace the zero with 44).

Programme	
6 February 1997	'Simulation and the Synthetic Battlefield' Speaker: Alan Cox–Group Manager (LSC1) DERA
6 March 1997	'The Changing Face and Needs of CESG' Speaker: Col J. S. Doody–Head of INFOSEC Requirements & Marketing Group CESG
12 March 1997	AFCEA Corporate Contacts' Luncheon–By Invitation
10 April 1997	Ladies Night
1 May 1997	Visit to RAF Strike Command Speaker: Air Cdre D. C. Couzens–AC CIS (STC)
5 June 19997	Operational CIS and the 2000 AD Bomb Speakers–DBI Associates
11 June 1997	Golf Day–Milford Golf Club–Guildford

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MOVEMENTS

MOVEMENTS
DECEMBER 1996

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col T. G. B. Fish	SHAPE Regional Sig Gp
Lt Col R. F. Rutherford	APC HQ & Central Services
Lt Col I. C. Shuker	DM (A) HQ AG (P & TC)
Lt Col (SL) D. Strong	Depot Tp RSS
Maj M. D. W. Alexander	ACDS (OR) LAND Sys
Maj R. S. Appleton	DCIS (A)
Maj M. Baines	HQ ARRC
Maj P. R. Barron	240 Sig Sqn
Maj M. C. Burke	Exchange Appts Canada
Maj J. A. Compston	Project CASH
Maj M. Davis	14 Sig Regt
Maj M. A. Eaton	RSS
Maj S. E. Felton	HQ 107 (Ulster) Bde
Maj P. Gillespie	DI 60 DI (ST)
Maj G. Hearn	AA HQ Strike Comd CPB
Maj S. D. Hodges	HQ Scotland/1 AFHQ
Maj D. B. Hudson	DGLS
Maj C. B. Keegan	HQ Land
Maj N. Keen	15 Sig Regt
Maj L. C. Lightfoot	21 Sig Regt
Maj A. J. Madsen	DRA Military Manpower
Maj R. G. Mather	ACDS (OR) LAND Sys
Maj C. J. McIntosh	DRA Military Manpower
Maj R. L. Munro	D/CIS3
Maj G. Neal	243 Sig Sqn
Maj R. G. Nicholson	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj P. D. Peel	PM/SP DGLS
Maj J. E. Richardson	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (200)
Maj I. G. Standen	D Army Plans
Maj S. J. Vickery	ATR Bassingbourn
Maj I. P. F. Vingoe	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj D. I. Whimpenny	15 Sig Regt
Capt M. Claridge	HQ UKSC
Capt J. D. Forrest	HQNI
Capt D. C. Gaul	2 Sig Regt
Capt J. M. Hodges	DRA Military Manpower
Capt F. M. Lawrence	HQ QMG
Capt S. R. Mannings	HQNI
Capt S. P. Moffat	RMAS
Capt J. E. Mullender	9 Sig Regt
Capt A. J Parsons	33 Sig Regt (V)
Capt S. E. Pillar	SHAPE Staff (BAE)
Capt W. K. Smith	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Capt J. R. Tod	HQ ARRC
Capt A. M. White	HQNI
Capt R. B. Wylie	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt L. Golley	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Lt G. E. Marsh	ATR Bassingbourn

JANUARY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Brig J. D. Stokoe CBE	HQ Land Comd
Lt Col M. J. Anderson	HQ LONDIS/5 Region AFHQ
Lt Col G. H. Goodman	DNBC Centre
Lt Col I. W. Griffiths	38 Sig Regt
Maj A. J. Allman	JT SVCS Para Centre
Maj S. I. Andrews	HQ LAND
Maj H. J. Bardell	DCIS (A)
Maj I. J. Bradshaw	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj J. W. Clark	15 Sig Regt
Maj P. J. Davies	215 Sig Sqn
Maj J. W. Cooper	DCIS (A)
Maj B. T. Dearman	HQ UK SP Comd (G)
Maj J. Dryburgh	APC HQ & Cent Svc (PB11)
Maj A. S. Eames	QGSH
Maj A. A. Ewell	3 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
Maj M. J. Fensom	3 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
Maj P. W. Glibbery	3 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
Maj G. R. Grant	30 Sig Regt
Maj N. J. Griffiths	CMSC (G)
Maj D. G. Halstead	216 (Para) Sig Sqn
Maj A. A. S. Harwell	1 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
Maj R. J. Healey	213 Sig Sqn
Maj P. J. Holliday	249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))
Maj A. P. Hudson	HQ 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde
Maj P. M. Kelly	HQ AFCENT
Maj D. W. Larkam	38 Sig Regt
Maj N. P. Matcalfe	30 Sig Regt
Maj S. J. May	HQ LAND
Maj A. N. Morphet	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Maj G. Pickersgill	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Maj N. A. W. Pope	HQ 19 Mech Bde (209 Sqn)
Maj D. W. Powell	D OR (ICS)
Maj M. Ramshaw	RSS
Maj S. R. Renfrey	DRA Military Manpower
Maj C. C. Richards	264 Sig Sqn (SAS)
Maj F. P. Roberts	21 Sig Regt (Air Sp)
Maj A. G. Ross	16 Sig Regt
Maj A. H. Rodgers	HQ R Signals
Maj J. Rowley	HQ UKSC (G)
Maj R. A. Sharp	RMAS
Maj M. A. Stevenson MBE	MS
Maj A. J. Stringer	7 Sig Regt
Maj D. A. Sullivan	HQ 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde
Maj P. C. J. Taylor	PJHQ
Maj N. F. Thompson	DAAVN
Maj K. P. Thornber	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj P. R. Towers	HQ R Signals
Maj Turnbull	259 Sig Sqn
Maj T. C. Wadey	D OR (ICS)
Maj C. Wakerley MBE	Depot Tp RSS
Maj K. Whitehead	7 Sig Regt
Maj I. D. Westerman	HQ NI
Capt (A/Maj) A. D. P. Shaw	39 Sig Regt
Capt J. Caesar	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Capt S. L. Davies	30 Sig Regt
Capt (A/Maj) M. Davis	15 Sig Regt
Capt R. Deans	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)
Capt A. M. Fallows	4 Armd Bde HQ 7 Sig Sqn
Capt C. A. Ford	7 Sig Regt
Capt J. H. Fraser	D/CIS3
Capt R. C. Gamble	JCUFI (AE)
Capt M. Poland	HQ AIRCENT
Capt S. Roden	HQ RAO
Capt A. B. Stoker	HQ LAND
Capt G. A. Y. West	SANGCOM
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NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

MOD (ARMY) MS PB11–FAREWELL

Well, they say that all good things come to an end: PB11 (nee AG 11) is about to disband with the formation of the new R Signals / Int Corps Manning and Career Management Division (MCM Div) forming at Glasgow from December 1996. This will be good news for the Corps with Officer and Soldier manning now concentrated in one location. Needless to say moving a Personnel Branch from Stanmore to Glasgow just before Christmas is proving to be an interesting exercise, but it will work and it will work well.

ALL CHANGE

The move will precipitate a number of changes. **Col Jonathan Cook** will move to a new job at Upavon (dealing with a lot of difficult issues–as if he hasn't had enough over the last two years!). **Lt Col Len Jeffery MBE** will move to Glasgow but will then move to a new Branch once he has trained a new (sorcerer's apprentice) in the form of **Maj** (to be Lt Col) **Mike Stevenson MBE**. **Maj Chris Wakerley MBE** moves to JDSC at Greenwich early in the new year, handing over his desk to **Maj Jim Dryburgh**. The only officer left in the Branch will be **Maj Gordon Rafferty**, who will take on the responsibility for mainstream Lieutenant Colonels as well as Majors, he will also be promoted for his pains! The other members of the Branch who will move up will be **WO2 Chris Myles**, and **Mrs Gillian McKee**, who has been on detachment from Glasgow since May to learn the ropes.

PB11 ALL AT SEA

As if the move to Glasgow was not enough to turn the tummy, **Colonel Cook** decided that this year's Branch adventurous training would be a sailing weekend in one of the Corps' yachts based at Gosport. This was met with approval, much better 'bobbing about in the briny with a gin and tonic' than getting wet and dirty in a pothole, or scrambling up Mount Snowdon (or so we thought).

The weekend arrived, and our skipper on *Petasus* **Cpl Martin Kendell** briefed us all on the safety bits and bobs, some members of the team looked worried already–the QE2 was nowhere to be seen, only this little boat, but we were told that a 36 foot yacht is big. Soon we were afloat in the boat (sorry yacht!), it's funny how a 36 feet yacht can seem so large tied up and so small when at sea. Anyway the first day was spent tacking and jibbing, or zigging and zagging to us landlubbers. **Colonel Cook** having previously passed all the Captain Pugwash courses was totally in control and in his element. **Maj Rafferty** had made the fatal error of saying that he had been in a boat before, nearly 20 years ago–so when the old 'motion sickness' arrived he was volunteered to go below to make tea to settle everyone's stomach! His only joy during this purgatory was seeing the faces of the other team members locked in fear as he peered out from the cabin.

That night we berthed (i.e. parked) in Cowes harbour, the weather had been kind, but **Lt Col Len Jeffery** and **LCpl Zoe Byrne** looked decidedly peeky, as did **Sig Ingrid Toft**. Meanwhile **Sig Adrian** 'Bob' **Hosking** was well into this new sport and quizzing the bosun on the various courses. **Maj Chris Wakerley** kept comparing it to flying! After a suitably refreshing 'run ashore' we awoke the following morning to find that the weather had changed. The BT Global challenge, round the world yacht race was due to start at midday, and the plan was to be at the start line to wave them off. In the event a force 8 gusting 9 gave the PB11 sailors an interesting few hours before the start, speeding along at 9 knots with only a bed sheet sized sail, the Indian meal in Cowes the previous night also looked dodgy in retrospect. We did see the boats off. The Colonel in Chief, **The Princess Royal** was on *The Normandie* and started the race. The yachts seemed to be struggling just as much as us. It is probably fair to say that only two members of the crew were sorry to berth at Gosport that night! All in all a wonderful experience - thanks again to our bosun, **Cpl Martin Kendell**.

PB11 'All at sea'
(*L to R*): Sig Ingrid Toft, Maj Chris Wakerley, Col Jonathan Cook, Sig 'Bob' Hosking, Lt Col Len Jeffery (smiling!?), Maj Gordon Rafferty, LCpl Zoe Byrne.
(The car ferry in the background had The Princess Royal on Board to start the race.)

STAY IN TOUCH

When we get to Glasgow there will be new telephone numbers:

Col R Signals/Int Corps MCM Div (**Col M. J. C. Galloway OBE**)	- 3240
SO1 **Offrs** Wing (**Lt Col G. J. T. Rafferty**)	- 3269
SO(LE) (**Lt Col M. Stevenson MBE**)	- 3270
SO2 (**Maj J. Dryburgh**)	- 3271
Fax	- 3277

Details of the roadshows 1997 will be published in *The Wire*

HQ 11 (ARRC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

In January 1996 it would have been difficult to imagine what lay ahead in the forthcoming year besides the traditional series of Brigade exercises. 2 Sig Regt were back from Bosnia after the successful exchange with the ARRC and 3 Division, although they still had 214 Sig Sqn in JCUFI. The remainder of the Brigade were valiantly supporting the Corsham Hub.

Later in the month **Brig Mike Shaw** handed the reins to **Brig David Wills, Maj Charles Miller** arrived as DCOS from 7 Sig Regt and a few weeks in Bosnia himself, and **Maj Chris Wakerley** was replaced by **Maj David Proctor** as COS. Little did we know that in a matter of months both would appear on the pink list, congratulations, but **Chris** would also be awarded an MBE, and be selected to command 2 Sig Regt in 1997. **Chris**, do you buy lottery tickets as well!

Meanwhile **Maj Rod Gladwin**, the erstwhile SO2 Log, was planning the greatest escape since most people managed to lose their Corps Museum passes. His task was to move the HQ from Deysbrook Barracks, Liverpool, to Venning Barracks, Donnington. During the period 12-15 April, Staff Officers, civilians and contractors emptied our palatial home and moved to a building without phones, carpets and unpainted walls, well done **Rod**. Sadly we left behind some old friends; **Jo** the PA, **Anne** the typist, **Diane** the clerk, **Sgt Jock Reid** the Q and **Cathy** the money lender. However, in late October the Commander returned to Liverpool to present **Anne Fagan** with her Imperial Service Medal for 33 valuable years as a civil servant.

Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Miss Anne Fagan, Brig David Wills.

In Donnington we took on some new staff; **Jean Vince** the PA, **Roberta Bragg** the typist, **Michelle Ward, Vickie Sutherland** and **Cpl Jasmine Cleathero** and her dog Toby. We also hosted a series of visits probably unsurpassed by the Brigade at any other time. In a matter of months we saw **Lt Gen Hugh Pike** DCinC, GOC 5 Division, **Maj Gen Ian Freer** and more recently his successor **Robin Searby**; the SOinC, **Brig Nigel Wood** and Commander Communications LAND, **Brig John Griffin**. As a result of additional tasks with the new JRDF we have also hosted CJRDFO, **Brig J. J. Thompson** and DACOS J6 from PJHQ, **Capt Colin Hamilton RN**. We have also seen far too much of **Lt Cols Nigel Hope** and **David McDowall**.

HQ 11 Sig Bde say farewell to Maj Gen Ian Freer.

Mid year also saw the arrival from 36 Sig Regt of **Capt Lee Brown** as the new SO3 Communications Equipment Controller. The bear with a sore head settled in quickly and returned to his traditional ways of terrorising the neighborhood and any visitors. Down in the depths of the Crypto Store, **SSgt Mick Alcock** started his resettlement and we must admit if he doesn't get a job it will not be for the lack of the most outstanding preparation and planning. However, his co-worker, **Cpl Jackie Simpson**, proved she was no sportswoman by a second sojourn in a cast for damaged ligaments. Our advice is stay away from rough ground.

Because the ARRC could not come out to play in the Summer, the Brigade headed North to Scotland instead on Ex Lowland Condor. Without 33 Regt to support us, **Maj** (née Captain for a time) **Chris Edwards** and elements of 95 Sqn, 35 Sig Regt, provided the intimate support at Bde main. Reconfiguring the headquarters complex completely, within 1 hr of an SOinC's visit, was not a game he enjoyed, but will not forget; as indeed will **Cpl Treadwell**, who was just about to label all the cables when the COS and others ripped them out. Now there's a man with a sense of humour. Our visitors to the exercise also included the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen A. Birtwistle**, as well as the SOinC. **Lt Col Bill Morris (V)** and his crew at the BSG fed, fuelled and watered the Brigade to their normal high standard. However, they will always remember the Portaloo lorry that delivered 13 'tardi' to the wrong farm just as the hearse was expected! Alternatively, best forgotten was the sight of a leather clad, blackened DCOS roaring through the locations on his motorbike with copies of the XIth Hour magazine in hand, selling his scurrilous newspaper full of lies about his impending marriage to **Maj Catriona Millar (V)** and that the Brigade Commander had had time to go fishing.

The end of August was also the end of an era. At a Dinner Night in the Officers' Mess we bade farewell to the Deputy Commander, **Col Brian Foxon** and a watchkeeper, **Maj Chris Webber**, and dined in the Brigade Yeoman, now **Capt George Greig**. Many generous words were spoken and we particularly wish **George** well in his new job at 3 Div Sig Regt. In his place we welcomed **WO1 (YofS) Gary Shakespeare** whose forthright, individual style is just like his predecessor. Where do they make Yeomen! We also welcomed the new Deputy, **Col Douglas McLay**.

September marked a sudden change in events in Bosnia and the SO2 Ops, **Maj David Whimpenny**, went off planning Follow on Force Communications in Split and elsewhere. He spent October there supported by **Capt Mick Boxall** SO3 Comsec and **Lee Brown**. Not forgotten at this stage was **SSgt (YofS) Phillips** who was on his 6th month at the Corsham Hub. One very happy piece of news at this time was **Cpl Dave Jack**'s wedding to **Mandy**.

HQ 11 Bde TAC
Capt Mick Boxall, Maj David Whimpenny, Capt Lee Brown

Just so that we did not let the weeds grow around our feet, a quick CPX for 250 was arranged at Donnington followed four weeks later by the Brigade Study Period for 150. Both went off without any major incidents, well almost, and that credit lies with **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Buxton** and **Sig Simon Emmett (V)**, ably supported by trainees from Blandford, who did an outstanding job driving, feeding, carrying, cleaning, moving, sorting, etc, ...

Maj Paul Gorford
haggles over the price of some Satcom Equipment for CSSG.

In August we had had time under **George Greig**'s direction for two outstanding days in Snowdon. It was therefore with delight we accepted an invite by the JFOS staff to 'male bond' on Tryfan in early October. As we stood there in thick fog, falling rain on the top of the hill with our new found friends, lost of course, we had to bite our tongue rather than admit to passing hill walkers that this was the point, the initial rapier cut, of the new Joint Rapid Deployment Force. (We never promised not to tell anyone that story.)

In the time it takes for these notes to reach publication the Chief Clerk **WO2 Steve Williams** will have handed over to **WO2 Dave Smith**. Both the COS and SO2 Ops will have moved on and been replaced by **Majs Paul Hudson** and **David Sullivan**, good luck all of you. We should also have seen **Mick Boxall** and **Lee Brown** back from Bosnia and **Capt Sarah Allan** arrive as SO3 CIS. Meanwhile 2 Sig Regt are back in Bosnia and JCUFI. Isn't that where I started!

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RMC SHRIVENHAM
EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM PYRENEAN–ADVENTURE TRAINING IN THE PYRENEES
by Lt L. J. Hawkes

In August of this year two members of the Corps undertook a period of arduous adventure training in the French, Spanish and Andorran Pyrenees between 5 August 1996 and 1 September 1996. The aim of the exercise was to gain high altitude walking experience in order to advance the members current adventure training qualifications and experience. The expedition was sponsored by RMCS, organised by **Lt Dave Pile RLC** and led by **Lt Jon Townsend** R Signals. All three members being undergraduates from RMCS Shrivenham.

The Pyrenees stretch 400km from the Atlantic Ocean, along the border between France and Spain, ending at the Mediterranean. Although they do not compare to the magnitude of the Alps, there is plenty of scope for trekking at altitudes in excess of 3000m. After a long drive into the South West of France we eventually arrived in Gavarnie and made camp for the evening.

The first day of proper trekking saw the start of the high route up from Gavarnie, to the peak of Pimene (2800m) via the Refuge des Espugettes (2027m) and then from Heas up the Montagne des Aiguillons, to reach the Hourgette de Heas (2608m) which proved a long and rewarding trek. Next there was an early start for a trek up to the Refuge de Barroude. We spent the night at the Refuge, to enable a good start for tomorrow. The Refuge proved to be very expensive to use, luckily we had enough food with us and so did not need to buy any extra.

The trek to L'Hospice de Rioumajou was advised against by the Refuge guardian due to weather conditions, instead we stayed in the general area of the Refuge exploring the Lacs de Barroude in the first snow we had seen. It took 9hrs but offered some outstanding views and good, exciting ridge walking with some exposure. We were given a lift from the Hospice to the main road, then caught a bus to collect the car at Aragnouet. Then drove on to Bagneres de Luchon, for good food and sleep. A days trek up through the Hospice de France, and on to Port de Sauvegarde which lies on the border with Spain and gives superb views. Back to the campsite, and the trekking in France was complete, tomorrow Spain.

On entering Spain we found that the cost of living had roughly halved, this was very welcome news. We left the car in Salardu, then backtracked by bus to Viella and walked from Viella to the Refugi de la Restanca. This is located next to a stunning lake, and proved to have near arctic temperatures. The evening was spent exploring a nearby disused railway, used in the construction of the dam. Next we trekked on from Refugi de la Restanca down towards Salardu. This was a misty day and required the first real use of map and compass, rather than simply relating map to ground. Our arrival in Salardu was welcome, and a well established campsite was found. The following days trek recommended to us by the campsite manager was up a nearby peak (2150m). Although highly praised by the manager most of the views were obscured by forests and the heat today gave us a virtual sauna as we slogged up the hill. Later we trekked along the high route path from Salardu up to Montgarri, continuing along a valley past a large lake and south into Boreo. Although this was a reasonably low level walk it proved to be enjoyable not to be constantly ascending or descending.

Our next day was spent walking up a track to Cuanca, a small hamlet. We then returned to the campsite in Tabescan followed by a day trek from Tabescan to Pla de Boavi. This route took us through parkland type scenery, along the river Lladorre. We then had a late start followed by a drive to the village of Alins, in preparation for tomorrow's trek. Trekking from Alins up to Puerto de Boet, which is the French/Spanish border proved a good day's trekking with a mixture of terrain culminating in a climb to the Puerto. However, the weather was mixed very much like a British Spring day.

Whilst driving the car into Andorra we were delayed by huge queues entering the principality but eventually arrived in El Serrat. After leaving the car in El Serrat we were given a lift by a local to El Castellar. From there we walked to Port du Rat, then back to El Serrat to complete stage three of the high route, and the trekking phase of the expedition. The following day we explored Andorra da Vella, then drove into Spain to restock on food and fuel before the journey north.

In conclusion the trekking itself was very rewarding. The terrain and scenery varied from day to day, from jagged peaks to open meadows. Routes were generally well marked or easy to find with the help of a map. The mountain rescue service was in evidence, and their information proved to be very helpful. The Refuges were useful, but proved costly although this could be understood taking into account their respective positions. However, the cost of living in France is very high in comparison to UK and Spain. Overall we gained valuable high level trekking experience, and were introduced to a new area which may be useful in future expeditions.

EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM SHAWOOP
17 JULY–13 AUGUST 1996

Although it may come as a shock to some of you there is still a requirement whilst at RMCS to do some forms of military training. As such, early in the year we decided to take an expedition to the Indian Himalayas to attempt high altitude trekking. This expedition idea soon became known as Shrivenham Shawoop, (we don't know what it means either!), and was organised by two Royal Signals Officers, (hence the article), **Lts C. I. Russell** and **J. G. Hill**. The exercise party eventually ended up consisting of two REME officers, one RA officer and an officer cadet (the only female).

The group departed from Heathrow early on the 17th on route for New Delhi airport. The flight was a long and uncomfortable experience followed by a taxi ride into the centre of Delhi driven by Senna's Indian counterpart. The first day was spent finalising plans in Delhi and was ended by the team getting on a bus to Manali (Himalayas). This journey took 16 hours and should now be recognised as a form of adventurous training in its own right, the fear factor is huge! A day was then spent in Manali organising guides, food, ponies and maps. The next day the expedition began in full.

The trek consisted of 20 days between altitudes of 3000 and 5500 metres. A total distance of 240 miles was covered including 4 passes over 5000 metres. The terrain varied from Alpine-like forestry in the lower hills to a moonscape of rocks, snow and little else in the higher passes.

Each group member carried their own personal kit with the ponies carrying group food and fuel for 10 days at a time. Few problems were encountered with altitude but this was due mainly to careful selection of heights and distances early on in the expedition to ensure easy acclimatisation. It should also be noted that the group is now claiming a new world record in Immodium and Diaralyte consumption over a timed period.

Upon returning to Manali, and after failing to hire a plane, we boarded yet another hell bus to Delhi. Two days were then spent doing post exercise admin (toilets, beer, real food, more beer, etc) and local sight-seeing in Delhi (new and old). All in all it was a thoroughly enjoyable and successful exercise which gave the group the opportunity not only to partake in arduous high-level trekking in some of the most striking terrain in the world but also to experience and enjoy some of India's many different cultures.

Lt's Hawkes and Townsend at the finish line.

Lts Russell and Hill in relaxed pose at the top of Phitse La

NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

The Royal School of Signals
Blandford

COMBAT SUPPORT TROOP

Combat Support Tp, comprising of Cable System Section, Power Section and Basic Signalling Skills (BSS) Section and commanded by **Capt (QGO) Ombahadur Bhattachan**, QG Signals, is now firmly established in their new purpose built buildings in Blandford Camp. As you might have guessed, the primary role of this Troop is to train Telecommunication Mechanics, Driver Lineman, Driver Electricians and BSS to all soldiers joining the Corps.

CABLE SYSTEM SECTION

Since opening the doors of it's brand new, pristine building in September 1995, Cable Systems Section has been a busy vibrant department. It's staff of fifteen instructors, a mix of military and civilians, has trained something like 45 Basic Telemechs, and in excess of 100 Driver Lineman, with a further 45 Telemechs and 30 Driver Lineman currently undergoing training. A constant stream of students have passed through, BSS for field cable training, Technicians for Mechanical Workshops, Installation Techniques, Telephony and Fibre Optics and various Command Courses.

Tele Mechs under training

From July of this year we have offered a full range of courses, Upgraders, Fibre Optic modules, SWS, and all are thriving. We have also fitted extra courses in for pre Bosnia/Falkland Island deployment training and have on three occasions carried the training to the Field Army by sending equipment and instructors to Germany and even as far as Gibraltar, all visits which were gratefully received by the Units concerned.

POWER SECTION

The Power Section is a separate entity in itself and is located in the old 640 Tp Building (if you can recall!) at the corner of the Anson Square Car Park. The building also known as Richmond was taken over by the Section in September of 1995 and by early October was taking in students.

There are, at present, two civilian Instructional Officers and 5 SNCO instructors. They are involved in not only training the Driver Electrician (DE) but also other trainees undergoing various Phase 2 training. This section's involvement in BSS courses is also substantial and like Cable System Section has been responsible for providing pre-deployment training on DEL generators for those DEs who were to be deployed on operational tour in the Falkland Islands; so far, three such courses have been run. The Section have also run two Territorial Army (TA) Driver Electrician courses. To date 93 Basic and 20 Class 1 DEs have been trained with further 15 Basic and 14 Class 1 students currently undergoing training.

BASIC SIGNALLING SKILLS (BSS) SECTION

This Section has gone through some major changes and turbulent times over the last year. The Section has changed Group twice and moved office five times and are still not in a permanent place . . . Pickfords have nothing on them!! or was it . . . nobody wanted them.

In spite of all the disturbances the section has managed, undeterred, to keep up with it's workload which involves the coordination of all BSS courses (45 students every fortnight) for all basic students and instruction of Health & Safety At Work for all Upgrader and civilian courses passing through the Single Centre of Excellence at Blandford.

This Section is in a unique position in that it sees every new soldier entering the Corps. With this comes problems!!! The main one being pronunciation of common and typically 'day to day' surnames. Here is our Top Ten favourites:

1.	WATMUF	6.	A-LIBHAI
2.	AANES	7.	PEREIRA
3.	CHEWIESENI	8.	MORTIBOY
4.	ILEOMOH	9.	GRABOWSKI
5.	RADIVOJSA	10.	PYBUS

And with two 'northerners', namely **SSgt Jimmy Johnston** and **Sgt Dave Hukin**, in the chair you can imagine the attempts!!

All this against the background of the move, and all that that entailed, settling stores into the building, setting up systems, recruiting new instructors and training instructors and generally working with new departments and people. We have also hosted a large number of visitors from the low to the high and very high and all have been impressed with the facilities.

It has not all been work though, **Sgt Dave Laverie** has managed a quick undersea diving trip to the Red Sea and **Sgt Mark Bullivant** is often to be found hanging from a mountain or tramping around the local area, nowadays, with **Sgt Sid Crowton** close by. **SSgt Paul Gorman**'s Section manages to find time to run the Unit swimming and water polo teams as well as offering a consultancy service in Cat 5 to all and sundry and operating a fibre cable repair service.

In the wider picture the School has a number of initiatives on the go, CFQ, NVQ, ISO 9000 and so on, to the crack of doom, and we have played and are playing our part in those. All in all, it has been a good start on which to build and with our new resources, building, equipment and manpower, we believe we can offer a good quality product to the Corps and keep pace with the changing times.

RADIO SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Bill Adsett**
HIO Tech Sect	**John Gallagher**
HIO Op Sect	**Mick Thornton**

Radio Sqn represents the amalgamation of RADEX and Radio Gp. Currently it is running almost at capacity with 5 Command courses and over 30 soldier courses. The Squadron is now responsible for all aspects of Radio instruction incorporating everyone from Basic Radio to the Senior Officer Courses. As with most areas at Blandford Camp the Squadron has seen a great deal of turbulence over the last several months. The Comd Trg Sect has said fond farewells to **Capt Nick Walker**, **Sgt Mullen** (on posting to Aldershot), **LCpl Johnson** and **Sig Forbes** (on posting to Civ Div).

A hearty hello is extended to **Capt Edwards** (Capt A & P), **WO2 (YofS) McKenzie**, **Sgts Emblem**, **Johnson**, **Nixon**, **Moloney** and **Wringe**. A cross section of the Squadron activities are described below.

RADEX TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Keith Langton**
Alpha Sect	**Sgt Mick Main**
Bravo,Delta & Charlie Sect	**Sgt Titus Reene & Sgt Jim Harvey**

HELLOS, PROMOTIONS AND FAREWELLS

A quick note on recent happenings. First a fond farewell to **Sgt Pete Mullen** who has gone on a stress relief tour to 604 Sig Sqn, many thanks and best wishes for the future. The loss on retirement of **Cpl Ian Clements** has finally occurred and we wish him all the best too. A few promotions to mention, **LCpl Mark Catney**, **Cpl Mark Smith**, **Cpl Jim Turnbull**, **Cpl** 'Mitch' **Mitchell** and **Sgt Pete Clements** who is posted to NI shortly, a well deserved step up the ladder. Finally to the hordes of arrivals who have swelled the Troop to 41 (almost 1 man per vehicle). These are **Sgt Titus Reene**, **Sgt Jim Harvey**, **Cpls Steve Frances**, **Tim Gamble**, **Rod Helps**, 'Mac' **Macdonald**, 'Mo' **Morris**, **Si Oldman**, 'Wicksie' **Whittaker**, **LCpls Clay Austin**, **Tony Murphy** and **Sigs Geoff Fawcett** and **Mark Hill** a grand welcome to them all and fruitful times spent producing the young communicators of tomorrow.

CLANSMAN SECTION

We have all heard fantastic horror stories regarding Blandford, and everyone concerned with moving to the Royal School of Signals was facing an uneasy prospect. There is a lot of truth in the saying 'Don't judge a book by its cover', it appears that the 'cover' was greatly exaggerated. The unit seems to be running quite well, bar some teething troubles (no doubt Planning have their work cut out).

Radio Sqn is quite a large group comprising SHQ, SYSEX, RADEX and OP Section. While unable to comment on the other departments, and having only been in station just over a month, Radio Sqn, Clansman Sect of which I am a part, has a good working atmosphere.

Clansman Section is headed by **YofS** 'Mac' **MacKenzie**, who is supported by **SSgt** 'Harry' **Hariprasad** (QG Signals), **Sgts Tony Ducker**, **Roy Emblem**, 'Jonno' **Johnson**, 'Mal' **Moloney**, **John Nixon** and **Sgt Tony Wringe** (currently on his Sgts Course).

EXERCISE WARM IRON 1996
by Cpl 'Mitch' Mitchell

After surviving yet another severe Dorset winter, summertime had come again and it was time for RADEX to leave the Garages once more and embark on Summer Camp. The venue for the week's character building activities was the picturesque and cultural town of Fort William in glorious Scotland. Sunday August 11 arrived all too soon and two minibuses packed with bodies and equipment started the perilous journey north into the unknown, next stop Scotland. On arrival we received a brief on the programme of events for the week, then split into two groups and issued the respective equipment for the first day's activities.

On Monday morning we left the training centre at Tulloch, after surviving a self cooked breakfast and headed out to a mountainside at Polldhu under the watchful eye of **SSgt** 'Keith' **Langton** for a day's rock climbing and abseiling. After observing the varying levels of ability which ranged from reasonable to ridiculously hilarious, and getting eaten alive by the carnivorous Scottish midges, we returned to the centre.

On the Tuesday we had to endure a gruelling and arduous mountain-bike circuit over very tough and testing terrain under the expert guidance of UEL **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Porter**. This left most of the group with aching thighs and calves as well as very sore buttocks.

Wednesday, and the day we had all been waiting for, the opportunity to climb Ben Nevis. We started the ascent in the early morning with the mist still thickly set around us, we had a long climb ahead of us, the incentive? Well I am still trying to work that one out. After two and a half hours of walking up the well worn path through the mist we achieved our objective, the summit, the view was outstanding, you could see people at least 20ft away before they were engulfed in the mist. Being the only British people up there amongst half the European Community, we decided to head back to sea level where the air was a little thicker and rejoin our minibus. During our descent the mist cleared and it was only then that we could see the top and realised our achievement and a feeling of exhaustion came over us all. On the Thursday we relaxed by going sea fishing, not the most arduous of activities but after climbing Ben Nevis the day before it was extremely welcome.

All too soon the final day of our Adventure Training arrived as well as our final activity: white water rafting. On arrival at the rafting centre we found that the rafting instructors had taken a gamble by mixing us with the civilian population. After learning how to get about in the raft we played around on the calmer parts of the river, capsizing the boats, getting back in and then throwing each other back out of the raft again. It seemed to become apparent to the civilians and the instructors that we were only too happy trying to drown each other. After an hour or more we eventually got to what they regarded as the 'big rapids' but it was all over in a flash. After removing and deflating the rafts we eventually returned to the centre. Our final activity completed we climbed aboard the minibuses, cold wet and tired and returned to Blandford. Everyone would agree a great time was had by all.

COMMAND COURSES–TC 36
WHO ARE THEY, WHERE ARE THEY????

After completing the theory aspects of Radio Sqn in the capable hands of **SSgt** 'Multi Media' **Marriot** *et al*. and finally completing all the PXR,s we found ourselves with only one task to complete, Ex Purple Vale. Conducted by **Capt** 'voice over man' **Hughes RM** and accompanied by the aforementioned 'multi Media' **Marriott**, **CSgt Lewis** (ably assisted by 'Jibber Jabber'); and not forgetting **Sgt** 'Groovy' **Burrows**, who kindly dragged himself away from the football pitch for the week, it was destined to be great! **Maj** 'Oil of Ulay' **Adsetts** mum kindly allowed him to stay over, so he quickly sought refuge, and a little sleep, in the Step Up HQ.

Although a jovial exercise for the most part, there were on occasion frayed tempers and 'flip top heads'. Indeed **2Lt** 'no comms, no bombs' **Ballantyne** and **2Lt** 'Scottie' **Scott** (Airborne) were both shot down in flames and told not to start any of 'that Airborne bleep'–well he is a Royal Marine and he does have rather large biceps. **2Lt** 'brave' **Dave Farragher** found that 'perfect' tree for the antenna, whilst **2Lt Kate** 'Ulrika' **Simmonds** was off giving the weather forecast,' 'in summary it will be' etc. The 'Gimp' (**2Lt Jason Nicholls**) was off doing his own thing whilst **2Lt Bob** 'Biffer' **Seymour** and **2Lt Kyra** 'Macnumpty' **McAnulty** were trying to construct one of those HF 'thingeys', they knew all the technical terms.

Whilst all this was going on **Capt** 'Cracker' **Edwards** (or is it Buster?) and **2Lt** 'Miss Marple' **Lloyd** investigated only to find that only one of the Tp Comds was almost perfect, **2Lt** 'Catalogue Man' **Carter** (first in everything) but then he is the oldest living Tp Comd in history. The good news is it will all soon be over and we will be let loose on the 'Big Wide World'. That should cheer up all the Adjutants in the Royal Signals who were struggling to fill their duty rosters for 1997.

FOREMAN OF SIGNALS COURSE 66
by Sgt Epps

Personalities: **Sgts Andy Dawson, Matt Duff, Ally Duncan, Matt Epps, Rick Gorman, Alex Groves, Jamie Harper, Phil Holland, Al Holyoak, Andy Moore, Jim O'Donnel, Eric O'Halloran, Richie Paterson, Andy Riglar, Steve Ruxton, Shep Sheppard, Chris Wilson and Rick Wincle**.

FofS Cse 66 started with 18 members and to date we have not lost anyone. With the purely theoretical part of the course finished and 'Cardigan Corridor' left behind, we were all confident of seeing the last term and a half of the course out, so stand by all working units, we are coming!

Having entered the latter third of the course, there has been little time amid the hectic production of Radio Grp PXR's, to reflect on what has passed, and more importantly, what is to come. When looking back over the efforts of the last 13 months, it seems amazing that so much academic material has been taught and hopefully stored away in the memory banks for future reference. The volume of man hours put in to get through would have most university students quaking in their boots. Indeed several Rain Forests must have been cut down purely to provide us with the paper we have used, not to mention the nuclear energy consumed keeping our computers running.

Looking to the future, the realisation that in six months time, we will be the people where the 'buck stops' puts some interesting thoughts in the mind. Most are best left unsaid! However, there is also a sense of excitement and impatience mixed in with the negative feelings. Being a Foreman is what we have all been striving for over the last months and now that there is light at the end of the tunnel, we all want to be out of training getting stuck into the job. There is also the added bonus of attaining BSc Degrees so our letter heads will look more fancy (and Band 7 pay).

And what of the present? There is still a hefty work load with PXR's coming out of our ears and project work coming out of the remainder of our orifices. After 13 months however, the work load and the pressure appears normal and we will continue to muddle by. We now also have the pleasure of gloating at FofS Cse 67, who have just finished their first month of the course, to help us get through any remaining bad moments. For them at least their is no light at the end of the tunnel yet!

FAREWELL TO MR ARTHUR DAVIES

On the 20 December **Arthur Davies** retired from his post as an Instructional Officer at the Royal School of Signals. He has been associated with the Corps for the best part of 30 years. He joined the Royal Navy as a boy at the age of 15 and served as a radio operator. He retired from the Navy after 12 years but remained a very active member of the Royal Naval Reserve for a further 15. On leaving the Royal Navy in 1967 he joined the staff of the Trade Training School in Catterick. With the exception of one year spent at the Army Apprentice College at Harrogate he served continuously in Catterick until the move to Blandford.

In 1985 he started to develop the computerised students records system TMIS.(Training Management Information System). Although he had a break of four years in the Technician Distance Learning area it is for his work as the TMIS Administrator he will be best remembered.

Since his arrival in Blandford he guided and helped all involved in Course and Student Administration with any computer related problems with both patience and understanding. He made a major contribution to the integration of the differing methods usd by the previous training organisation into a system fitted for a Single Centre.

Arthur has been a highly popular and respected member of the School Team. He will be hard to replace. He plans to settle in his house in Colbum Village near Catterick and to take up walking in his free time.

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

Sig Lee Millar

Sig Iain Cushing

Sig Lee Millar and **Sig Iain Cushing** are the latest recipients of the Raychem Award which is presented to outstanding students. The award was presented at Blandford by **Mr Phil Griffiths**, Personnel Director of Raychem.

Mr George Pothecary, Assistant Chief Constable for Dorset was most interested to inspect the Guardroom and in particular, the cells, during a fact finding visit to Blandford.

Following the end of conscription, the French Signal Corps has been studying the way that CIS training is conducted in the British Army. **Col Alain Mark** and **Col Gerard Delle Luche** from the French Signal School had a particularly rewarding visit to Blandford. Although a brave attempt was made by the Commander to conduct the visit 'en Francais' we were grateful to have the French Liaison Officer, **Lt Col Bernard Jarlegand** to hand to explain the finer technical points. *Picture overleaf*

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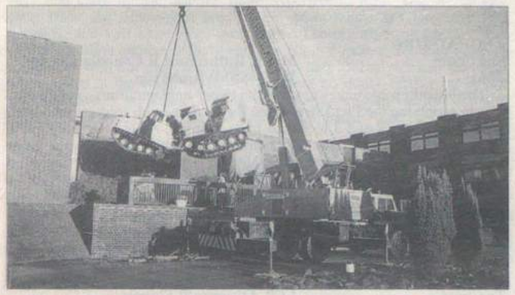
Back (*L-R*): Maj P. Rutherford RC Signals, Lt Col B. Jarlegand, Lt Col L. Relph, Maj R. Papworth, Lt Col R. Hoole.
Front (*L-R*): Lt Col P. Richards, Col G. Delle Luche, Brig S. M. A. Lee OCE
(Different visit, same lunch) Col A. Mark, Lt Col T. W. Canham

Visit of the Indian SOinC

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM–NEW MUSEUM PROJECT

The Museum was closed on 7 October and since then there has been a constant blur of activity as the museum staff, assisted by soldiers awaiting training, removed all the items from the display cabinets and packed them safely away. The building contractor created a new plinth to carry the weight of the 12 Ton ACV and paved the entire floor surface of the new wing. Window openings have been bricked up and vehicle access into the old display area has been created.



The photographs show the Volvo Snow Cat, refurbished by members of 249 (AMFL) Sig Sqn, and the Austin K9, carrying a complete D11/R232 station, being lifted into their new display locations. The book says that a fully laden K9 should weigh five tons. The crane driver, shaken as his crane lifted off three of it's five stabilizer legs, noted a weight of six tons! But then everyone who has driven a K9 D11 station knows that performance is somewhat less than sparkling.

In the meantime the Museum Designer removed all of the display cabinets to Leicester to be refurbished and the first one was ready for inspection in early December. The Museum Director and the Curator both asked with one voice–'Is that really our old display case?' Repainted, refurbished and with graphic panels in place the transformation was amazing!

By the time this is printed, the shop fitters will be well into their work of transforming the empty shell into a new, vibrant and eye catching museum ready for re-opening on Friday 23 May. However, the shop and the NAAFI Canteen are still open and anyone who visits to see the progress is very welcome.

FUND RAISING

With monies known to be in the pipeline, the shortfall is now down to some £46,000. This includes over £7,200 profit from the Christmas Lottery and over £3,600 received in personal donations in response to the lottery mailshot.

Supplies of the last two envelopes in our series of Commemorative Postal Covers have now been received and receipts from the sale of these will again make inroads into our shortfall.

The covers now released are No. 18 and 20 in the series. No 19, 'Royal Signals in BAOR, 1945-1994' was released last year.

ROYAL SIGNALS AFLOAT (18)

Since before the second World War Royal Signals detachments have served on board Royal Navy ships to provide communications in amphibious warfare and logistic supply vessels. They were involved in landings on Sicily and Italy, the D-Day landings in Normandy and in the Pacific until the Japanese surrender.

At the end of the war, 601 Sig Tp joined HMS *Meon* which was the Headquarters Ship in the 1956 Suez operation. HMS *Meon* was officially affiliated to the Royal Corps of Signals in 1960 and, following de-commissioning in 1965, the ship's bell was presented to the Royal Signals Museum.

HMS *Meon* was also the Headquarters Ship during operation Vantage, an operation which, in 1961, forestalled an earlier threat on Kuwait's borders by Iraq. The date stamp on the commemorative cover is based on the ships badge and the date of issue, 1 July 1996, is the 35th Anniversary of operation Vantage.

The Special Editions of the covers have been signed by Admiral of the Fleet, **Sir Edward Ashmore GCB, DSC**, who commanded the Naval Signal School, HMS *Mercury*, in 1955 and became Chief of the Defence Staff in 1977. All the covers have been flown by RAF Hercules aircraft to the Persian Gulf.

THE FALKLANDS CAMPAIGN (20)

Argentinean forces occupied the Falkland Islands for 74 days before General Menedez, the Argentinean commander, surrendered on 14 June 1982. The Commemorative Cover was issued on the 14th anniversary of that surrender and the date stamp features the vessel *Desire* (incorporated in the Falkland Islands flag) in which **John Davies** discovered the islands in 1592.

The cover design shows scenes from the campaign including Royal Marine Commandos coming ashore, the satellite communications equipment installed by 30 Sig Regt for communications to the UK and **Sgt Mather**, MM, Royal Signals, a member of one of the SAS surveillance teams which operated on the Falkland Islands before the landings at San Carlos.

This was the first major operation in which the British Army used satellite communications and **Brig** (later Maj Gen) **Julian Thompson**, commanding 3 Commando Bde, remarked that, 'The radio telephone was as clear as if the call (from UK) had been coming from next door.'

Special editions of the covers have been signed by **Gen Sir Michael Rose, KCB DSO QGM ADC GEN**, the Adjutant General who, at the time of the Falklands Conflict commanded 22 Special Air Service and negotiated the surrender of the Argentinean forces. All the covers have been flown by RAF Hercules aircraft to RAF Mount Pleasant on the Falkland Islands.

A leaflet listing all the covers in the series is available from:

The New Museum Project Team
Royal School of Signals
Blandford Camp
BLANDFORD FORUM
Dorset DT11 8RH
Tel No: 01258 482258/482329

Please do not hesitate to ask if you would like copies of the actual covers or any further details.

8 ROYAL SIGNALS HERITAGE LOTTERY WINNERS

But to return to the lottery, it was one of those delightful situations when **Mrs Patricia Downing**, who happened to be working in the museum at the time that the draw was being made, saw her winning ticket drawn. The photograph shows her with her husband, **Sgt Tony Downing**, receiving her £1,500 cheque from the Project Manager just three days later.

1	50132	£1,500	**Mrs P Downing**, Wife of **Sgt A. J. Downing**, 11 Sig Regt
2	93030	£500	**Mr J. Brown**
3	06980	£500	**Central Bank**, 21 Sig Regt
4	99253	£250	**Lt Col (Retd) C. St. Graham**
5	13923	£250	**SSgt P. Farrington**, 608 Sig Tp
6	49505	£250	**Mrs A. Meade**
7	01888	£250	**Mr E. M. McGrath**
8	11411	£250	**Sig K. Bickford**, 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
9	107477	£25	**Mr R. Barrance**, Middlesex Yeomanry OCA
10	71351	£25	**Mr F. K. Hancock**, Indian Signals Association
11	90120	£25	**Mr A. J. Child**, 56 Div/City of London OCA
12	01266	£25	**Mr T. Holmes**
13	74114	£25	**Maj (Retd) A. R .Taylor**, 254 OBA
14	99195	£25	**Brig T. I. G. Gray**
15	91232	£25	**Col P. Davis**
16	43608	£25	**Ms Katy Barkworth**
17	37767	£25	**Mr J. A. Williams**, 254 OBA
18	60692	£25	**Mr M. Denne**
19	97712	£25	**Mr J. D. Fenner**, 254 OBA
20	33710	£25	**Mr D. Ross**, 254 OBA
21	06173	£25	**Sig S Hindson**, 252 Sig Sqn, 16 Sig Regt
22	10135	£25	**LCpl S. B. Brown**, SSW Sig Sqn, Banja Luka
23	76254	£25	**Mr W. Exall**, ALF Sigs OCA
24	28382	£25	**Maj A. A. Ewell, HQNI**
25	109724	£25	**Maj (Retd) N. Moss**
26	09338	£25	**LCpl R. Irwin**, 40 Sig Regt (V)
27	71322	£25	**Miss E. Hannaford**
28	36732	£25	**Capt (Retd) & Mrs L. Hood**

11 Sig Regt
Blandford

HQ SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj T. Friend**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) R. Snow**

There has been little movement in and out of the Squadron. We welcome **SSgt Anne Wilde** into the QM (G) dept. She has taken over from **SSgt Linda Williamson** who has moved upstairs to work in the PSO's office.

SPORTS

The female hockey goes from strength to strength. The Regimental hockey team have recently won the 3 (UK) Div Inter-Unit hockey championships held on an extremely cold and windy day up at Boscombe Down. They now go through to the Army Championships to be held in March. It is hoped that not too many of the team will have been posted on by then. It was encouraging to see that a few members were chosen for the R Signals Corps squad this year. The Netball team have also recently taken part in the Army Open Championships where they came a very creditable 3rd (considering that it was the AGC corps team that eventually won it, having beaten the 11 Sigs team in the Semi-finals).

GARRISON FIREWORKS DISPLAY

As the early morning mist slowly began to clear it was just possible to make out the dark figures of **SSgt Steve Metherell**'s squad digging the trenches. It was going to be a long day for the soldiers under his command. They included **Sgts Steve Jones** and 'Middy' **Middlemiss**, **Cpls Rob Jennings**, **Andy Mileham**, **Phil Davies**, **Flo Wilson** and 'Smurf' **Price**, **LCpls Larry Grayson** and **Luke Vennie**, **Sigs Tetley Crossley** and **Ed Moses**. All the ground work was finished by 1200 hrs and the troops dispersed for lunch. At 1400 hrs they returned ready to erect the set piece displays and load up the mortar tubes and rocket racks. While this work was going on, **SSgt Steve Metherell** was running wild with his mallet which resulted in 'first aid' being given to a set piece. He then instructed each member of the squad in his or her role for the night. By 1600 hrs everything was set and the squad went away to relax before the night action was due to start. 1800 hrs and H hour had arrived, **Sgt** 'Middy' **Middlemiss** along with **Cpls Flo Wilson**, 'Smurf' **Price** and **Sharon Lothian** (who had now joined the squad) were busy creating a colourful diversion by selling glow sticks to the young and also the not so young.

At 1830 hrs four trip flares permeated the darkness and ignited a large pile of combustible materials. It was at this point that a poor soul who had apparently just stopped for a rest on the top became visible. Little was known about him except his first name was Guy. 1900 hrs and as the bonfire roared into life the action began with mortar shells exploding hundreds of feet into the air cascading colours of red, green and blue in every direction. This was followed by shell burst rockets and more mortars. Suddenly out of the darkness a battleship appeared and began to engage a surfacing submarine. The fire from the ship was hitting the target, but the return fire from the submarine seemed more intent on scaring the life out of the fire teams. Finally after what seemed an eternity, both vessels disappeared into the darkness from which they had come.

The set pieces worked well until one misfired, **Cpl Phil** 'don't blame me' **Davies** had neglected to join the fuses–this said, no one seemed to notice as a salvo of rockets soared into the darkness. Finally, to the right, there was a bright glow and the word GOODNIGHT heralded the final act of the Blandford Camp 1996 Fireworks display. The massed crowd applauded then slowly dispersed into the darkness, leaving the team to clear away the debris and reflect on plans for next year.

LAD v MT BOWLING EVENING

On Thursday the 7 November the LAD challenged the MT to a game of 10 pin bowling. The night started well with a happy hour in the bar located conveniently outside the bowling alley. With all teams suitably refreshed battle commenced. The bowling balls were launched down the alleys (some of them down the gutters), strikes were scored to loud acclaim and generally all was going well. The buffet was served and consumed in what appeared to be a matter of minutes (could the next challenge be a food race?) and the half time results indicated that the LAD had established a lead. Once again, suitably refreshed, battle recommenced with opponents gliding down wearing those style-less shoes. Balls were launched, pins exploded and the display screens altered, calculating the scores as play took place.

After a timeless evening the final scores were eventually calculated with the winning team being from the LAD. The MT proffered excuses ('Sid the dentist helped you', and 'our pins were stuck down') to humorous banter, it was, however, agreed by all that it had been an enjoyable evening. Top score was from **Mrs Angie Gillingham** and the booby prize went to **Mrs Evon Harrison**. To round off the evening the MTO **Capt Abbott** used the opportunity to say farewell to **Gillian Hurst** presenting her with a gift from the MT. Thanks go to **LCpl Kynaston** and his helpers for organising the do and if any other department wishes to challenge the LAD call him on Ext 2685.

1 SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj P. Rutherford R Canadian Signals**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Anderson**

The Squadron continues to fulfill its rather unglamourous yet essential role in supplying the Field Army, you the readers, with soldiers who have completed Phase 2 and 3 technical trade training. As at 1 October 1996, 195 soldiers are involved in trade training and a further 269 individuals are undertaking Basic Signalling Skills, Driver Training or being employed around either the Garrison supporting such things as Command Training Exercises or working with field units, currently 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. The administration of this well oiled machine is far from easy. It is as a direct result of the hard work and dedication displayed by the Senior and Junior NCOs that it runs so smoothly. An easy life, I think not.

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt P. Atkinson R Signals**
2 IC — **WO1 George**

You may already know that Charlie Tps role is to administer on average some 300 phase two trainees awaiting training. There are a growing number of initiatives to employ these individuals. The priority will always be the Field Army (if they are qualified to go) and this is supplemented by a progressive programme of adventure training and PT. However, we do not lose sight of our aim, which is to reduce the length of time that the soldier has to wait for their ultimate goal of reaching their first working unit. We are succeeding in that goal and have very few soldiers to command, who knows maybe one day none!!!

EXERCISE LION SUN
by Sig MacDougall

Ex Lion Sun was six great weeks in Cyprus with 2 Sig Regt, I joined the Regt expecting to be employed as enemy. I was pleasantly surprised when I discovered that I was to be an exercising soldier. The heat was a problem to start with but got easier as the exercise went on and we became acclimatized. The first few weeks were split between adventure training and learning how to use the radios and various weapons.

3 (PENNEY) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Dave Lumb**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell**

The arrival in Blandford of the apprentices' has seen a change in all the SHQ personnel. Out went **Maj Graham McNeill** (to the BOWMAN Military team), **WO2 (SSM) Fortheith** (to Arborfield) and **Sgt Steve Gallagher**. In came **Maj Dave Lumb**, **WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell** and **SSgt Jeff Morris**.

THE SUB-AQUA CLUB

We started diving about a year ago in Harrogate, and since then we have been on various expeditions and exercises in England and abroad. Initially it was pool work or theory lessons every week to achieve our Novice I qualification, this led on to Novice II and an open water dive, in a very cold dark quarry. We went to Egypt for a week at the beginning of June on Ex Fin Ali and it was a brilliant experience, as we did 13 dives which included a night dive. There wasn't much to see at night but diving in the day we saw many brightly coloured fish but luckily never met a shark!

When we arrived in Blandford we carried on our diving with the Garrison club. Most of the instructors are military and they are all sports divers and above. To help us with our qualifications, on Saturday 16 November we went to a torpedo testing site on Hornsey Island near Portsmouth.

We set off at 0715 in the freezing cold, there were six to eight instructors and 14 Novice divers, 13 of which were apprentices and **LCpl Thomas**. There were five working towards sports diver and the rest for Novice II diver. We all seemed a little apprehensive at the thought of entering the cold water. The water was murky and after breaking the ice, in we plunged being careful to avoid any torpedoes–in fact all we saw were hundreds of jellyfish. Despite the early start, freezing cold weather and the stew at dinnertime, the dive was very enjoyable. For some of us it was good to get back in the open water and for the rest it was their first dive in open water.

Another Red Sea expedition is planned for December in Sharm-el-Sheik, Egypt. It will comprise of 24 people, 8 staff and 16 apprentices, a third of whom will be sports diver qualified. There will be four days hardboat (which is where we stay in accommodation and go out on the boat every day) and two days aboard. Maybe we will see some sharks this year!

TUG OF WAR–MERCURY PULLS

On Sunday 3 November, eight apprentices' fell out of bed and plodded wearily to the pre-arranged rendezvous to meet their coach and fellow team mate **Sgt Jock Reid**, before setting off for the throbbing metropolis of Swindon. Swindon we were told was the best place 'to pull' so hopes rose, only to be dashed when they entered the hall at the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre to find it full of Big Hairy Welsh Farmers. Thinking, optimistically, as they weighed in that we might have a chance in the light categories only to be told all the teams were heavy weights and the lighter weights were cancelled. So as not to waste the journey we put in for the 600 and 640 kilo weight groups, our 600 kilo team weighed around 575 kilos so we borrowed two guys from another team to get close to the 640 weight.

Our first call to the rope lasted about 5 or 6 seconds as we were pulled here and there by the heavier, more experienced team. But as the day progressed the time spent holding the other teams got longer, 30-40 seconds, and vast experience was gained.The highlight of the day was actually pulling another team towards us about 3 inches. We didn't expect to do very well but everyone there gave us help and advice and we came away wiser in the ways of Tug-of-War and no doubt further on in our sporting careers we'll meet the big Welsh farmers again and thrash them. That's all for now but keep reading as we'll be back.

SCOTT TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt John Torrell**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt 'Johnno' Johnston**

EL EXPEDITION–10-16 NOVEMBER 1996

It all commenced at 0900 hrs Sunday 10 November, the entire group was feeling a little apprehensive, as we were the Troop 'guinea pigs' for this phase of external leadership (EL).

After breakfast kit was packed and finally we were off on the six hour journey to Capel Curig Training Camp in N Wales. Our welcome to Wales was ice cold wind and rain, kit issue soon took place and bunks were allocated. Entertainment for the week was a small TV room and coffee machine, the camp consisted of several accommodation blocks, a guard house and a latrine block.

DAY 1 AND 2–HILL WALKING

Bleary eyes and chilled bodies jumped into the minibuses for the short drive out to our start points. For most groups a number of peaks were covered over the day in conditions ranging from sun to snow to freezing fog. Navigation was left to the AT's so a number of groups walked a lot further than was necessary. At dusk a 'gale' decided to pay a visit and campsites were picked by two of the instructors, **Capt Dave Drinkall** and **SSgt Jeff Morris**. The other three groups–**Cpl Jason Scrase**, **Cpl Mick Anderson** and **Cpl Pete Casson**'s were defeated by the weather and went back to camp, awaiting the humiliation when the rest returned. The valiant two saw a night of snow, sleet, rain, wind and runaway tents. The now tired, cold, wet and bad tempered AT's woke up to find chaos, flysheets, tentpoles and pegs littering the Lywn Cym Valley. After much battling against the elements the equipment was recovered and so was **AT Jackson** who was blown away whilst inside his tent–he's never been the same since.

DAY 3, 4, 5

A mixture of canoeing, climbing and scrambling was to take place over the next three days.

SCRAMBLING

A terrifying ascent up steep gullies and along knife edges, across breath taking landscapes designed to build up self confidence, teamwork and leadership skills, resulted in a strenuous day of clinging to tufts of grass whilst dangling from a cliff face.

CANOEING

A learner course designed to build up confidence in a canoe and induce frost bite, unfortunately **AT Lowes** and **AT Cpl Dunlop** preferred submarine antics and felt exactly how cold the water really was, first hand.

CLIMBING

An interesting day out abseiling on Tryfon Bagh and climbing the indoor wall of the Beacon Climbing Centre in Snowdonia. **AT Holmes** didn't quite grasp the idea and technique and was unprepared for a shock when he was about to abseil down the wall after unclipping the last remaining support carabinar, only after shouts and sniggers from the surrounding climbers did he realise his mistake and descended with a red face. Altogether an excellent if cold and wet week with many valuable hours of experience gained. Our thanks to all the EL Staff, especially to **SSgt Jeff Morris** who had an infatuation with straightening tent pegs.

EL EXPEDITION–24-30 NOVEMBER 1996
by AT Howland

My trade class spent a week in sunny Capel Curig on the second phase of our External Leadership training. I feel that a good time was had by all as we all learnt new skills. Due to the adverse weather conditions the scheduled activity of 'gully scrambling' had to be changed for skiing which was definitely an experience to remember as most of the budding 'Franz Klammers' of the troop spent most of their time lying down.

Other activities included canoeing which turned out to be one of the coldest days of my life. **AT Jones** put a smile on everyone's face with his demonstration of his submarine commander skills.

The week was enjoyed by all and a special thanks should go to all of the EL staff, who worked so hard, especially **SSgt** 'I don't believe it' **Morris**, as he nearly smiled!

RAWSON TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Joth Heywood**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Kev Innes**

Rawson Tp are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel as far as the Apprenticeship is concerned and we are now beyond the point of no return. With this in mind, congratulations are in order for the following ATs' on their promotions to AT Sgt:

AT Sgt Fox
AT Sgt Pritchard
AT Sgt Verrall
AT D/Maj Samuel

Will it be one of the above who deserve and earn the rank of AT SSM? We will see. Congratulations also to RAWSON 'A' who recently entered the Gladiator Mini Assault Course Competition and won convincingly with ZODIAC (from the real Gladiators) awarding the prizes and kisses.

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The White Helmets

The treasured White Helmets have become a trifle grubby over the last couple of weeks. The show season over, ATDs complete and blues put in for dry cleaning, it was time for the dreaded selection course. The 9 intrepid 'Helmet wannabees' were certainly put through their paces in the mud, sand and 'bumps' of the Bovington Camp Training Area. Under the watchful eyes of **Sgt** 'Don' **Brebner** and his crew of senior rider instructors, it was 'last around the course is a sissy' (or words to that effect) and 'if anything hurts–tough'. The word 'sympathy' has long ago been eradicated from the White Helmet dictionary.

After week one, it was time to observe the affinity between balancing and manoeuvring as the riders attempted a selection of tricks performed in the arena. Notable ones were the newly named 'Turtle Head' starring **Sig** 'George Dawes' **Cooper** and 'A New Way to Brake by Sticking Your Foot in the Back Wheel' by **Sig** 'Tin Tin' **Owen**. Only two riders emerged unscathed from this particular phase of the course and **Sig** 'Hop along' **Mason** is to be congratulated for managing to conceal a broken ankle from both the instructors and the Med Centre.

The team welcomes the new members, **LCpl** 'Magnum With Horrendous Dress Sense' **Chester**, **Cpl** 'Tom Cruise' **Butterfield**, **LCpl** 'Mr Bean' (for lack of other ideas) **Hankin** and **LCpl** 'Second Time Lucky' **Cooper**. **Sig** 'George Dawes' **Cooper** and **Sig** 'Tin Tin' (now otherwise known as Sinead O'Connor) **Owen** are to be welcomed back to the fold having decided, for the fun of it, to do the course for the second time. (And why not?)

During the second week of the selection, the team hosted two visits. The first was from **Mr Duncan Nottage** who had won a competition two years ago. His coveted prize was 'to spend a day with the White Helmets' the lucky thing.

Mr Duncan Nottage taking the full weight of Cpl 'Ellie' Elson plus a bike!

Cpl 'Postman Pat' **Elson** explained a few ground rules literally and, by the end of the day, Mr Nottage had become an accomplished trickster(?!) We look forward to hearing his version of events in the next issue of 'Classic Bike' Magazine.

The second visit was by a grandfather, father and son trio. The grandfather, **Mr Gwynfreys Jones**, is sadly suffering from incurable lung cancer.

Mr Jones receiving his presentation from Capt Giles, the new Team Captain, flanked by the instructors and students of the selection course

He had served as a dispatch rider with the Corps from 1941/46 and was very keen to see a new generation of 'dispatch riders' in action. **LCpl** 'Gypo' **Hooper** was their instructor although **Mr** 'Very Junior' **Jones**, luckily, was able to show him how to ride a Triumph first.

Mr 'Very Junior' Jones teaching LCpl 'Gypo' Hooper how to ride

The team have now departed on some well-earned leave before embarking on the busy training phase of the year. If there are any soldiers out there who want to join the best team in the world, get applying through your chain of command. Alternatively, phone **Maj Russell** or **Capt Giles** on Blandford Mil Ext 2365.

SITUATIONS VACANT!!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MOTORCYCLE DISPLAY TEAM

Are recruiting new riders to fill vacancies which occur in the team. Two week selection courses will take place at Blandford.

No previous experience is necessary - all you need is guts, determination, fitness and ..... a sense of humour.

Application forms are kept in your Orderly Room/Sqn Office. Get one.

Apply now and get on the next selection course.

THE WHITE HELMETS WANT YOU!!

THE ALBANIAN ORPHANS MISSION
By John Stewart (Graphics Dept RSOS)

THE 1996 SANTA CLAUS RUN

People often ask me how A.O.M. first began and I tell them that it all began with a prayer in Southern Malawi, central Africa. I had spent three and a half weeks in the bush with some Malawi pastors preaching and teaching. We had been tremendously encouraged as over 2000 people had responded to the gospel message, many of them children. Each evening crowds of people would gather to hear some of my illustrated animal parables and to sing and dance to our gospel choruses. All Africans love stories and they particularly enjoyed my multi-coloured acetates projected on to a reasonably clean sheet. Perhaps if they had been brought up on a diet of English TV I wouldn't have been so successful. However, they were always very enthusiastic calling out for, 'More Go-go **John**, more!' (A Go-go is a grandfather, by the way).

The four week mission was almost at an end when we experienced two disasters. Esther, the youngest daughter of **Steven Nampinga**, one of my interpreters, succumbed to cholera and died in the night. He requested that I organise the funeral service and bury her that same day. Not being an ordained minister I felt totally ill-equipped to do so, but he insisted. He told me that my main responsibility would be to preach a Heaven and Hell sermon over the tiny body in true Malawi tradition. I should have much preferred to preach words of comfort and hope but he and his wife insisted on a strong repentance theme, so I complied with their wishes. The whole village gathered to their tiny mud hut and I preached the strong message of 'Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and him only', which they had requested. What they hadn't told me was that a large number of the mourners were Muslims. They were incensed at my message and stormed off in high dudgeon! Everyone seemed delighted with both my message and the resultant response. I, however, didn't feel very good about things preferring to draw people to Christ with a message of love. It had also begun to deluge with rain and I was totally soaked from head to toe.

The second disaster came as a direct result of this rain storm. Dry river beds soon became raging torrents and I expressed a fear that we might not make it back to our own base camp. We eventually laid the six month old child to rest at seven p.m. and proceeded to slew our way across the village and out across the plain. I kept my foot hard down on the accelerator, hoping and praying that we would not get bogged in. The wipers were hopeless and more by luck than judgment I eventually mounted the dirt road and sped for home. Near us towered the Mulanje Massif, an old extinct volcano filled up to form a vast lake. The pressure of water was so great that a large section of the crater's lip collapsed. Thousands of tons of water, rock and hardwood trees crashed down the almost sheer side of the volcano. A swath of destruction was cut through Phalombe village and across the plain. Next morning revealed approximately one thousand dead, mostly children. It took a further two days before the floodwaters subsided sufficiently for us to go into Phalombe and by then I had only two days to get back to the airport and home. The scene of devastation remains indelibly printed on my mind. Everywhere, sobbing children and weeping men and women. I felt like Judas as I drove away from the area and prayed to God that I might one day be in a position to help suffering children like them.

A year later I sat watching a TV documentary entitled 'The Forgotten Children of Albania'. Again I was witnessing children experiencing intolerable suffering. They rocked backwards and forwards vainly seeking to comfort themselves. They were cold, naked, caked in excrement and totally neglected. The empty staring eyes broke me apart. I began to sob from deep down inside myself and left the room, embarrassed lest my wife should see me. I paced up and down the hall trying to regain control of myself. At the same time I felt God's presence so powerfully near. It was as if He was waiting to see what my response would be. In a strange way I saw Him in those suffering children. He was right there enduring even more pain and I had to do something about it. That was the beginning of THE ALBANIAN ORPHANS MISSION, later to become a registered charity. Initially it was a stop-gap aid solution dedicated to shipping humanitarian aid by road and sea to Europe's most impoverished nation. We are now committed to improve the actual fabric of the buildings the orphans live in. Teams go out during the summer months to undertake specific work projects. At Christmas we do a **Santa Claus Run**, when we take party food, sweets and Christmas gifts to five orphanages dotted up and down Albania. This year was no exception although adverse weather in Europe caused some difficulty.

We did better this year than previously thanks to the Rotary Club who offered us help in the form of hundreds of boxed presents for a wide range of age groups without charge! The kids were as usual so grateful and signified their thanks by hundreds of 'snotty' kisses. Many were suffering from flu and they generously shared this amongst the team. The baby orphanage at Vlorë is always a delight to visit even though babies don't particularly turn me on. It is managed by an American husband and wife team, **Mark** and **Lola Nyeberg** and is a haven of love and care. We at A.O.M. have done a vast amount of work in this orphanage over the past five years all in the certain knowledge that it would be cared for. It is without doubt the best kept Baby Orphanage in whole of Albania and a credit to these two godly people.

Theft is still a major problem amongst the workers in Albania's institutions. We therefore give Christmas presents to the workers as well as the children when we go. We reason that they also have children of their own and quite naturally will find their own ways of distributing the blessing wider if we don't.

The temperature in Vlorë on Christmas morning was 65°F with bright sunshine, amazing weather. Then just 48 hours later at Skodrë, near the Montenegro border, it was–20°F and we were experiencing big trouble. The roads were inches thick with ice and we had no snow chains. A lot of prayers went up that day. The long journey to the Skodrë orphanage took us much longer than we had planned, so when we arrived there we had no time left to meet the kids. We unloaded our food and gifts and headed back the way we'd come hoping we'd be able to travel in the rapidly deteriorating daylight. We arrived back in Tiranë the capital very tired, very tense and very late at night. We were safe though, so everything was fine.

We helped organise parties at two orphanages in Tiranë and had a great time with the kids, even attending their disco. Whilst at the main orphanage we noted that all the beds and mattresses were in a very poor state. Most of the children wet their beds at night and really need waterproof covers over their mattresses. We have therefore launched a new bed and mattress appeal, so if anyone out there can help us we'd be grateful. Children from a school in Guterslough generously collected £1,000 and their teacher **Claire Gibbs-Murray**, who came with us has requested that it go towards this appeal.

Out return journey took us far longer than we had originally planned. We made a wrong decision to cut up through the Aosta Valley via the Mont Blanc Tunnel. Before reaching the tunnel it began to snow heavily and we were forced to spend the night in an alpine hotel. The roads were quickly cleaned in the morning, so we set off again having had a small but welcome taste of luxury.

Workshop–for conversion to sleeping area!

NEWS FROM BOSNIA

1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
BFPO 15

CO **Lt Col P. A. Pratley MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) T. J. Keates**

When this edition of *The Wire* is published the Regiment will have completed its' tour in Bosnia-Herzegovina as MND SW Sig Regt. The first heavy snow falls arrived on the 24 November and the various detachments on the hills were rapidly pulled in. The Joint Commander **General Sir Roger Wheeler** formally turned off Ptarmigan on 26 November, as 30 Sig Regt's EUROMUX and a Secure Commercial Radio system bought from GEC Marconi came on line. The Regt was then allowed to form up and head for Split North Port.

Trunk Sqn prepare their vehicles prior to departure.

SECURE COMMERCIAL RADIO TRIALS
by 2Lt Sue Barnard

With unprecedented speed the GEC Marconi Secure Commercial Radio (SCR) system, which is the replacement for SCRA in Bosnia, has been procured and installed. Hence a Main Squadron trials team has hit the road again trialling the coverage of yet another communications system. Led by **SSgt** (YofS) 'Gaz' **Tomlinson** and ably driven by **Sig** 'Robo' **Robertson**, the team (which includes **Cpl Tom Murray** doing some real work after his summer leave at 'Hotel Vitorog') travelled extensively throughout the AO to confirm the coverage from each of the repeaters to base locations before the withdrawal of SCRA. It took two weeks to successfully prove coverage, with the five detachments driving in excess of 30,000Km.

In some instances a little R Signals cunning was required to ensure the most efficient deployment of assets, with **Cpl Cal Hewitt** and **Sig** '3-D' **Beevers** erecting a mast on top of a sand silo to bring in the Canadian Multi National Brigade in Coralici. A very smokey **Sig Lee Goodwin** also discovered that not everyone has their antenna in the most convenient of places, with the Green Howards at Krupa using a fully functioning chimney stack! The long hours on the road often meant overnight stops at different units which led to a potential lynching of a very keen **Sig Robertson** by **LCpls** 'Oz' **Ostley** and **Al Joy**. Early rising is all very well, but queuing for breakfast can be cold in Sipovo on a Sunday morning when you've forgotten that the clocks went back an hour.

TROUBLE AND STRIFE ON LISINA
by Cpl Glynn Warburton

Although we have by far the most cushy hill top site, life suddenly became harder when **Mrko** our friendly Serbian television technician decided that the pipes from our porcelain toilet were leaking on his sensitive broadcasting equipment. As **Cpl Mark Tench**, **Sigs Ky Wilcockson** and 'Buck' **Rogers** looked on in horror, and no little strain, **Mrko** ripped out the toilet with his bare hands disposing of it in a rubbish tip. **WO2 (SSM) Sarah Stonier** immediately rushed to our aid from Banja Luka with a translator and an engineer in tow, in the hope of negotiating a compromise and effecting a repair. But the toilet was beyond all help. **Sig** 'Humps' **Humphries** was nominated from a cast of thousands (6) to construct an alternative toilet which unfortunately then had to be emptied and burned regularly. It was only then that we realised we were almost as badly off as those on the other hill top sites on Gorica, Radaljice, and Vitorog–almost but not quite as we can still get our daily showers.

LO TROOP MULTI-NATIONAL RANGE DAY
by Sig Richard Bird

Shortly before the move of SAN 690 from Vitez to Gornji Vakuf LO Tp held a range day at the nearby Travnik range. The range meeting was probably the largest gathering of the Troop since its deployment to Boznia-Herzegovina, with the outlying detachments from Kupres, Busovaca and Gornji Vakuf all being represented. The SCRA(T) detachment from Gornji Vakuf had also invited members of the 299 (Netherlands) Helicopter Squadron detachment to attend, as well as several US soldiers who were served by our message centre in Vitez. Our visitors soon augmented our small arsenal of SA80s, 9mm pistols and GPMGs with Uzis and Glocks (courtesy of the Dutch), and M16s and Berettas (courtesy of the Americans).

Cpl 'Waggy' **Wagstaff** ran the range day which started with each man zeroing his personal weapons and being tested on a British style APWT (much to the confusion of the foreign contingents). Once personal weapon tests had been completed we split into small multi-national groups and familiarised ourselves with the weapons belonging to the other forces. After this weapon familiarisation we each had a go at firing as many different weapons as time allowed. We were all surprised that we could hit targets at over 100m with an Uzi, especially **Cpl** 'Spike' **Milligan**, who normally can't hit a barn door at 10 yards!! Many of the Americans were disgusted to find that the SA80 cannot be fired left-handed. An unnamed 'Special Forces' Captain was heard to say, 'Jeez, I can't fire this left handed–well that just sucks. In fact, I'm going to sue your Government.' Which left **Sigs** 'Jase' **Whitehead** and 'Scotty' **Scott** short of a reply.

We next moved on to the pistol package, under the supervision of **Sgt Bob Harvey.** Despite all looking familiar in both size and shape there was a marked difference in the handling of each pistol, but in the end everyone decided that their favourite was the Glock. The final shoot was with the GPMG, at distances up to 300m. Unfortunately we had no other foreign weapons in this category, which was a shame as many of us wanted to fire the M 'Full Metal Jacket' 60–but we all thoroughly enjoyed the stand anyway.

Sgt Bob Harvey coaches an American soldier on the Multi National Range

At the end of the day everyone had a good time on the range. For us and our guests it was a unique opportunity to try our hand at firing different weapons and to train in a multi-national environment.

NGO (NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION) LIAISON
by 2Lt Alex Hutton

During the deployment to Bosnia one of the many tasks, **SSgt Bob Breheney** and I undertook was that of liaison with the two main NGOs in theatre. In non-Army terms, this meant visiting both the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), who were in Bosnia to run the elections, and the International Police Task Force (IPTF), who monitored the conduct of the local police forces. Each organisation was manned by civilian officials and police from a myriad of countries whose only method of communicating between their many offices was a Motorola insecure radio system. As NGO IOs all we had to do was ensure that each of the 32 offices, spread across a divisional area the size of Wales, knew how to operate the radio, which channel to use if needed and how to call for help from IFOR.

That probably sounds quite easy. Unfortunately, the majority of stations were hidden away on back streets and on the upper floors of buildings, so finding them in the first place was a task in itself. Upon finding them there was often more than a communication barrier to overcome. English was rarely their first language. Whilst not insurmountable, these problems did cause some consternation. Everyone knows that if you want to find some thing, ask a policeman. Unable to find one particular IPTF station we did exactly this, by asking one of the local Serbian 'bobbies' who was casually standing at the side of the street in his camouflaged blue uniform. Unfortunately, my Serbian being somewhat lacking, my question of 'Politzi?' met with a blank expression. A change of tack to "IPTF Politzi?", complete with quizzical expression, provoked somewhat more of a reaction with lots of pointing. Probably with more luck than understanding, his directions, to our surprise proved sound. Having eventually located the stations, we still had the problem of talking to them. The quality of English varied from very rough to better than mine. On a visit to one station, I spoke with a policeman from Ghana who said 'I have not been speaking English for 26 year, but I am fluent in French'. Unfortunately, my spoken French extends to 'Vin Rouge' and no further. My lack of linguistic dexterity was reaffirmed when I asked a Czech policeman 'If he had any problems with Motorola' I was informed in a perfect English accent that, 'Everything is quite all right thank you very much'. Problems are not always tied to difficulties in communication. At an OSCE field office, I had asked what their callsign was on their Motorola channel. The reply I had from a Frenchman was 'Oh, we don't use callsigns'. Of course you don't, forget I asked.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AUXILIARY MILITARY POLICEMAN
by Sig Josh Kirby

Following two day intensive training, hosted by the RMP, Osnabruck, it was back to Herford, for a morning on the ranges, brushing up on our Pistol drills. All that was then required was for us to slip an armband on, force our Red berets onto our heads, thrust our Police Notebook neatly into our hip pockets and set out on patrol.

With our new sense of responsibility, we set about our first day as AMP's feeling rather proud to be amongst the British Army's elite law enforcement team. Former friends, however did not quite see things the same way. Rather than being greeted with the normal 'Morning Scouse', or words to that effect, we were being greeted by a sort of whooping sound, often accompanied by frantic armpit scratching. (Very strange). No matter, we have a job to do, and we intend to do it well. Church house was to be our first area of responsibility, 'If you run into trouble just call us on the Motorola', we were told. 'If that doesn't work, use the back up comms'. 'What back up comms?' 'That 30 pfg we gave you this morning for the phone'. (How reassuring!) As we approached the gates of Church house, **Sig Hodgins** and I got out of the vehicle, and began to move towards the main entrance in true 'Starsky and Hutch' fashion. On reaching the door, **Sig Hodgins** rang the bell as I covered him. 'Someone's coming'. 'Good morning lads, come in, sit down, put your feet up, I'll have Janet make us some tea'. Needless to say, this was one of the more popular patrols.

It isn't all Hot drinks and Hobnobs though, we were also responsible for patrolling Kicks, Go Parc, McDonalds and other such areas normally frequented by soldiers (**Sig Amos** never wants to see another Big Mac as long as he lives). It was during one of these patrols that we received a report of a suspicious vehicle that had been spotted earlier that day around the married quarter area. When we went to investigate, it turned out, that the car which had been reported as driving very slowly down the street, acting in a suspicious manner and had been described as, small, with what appeared to be a firms' advertisement on the doors, was in fact us in our AMP CORSA. On a serious note, there was a long list of responsibilities which the AMPS had a big part in, not least of which was ensuring the safety of the Married Quarter areas, in particular those quarters which had been left unoccupied whilst families had returned to the UK. The NAAFI complex was also given the benefit of our new found expertise as we pounced into action unannounced and carried out spot checks on ID cards and random VCP's on the vehicles of our ex friends (Yes the armpit scratching brigade). In all, it has to be said, being the AMP was certainly an eye opener.

THE MEDIA MEETS THE REGIMENT
by Capt James Anderson

Promoting the Corps and the Regiment by hosting a variety of journalists has not proved a simple task over the past four months. So here are a few tips on hosting journalists for other aspiring Unit Press Officers, who haven't done a course and want to retain a career at the end of their tour:

1. If using a Czechoslovakian helicopter don't tell the crew that your two journalists are from Germany, probably descended from those who ravaged their country only a generation ago. A flight at only 100 feet above the ground through the mountains for 1 hour is guaranteed not to be settling on your breakfast
2. Don't host a TV crew and a newspaper team together, they want to see different things and you will only have to separate them physically during their trip when they try to punch each others' lights out.
3. Journalists are quite prepared to take your word for the weather conditions without experiencing them. They prefer to spend their nights in CORIMECs and eating the excellent Banja Luka meals, rather than 6000ft up a mountain in 100 + Kph icy winds with only an all in stew to look forward to.
4. Artistic temperament allows a photographer, who has come to photograph soldiers on operations in Bosnia to ignore the countryside, devastation and remnants of war, and to concentrate on photographing soldiers (studio style) on a white sheet which he carries around in his day sack. Throughout this whole process he will ignore all your pleas on the accuracy of the subject matter - the photographer knows what makes a good photograph.

Sig 'Waggy' Wagstaff poses on a white sheet with the future of Royal Signals Communications equipment

Good News Travels Fast!
Publish it in *The Wire*
The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

7 Sig Regt
Bosnia

COMMAND POST 7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO — **Lt Col Mike Dyer**
RSM — **WOl Griffiths**

The command post had seen better days by the end of the Operation, with only the bare essentials left in place. Regimental Admin was very nearly conducted in a green army tent and consisted of one canvas chair and a GS table. It did however have one particularly gullible officer fooled! Regimental Ops was looking more like the black hole of Calcutta by the day, and it was only the overflow into the CO's corrimec that saved the day.

The end of the Operation saw the arrival of **WO2 (SQMS) Mal Sleight** from the RAO. His stories about flying and aircraft design made a pleasant change from those of **WO2 (YofS)** 'Strange' **Swiffen** who is into country and western, but the two combined made us feel like it was definitely time to go. The CP would like to say farewell to our one and only reservist, **LCpl** (now Mr) 'Clinger' **Cartmell** who has finally made it back to his 3 bed semi in surburbans-ville. He very nearly extended with LANDCENT but the diplomatic service stopped him doing so. He is yet to complete his training course. It is not so much good-bye 'Clinger', rather au revoir until the next Op.

HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL'S VISIT TO THE REGIMENT

On 8 October British troops were treated to a visit by **HRH The Princess Royal**. 7 Sig Regt personnel were among the troops that the Princess met during her 2 day tour.

HRH The Princess Royal
with Brig J. M. Shaw Capt A. R. Knott and Lt Col M. Dyer

The programme started at the Regimental Command post where the Princess was met by the CO, **Lt Col Mike Dyer** and **WOl (RSM) Pete Griffiths.** From there the programme was fast and furious, the idea being that as many of the Regiment should meet the **Princess** as possible. **Sig Jason Start** was one of the first to have air time with the **Princess** quite literally, speaking from Tuzla on a Video Teleconferencing link arranged by the OC 231 Sig Sqn, **Maj Gus Colville**. **LCpl** 'Dunny' **Dunderdale** provided the set control during the conference with the aid of his space invader like control box, and afterwards explained the finer points of the system. It was then on to meet **Cpl Chris Yin** who managed to explain the 'Norris' 2000 without saying 'Sir' once.

At RADCON in the Ilizda complex **SSgt** 'Chalkie' **White** conducted the tour of some of the systems employed on the operation. The **Princess** was able to meet members of 232 Sig Sqn, as well as representatives from 280 Sig Sqn and 30 Sig Regt. In particular **Cpls Bhoj** and **Jimi** entertained the whole party for some time with their tales of life here.

Maj Mark Thorek of 232 Sig Sqn put on a display at the Zetra Olympic Stadium which included Mini TAC HQ, where the **Princess** got a feel for the field deployment of the ARRC staff and Royal Signals soldiers who provide the communications therein. Among those to meet her were **SSgt David James**, **LCpl Paul Dacey**, and **Sig Tom Longbottom**. Next on the agenda after Zetra was the rather more comfortable surroundings of Banja Luka.

VISIT OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF

On 6 November the Regiment received a visit from the SOinC, **Brig N. F. Wood**. He was met at the Regimental Command Post by **Maj Phil Filby** and **WO2 (YofS) Martin Swiffen**. From there it was straight on to meet members of 231 Sig Sqn, who are shortly to leave Sarajevo as part of the HQ ARRC withdrawal.

Lt Col Andrew Mills (Royal Engineers) kindly gave the SOinC his VIP tour of the Sarajevo area explaining the history of the conflict in the city over the last four years. The tour called in at the Holiday Inn where **Sig** 'Johno' **Johnson** leads the team in support of Media Operations. The room inspection was unexpected, but luckily the lads passed–just! **Maj Ian Condie** briefed the SOinC on 280 (UK) Sig Sqn which will be taking over the reins for LANDCENT Communications once the Regiment has gone. Many of the Regiment's reservists and Territorial Army personnel will be extending their service in Bosnia with the lads of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. The visit of the SOinC was not only confined to the Sarajevo area. In Mostar he met **SSgt Rab Marshall** the Troop Commander of the 30 strong detachment. The detachment supports the Multi National Division (South East) run by the French. Unfortunately for them the food in Mostar is an acquired taste so it was off to Zetra Stadium for lunch at the Regimental Echelon.

Lastly it was up to 232 Sig Sqn, where the SOinC dined with a sprinkling of the Officers and SNCOs of the Regiment. Not surprisingly the main topic of conversation was the imminent departure of the regiment back to Krefeld after a very long year.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Gus Colville**
A/SSM — **SSgt Dean Ewing**

Morale in the Terme peaked in late October with the good news that Transfer of Authority (TOA) was to be brought forward by a couple of weeks. We can all return to civilisation at the end of November, ready and eager to reconstitute the Squadron and celebrate the festive season (in big style). The departure off-rotation of **WO2 (SSM)** 'Gunny' **Pellant** has also been welcomed as PT sessions have returned to normal (good healthy fun, in daylight, and followed by a hot shower). **SSgt (SQMS) Dean Ewing** still enjoys himself by biting (not literally) the consistent dress code offenders in true 'Gunny' style.

MAN TROOP

The new Tp Comd, **2Lt Nick Yardley**, has mastered the complexities of Ptarmigan and his instructors from the Tp Comd's course would be impressed with his new found talent. They would be even more impressed with **SSgt (YofS) Nige Richards** on a recent 'skit' night with his outstanding impression of a rather tall 2Lt straight out of troopies meeting a Field Marshal. A variety of props were used, notably a broom handle doll and 3 gallons of industrial strength deodorant. The skits were all of a high standard and no one escaped totally unscathed, not even the Commanding Officer. The leaky roof is under going repair now sir.

The highlight of the last couple of months was the visit of **HRH The Princess Royal,** who visited on 8 October 1996. She proved to be as charming as ever and spent some considerable time talking to the Tp Comd, **Cpl Chris Yin** and **LCpls Jan Atkinson** and 'Dunny' **Dunnington**.

Sgt Paul Beardell on a tea break with Lt Nick Yardley in CPT, Sarajevo

SYSCON

Life goes on, problems never seem to change, and new technology appears every other day. IDNX exchanges have now been fitted in preparation of the handover to LANDCENT and the Video Tele Conference facility has expanded to include the MNDs, AFSOUTH, and SHAPE. **Cpl Dave** 'Kitkat', '4 Fingers' **Kemley** is the real expert and even though he belongs to M Tp, he is treated with awe, as are the remainder of the SYSCON techs. **SSgt (FofS) Frank Cowan** has taken over from **WO2 (FofS) Si Boyd** bringing his own special charm to the team. **SSgt Mark Neighbour** leaves us for York and **SSgt Sharkey Ward** wants the SSMs job, (or the Foreman's job) or both.

Sgt Mark Sala with Line Troop

LINE TROOP

Sgt Mark Sala escaped at the end of Rotation 3 having probably done four months in theatre and **Cpl Les Robinson** asked to stay in camp so that he could get his LS & GC at long last. It's a bun fight as to who is in charge now as **Cpls Brent Tate** and **Chris Wilson** vie for position, trying to figure out which is HF quad and which is Single quad. The single quad is half the weight. **LCpl** 'Windy' **Miller** is doing his best to train the bunch of new boys from the factory who have trouble lifting a box of Walker's crisps and don't like driving in the dark. Their names are safe for six months, but watch this space.

QM DEPARTMENT SARAJEVO

QM — **Capt Chas Greig**
A/RQMS — **SSgt Stan Ross**

The QM **Capt Chas Greig** has continued to crack the whip despite succumbing to the sudden change of weather. His cold cure definitely was novel and the envy of all the lads. As it is the last rotation of the tour with LANDCENT taking over the role, **SSgt** 'Ring Ding' **Terry Parle** has been prised from Krefeld to close down the theatre accounts. He has already positioned his desk so that he can watch the locals play football on the bare patch of land they call a pitch. Since the departure of the RQMS on the last rotation, the department in theatre has been ably led by **SSgt Stan Ross** who was signed out on loan from 38 Sig Regt(V) for six months, and has proved to have been a major asset to the department. **Sgt** 'Arfur Daley' **Leigh Northeast** has proved that the difficulties of the length of the supply time can be circumvented, and that nothing is too difficult to obtain! **Sgt** 'Not just a footballer' **Si Booth**, who has recently arrived from Herford via the Falklands, has arrived to issue the remainder of the soldier '95 clothing package, and to take on the NATO and welfare accounts. **LCpl** 'fag ash' **Waters** who at the time of writing was selected for promotion, has been ensuring that the department is on good terms with our colonial cousins.

LCpl 'Squirrel' **Leigh Tyrrell** chose to remain in theatre for the full tour (now a rich singley), but in spite of the money he still has trouble finding a girlfriend. **LCpl Steve Hannan** also joined us on loan from the volunteers and has enjoyed it so much that he is remaining in theatre with 200 Sig Sqn. **Sig** 'Slug' **Mark Owen** has not long arrived in the department from training. He has had a good introduction to long stands, DPM paint, spark plugs for diesels, and realised very quickly that if you don't keep your eyes open you end up falling down large holes!

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Mark Thorek**
SSM — **WO2 Rod Oakley**

September saw the mammoth move of the Area Comms Sarajevo (ACS) from the leaking wet Zetra Stadium to the Dalmacjia hotel at Kiseljak, hi-jacking 255 Sig Sqn at HQ ARRC Rear. Not that this arrangement will last for very long, as we are all looking forward to Christmas at home.

Highlights since the last edition have got to be the visits of **HRH The Princess Royal** and the **SOinC**. Both visits were very successful and enjoyed by all those involved, breaking up the routine of life on operations.

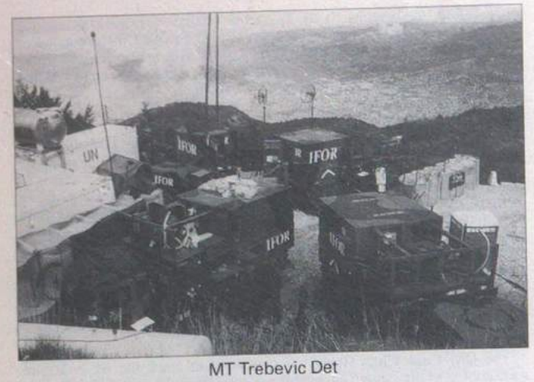
Good-bye to Rotation 3 and the likes of **Lt Sam Harrild**, **WO2 (SSM) Basil McKenna** and **SSgt David James**, and welcome to **Capt Nick Deacon** and **Lt Jack Jennings**, the latter replacing **Lt John Carter**. 'Replacing' is not the right word, as no one could take **John**'s place at SYSCON Rear. A hard act to follow Jack! A special welcome to **LCpl Tim Bagnal** from Alpha Tp 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We hope you have left the Troop life size punishment cross behind.

In the Squadron MT department the show has been run by **SSgt Tony Cryans.** With the merger with the MT from 16 Sig Regt we are now 21 strong, with 15 linemen making up the bulk of the team. Operators beware! A special thanks goes to **LCpls** 'Goose' **Newman** and **Paul Hanseli** for their earlier trip to Bitburg. When is the next one?

SAN 873 MND (N) MAIN TUZLA

'Another sunny day in the Tuzla valley' has to be one of the most memorable phrases of the Operation. Twice a day on the Regimental conference we are reminded of not only the location of the det, but also the weather there. The detachment has seen many people pass through the doors in the last year, but only one has served right from the start. **Sig** 'The Wise One' **Hague** has spent all year in support of the Americans of 1st Division, and is thinking about writing a book entitled 'Bosnia The Yank Way'. No doubt all those who have served here will be included, notably **SSgt** 'Rab' **Marshall**, **Sgt Col Raynor**, **Cpl Robbie Love**, **LCpls Lee Rotherforth** and 'Taff' **Powell**, and **Sigs Daz Culver**, **Jason Start**, **Lucy Kyle** and 'Moonheed' **MacDonald**.

Lastly the Squadron says a farewell and many thanks to all the TA and reservists that have so ably supported us, especially in the last few months of the deployment. In particular to **Cpl Mark Lawrence** who has worked as a first line technician in RADCON since May. Serving in Bosnia really did open his eyes to what life is like here for both the regular army and the locals. We wish him and all our Augmentees the best of luck back in civilian life.



MT Trebevic Det

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT DET NAPLES

Life is good for the boys and girl serving (against their will of course) in Naples. **Cpl** 'Ginger' **Crossley**, **LCpl Debbie Hunter** and **Sig** 'Phil' **Phillíben** have been living the life of Riley across the water in support of AFSOUTH. This being a family magazine it would be too obscene to publish their LOA rate, but needless to say they couldn't eat that much pizza! The detachment have their very own company transport, but unfortunately it is green and manufactured by Landrover. Not that it matters as the public transport system is excellent, and Rome is just a few hours away. **LCpl Debbie Hunter** was the first of the three to venture out of town on a sight seeing trip to the ruins at Pompei. This was obviously too cultural for the rest of the det, who had stayed in to do their washing!

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT DET VICENZA

The two boys supporting air operations in Vicenza have to be the two luckiest soldiers in NATO. There is no doubting that **Cpl Kevin McGuiness** and **LCpl Stuart Turner** have got it 'Sorted'. A flat in the centre of the trendy Italian town, (complete with cleaner in case the CO flies over for a room inspection), flash hire car and enough LOA to dress in Gucci suits when out every night of the week. Lunch is taken in one of many of the local cafes where the boys watch the world go by, and in the evening well enough said. Unlike Naples, there is no need to leave town to see the sights–there is more than enough to see in the centre of town, and that is not just the architecture. In summary, **Kevin** and **Stuart** are two soldiers that will be in for a very big shock when they return to Regimental life.

LCpl Stuart Turner and Cpl Kevin McGuiness welcome the CO's private jet for a room inspection

THE 'ONE PIP WONDERS' ON TOUR
The Attachment of 2Lt Heath and 2Lt Hopcraft to 7 Sig Regt

On 9 August 1996, we were both commissioned into the Royal Corps of Signals and one week later departed for Krefeld. On arrival in the Regiment we spent two weeks getting to grips with the Regt, studying camouflaged boxes on large lorries (Ptarmigan) and discovering the joys of life in a real Officer's Mess. Whilst initially there were only five living in members because of Regimental commitments to IFOR in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, word of our arrival obviously spread because the mess began to fill up! The Adjutant, **Capt Dave Duggan**, was swift to inform two very new and very green Second Lieutenants of all the do's and dont's applicable to the conduct and behaviour becoming of a young Officer. Unfortunately, the excellent hosting abilities of **Capt Kyle Barker** and **Lt Daz Saul** seemed to encompass more of the dont's highlighted by the Adjutant. After two weeks, we bade a fond farewell to Krefeld and set off into the unknown for a five week deployment to theatre.

On arrival in Split we were introduced to 230 Sig Sqn by **Maj Jim Wood** and **Capt Richard Webb**. This consisted of a hands on approach to the 'camouflaged boxes' which soon became Radio Relays, Switches and Centrals. It proved to be an invaluable experience as we were able to see the Ptarmigan system up and running as well as links to other Islands via the American NABS system. Although our time in Split was short, it prepared us extremely well for the journey into Bosnia and the infamous Headquarters ARRC Main at the Ilidza complex.

Once we finally arrived in Sarajevo, we were met by **Capt Andy Knott**. He was extremely keen for us to see as many aspects and locations of the Regt as possible and as a result we spent quite some time in and out of landrovers travelling the length and breadth of the Sarajevo area. He also took us for one of his legendary tours of Sarajevo and the surrounding countryside which encompassed Zetra Stadium, the Olympic Bobsleigh run, the 'Wall of Death' and a disused Bosnian airbase–classic military tourism!

'One Pip Wonders'–on tour

Whilst at Terme, we were also attached to several different areas. We spent many busy days with RADCON under the careful eyes of **Sgt Loughlan** and **Sgt Pearson** obtaining an insight into the way radios are used in support of the Ptarmigan network and also some time with the new VTC (video teleconferencing) team. We helped to install a new terminal in the Serbia hotel and tried hard to get our heads around the complexities of the LANs and WANs the Signals personnel deal with on a regular basis. Fortunately, before things became too complicated, we moved on to 232 Sig Sqn at Zetra stadium. We would like to thank very much all of those who knew **2Lt Andy Hopcraft** was chained to and carrying a bag of 3 'Crypto' house bricks to Zetra for their complete lack of forewarning.

Our time at Zetra stadium flew by, with **Maj Thorek** finding all sorts of subaltern activities for us to do. We organised a convoy of vehicles to be backloaded to Split with **Sgt Moore** and even had the opportunity to use our Mission Analysis skills! We were also fortunate enough to visit some of the outdets manned by the squadron. **SSgt Marshall** and his team were excellent hosts in both Tusla and Slavanski Brod and gave us an excellent introduction to the American Army and their MSE system. During our stay in Sarajevo, we visited Mt Trebevik many times, so it almost felt as if we were living there! Mt. Treb. also saw the culmination of our physical training campaign in theatre. Each of the squadron SSMs kindly took it upon themselves to test and adjust the levels of fitness for attached subalterns. After a month of training under **WO2 Sykes**, **WO2 Pellant** and **SSgt Halliday**, we ran the 16.5km route from Zetra Stadium to the outdet on top of Mt Treb with **Padre Langston**, **2Lt Tim Gray** and **SSgt James**. 14km of uphill was a long way, but we were all well pleased with ourselves when we had completed the run and could enjoy the spectacular views.

Sixteen weeks of the Troop Commanders Course at the School of Signals in Blandford beckons for us now. We go to it knowing why we need it and roughly what to expect at the end of the training. Whilst we have been lucky to get such an excellent attachment, it has been made so by the time and help given by all of the members of the Regiment. Many thanks to you all. Goodbye for now 7 Sig Regt.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please advise the Subscriptions Clerk at RHQ, IN WRITING, of any change of address.

THIS INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE TELEPHONED

20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) BFPO 16

OP RESOLUTE–SIPOVO BFPO 538

Sqn Comd **Maj A. N. Morphet**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) K. A. Jones**

The Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron took only a few days to settle into it's new environment in the somewhat cramped conditions of Hotel Janj and the Secure Factory across the other side of town. No sooner had we arrived but planning was under way for the move North to Banja Luka in mid December and when there, to take over all communication responsibilities for our AOR. The Squadron will swell in size, totalling 338 officers and soldiers, not to mention a rather large Brigade HQ totalling 260 staff officers–sounds more like a Divisional HQ! We are certainly looking forward to the move and hope to be settled in by Christmas and be able to enjoy ourselves through the festive season.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt D. R. Seymour**
Tp Sgt **Sgt T. Taylor**

The Troop is now firmly established in the Secure Factory, Sipovo, having taken over from 215 Sig Sqn in the middle of October. Residence here is only temporary and on 9 December we up and move en mass to Banja Luka so that the Division can be home for Christmas! The first four weeks have proved extremely busy and the Troop has swelled in numbers to sixty. The armour has already been deployed in support of operations (to the surprise of many) in a patrolling role and pictured below is **LCpl Bob Cunningham**, a Panzer stalwart with a typical burnt out house behind him.

BOSNIA–FIRST IMPRESSIONS
by Sig Kenny McInnes

About five years ago, before I joined the Army, I first became aware of the fighting that was going on in what was, as far as I was concerned, Yugoslavia. Over the past two years Bosnia has become more than just a news feature to me as, having joined the Army, there was the possibility that on posting to my first unit I might find myself serving out there. This possibility became a reality when within 10 minutes of arriving at 200 Sig Sqn in Paderborn, I was told that I was due for a six month tour, starting in October. After a few intensive months of vehicle maintenance and pre-Bosnia training, October soon came around. Although the whole experience of deploying was a novelty to me, it was nothing new for most of the lads who had only returned from Op Grapple 6, 11 months earlier.

We flew into Split from Hanover on an RAF VC10 aircraft which was an experience in itself as the seats face opposite to the direction of travel. I was impressed at the pilot reversing all the way across Europe. My mate, **Sig Jimmy Montgomery**, was more concerned with the customary red, white and blue target painted on the fuselage. He was heard to say, '. . . flying into Bosnia with a bullseye on the side of the plane is just asking for trouble.'

Part of our Bosnia training included learning how to deal with cold climates and, granted that Split is in Croatia I was surprised to find the temperature more akin to what you might experience at the height of summer. The next morning however, as we set off north-east across the mountains towards Bosnia the temperature seemed to change dramatically for the worse, as did the scenery.

Like most people, I had a fair idea of what to expect through the television coverage of the war over the past few years. However, it was not until I had seen the aftermath of the war for myself that I was able to realise the extent of the destruction. As we travelled along routes Circle, Albatross and Parrot, skirting around Tomislavgrad and Kupres, we found ourselves travelling through 'ghost towns', where bullet holes adorned every wall left standing and cars lay abandoned and burnt out at the side of the road.

Eventually we reached our camp which is situated in Sipovo on the Bosnian Serb side of the Inter Entity Boundary Line. As those who have served in Bosnia recently will know, it is located within the area known as the Anvil. The camp itself is located in what was once a factory and boasts good relations with the locals who have been able to return to their homes in the knowledge that there is an IFOR presence to protect them.

Our accommodation at present is in tents, inside the factory. There are roughly 16 to a tent, where we sleep on bunks. Settling in has not been too bad. Once you get used to **Sig Tony Marsh**'s snoring and **LCpl** 'Hi, my name's **Steve** and I'm a Sagittarius' **Brown**'s incessant talking which is only punctuated by **Sig** 'Buzz' **Bury**'s shared enthusiasm for conversation. **LCpl Bob Cunningham**'s Sydney Devine tapes have not gone down too well and are believed to be in the post somewhere between here and Germany. There is also a cookhouse, gym and bar inside the factory. The bar employs the 'two can rule' which everybody adheres to. Anyone who made plans to stop smoking over the course of the tour quickly changed their minds on learning that 200 cigarettes cost about £7.

Although, being something of a home lover, the thought of a six month tour sends shivers down my spine, and given that on most days you wake up to a Groundhog day feeling, the time has actually passed quickly so far. There has been so much work on since we arrived that you do not know whether it is New York or New Year. In addition to this, our move to Banja Luka in December will help to break the tour up.

Workwise, everyone is happy to pick up details as it gives you a chance to see more of the area and so far the highlight of my tour has been a detail to Sarajevo. I also enjoyed being part of a two man detachment with **LCpl Don Garner,** where we provided comms for an operation run in conjunction with the Dutch. It would appear that everyone's dream is an attachment to the Dutch Rear Link and, although as yet I have not been fortunate enough to land this one, I'm ready and waiting on the off chance, with a lifetime's supply of shower gel.

Bosnia also offers the opportunity for you to get to know your trade inside out. Not only are you working in an operational environment but with the mountainous terrain, that is native to Bosnia, posing problems to communications, you have to be on the ball to deal with all eventualities.

Although I would be lying if I did not admit to counting the days to R & R and the end of the tour, I have found Bosnia a fascinating place. Some of the sights that I have encountered and the events that are happening here will stay with me forever, guaranteeing that come the end of the tour, I will have experienced a situation that most people never will. For that reason I will be happy to have done my tour, I just hope that I do not have to come back again.

VISIT OF THE SOINC, BRIGADIER N. F. WOOD

As part of his whistle stop tour of all R Signals assets in Bosnia, **Brig Wood** accompanied by **WO1 (RSM) Derek Deegan** flew in from Banja Luka after visiting the Div Sig Regt. Before touring Hotel Janj, **WO1 (RSM) Deegan** posed for a photograph with his brother **Sgt Ralph Deegan** next to the 'Telephone Box' outside the Brigade Headquarters. They are both looking forward to meeting once again over Christmas Lunch during **Sgt Deegan**'s R and R! After a curry lunch, and a comms update brief, **Brig Wood** moved across to the other side of town to meet the remainder of the Squadron based in the Secure Factory where he was able to see the large fleet of Squadron vehicles, including a Warrior, three BV 206's and even a fire engine.

Sgt Deegan meets the Corps RSM–his Elder Brother

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
BFPO 35

Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Condie**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Ivan Shiels**

OPERATION CONSTANT ENDEAVOUR

The Squadron started to deploy on Op Constant Endeavour on 2 October. The advance party consisting of the OC and Ops team. Our close neighbours in Krefeld 7 Sig Regt were delighted to welcome us, and helped us settle in. Once in theatre it was obvious that a comms plan was needed urgently and so the OC and **WO2 (FofS) Lowe** set about the task of information gathering.

The interim LANDCENT HQ consisted of 30 x 5m shelters and 20 x 10m shelters as well as a purpose built building called the Krystal Palace. The Squadron technicians and operators alongside the 1 (NL) Sig Sqn set about installing communications in the HQ. This consisted of a LAN/WAN headed by **SSgt (FofS) Johnson** as well as the IFOR private telephone network. As TOA ARRC approached, our own LANDCENT staff started to arrive in large quantities and so the pressure built up. With the interim HQ fully functional the TOA ARRC to LANDCENT took place on 20 November.

It didn't take long for 7 Sig Regt to pack and begin their journey home to leave 280 (UK) Sig Sqn to continue the IFOR operation.

SARAJEVO CRYPTO CUSTODIANS (TO THE RESCUE)
by SSgt (YofS) 'Bod' Horan

Before I begin this brief resume of the story so far, I feel that I should firstly explain to the un-initiated what crypto is. It's usually bits of small paper or large heavy pieces of equipment that if lost can terminate your career on the spot. So as you can imagine it was with a feeling of deep joy that I, **SSgt (YofS) Bod Horan** and my partner in crime, **SSgt Terry Murrell** entered into the high tech world of Over the Air Re-keying (OTAR) Over the Air Distribution (OTAD) and other such abbreviations that we have yet to de-cypher.

The scene is set, 'It's just a case of arriving in Sarajevo and combining the old two existing accounts into one', quoted an American whom we are desperately trying to get our hands on. The reality, no room to work from, nothing to work with, no transport, no safes, no documents, no records, no publications and more importantly no clues on how to run a NATO account! So you can see what a challenge it has been. Our first mission was to 'acquire' somewhere to work from. Not a problem we hired the expertise of **Cpl Jock Galloway** and simply (with the use of his crane) picked up an ISO container, re-located it to another part of camp and called it a crypto store, simple. We then set about furnishing our home, I will not go into each account but needless to say we are now ordered to put our hands in our pockets as soon as we arrive anywhere due to everyone losing things shortly after our visits. We currently have 11 hole punches and at least 17 rulers at the last count and **Terry Murrell** is thinking of opening a market stall outside the Residency. (Well he looks like a local anyway).

The future for the COMSEC crew looks a little brighter, now we have lights and power in our little box. I'm sure it is only a matter of time before we have our own vehicle, three bedroom detached house, jacuzzi and swimming pool. Well if the QM's plans for the new complex come true it may just happen.

Don't miss the next episode of 'Sarajevo Crypto Custodians (to the rescue)'.

COOKING, CATERING AND CLEANING
Sgt Allison, Sgt Miller, LCpl Radford, LCpl Goodchild

'Beep Beep Beep Beep', 'Unh, ooh ooh er God what time is it, oh no it's only 05:55, another five minutes of sleep, sleep sleezzzzzzzzzzzzzz.' This is the start of another new day, a day which brings joy, pain, happiness and rain (lots of rain no doubt). This deployment has seen the nasty side of the Bosnian people, 'Down right evil' is what **Cpl Simpson** said after his 57th freezing cold shower after P.T. As soon as everybody warms up again, with 20 brews (each) it's time to start hustling. No I don't mean becoming pool sharks (no time), it's time to prepare the delights for all of the lads and lasses of not only LANDCENT but all of the IFOR personnel of the past year (you can tell the difference, white hair, mad stare and hysterical giggling). 'We'd thought we'd walked into a madhouse, oh we have' commented the Germans. **Sgt Allison** newly promoted master chef, of the Turmoil hotel arrives half an hour later than the rest of the shift, after singing the full rendition of Neil Diamond's greatest hits. His first task is to drink a large slibervic (window cleaner) with the directors, then sack as many locals as possible.

'Lard, Lardeio, Lardick, Lardinski' is all we can hear, so it must be dinner time, with over 700 people to feed in one sitting things can become a bit hectic. With at least 20 different nationalities the vast styles of food, as you can imagine is mind boggling (not as mind boggling as the languages!). Lunch time/mad hatters tea party, starts at 1200hrs and runs for an hour and a half and so do the chefs, at 1330 hrs the running shoes come off, with a quick refreshment (367 brews each) then back to work, waiting, dreading sometimes fearing, the next onslaught of foreign nationals at tea time. Tolerance has now gone by the wayside as once again **LCpl Steve Caimes** waves his magic ladle, showering blows on the unsuspecting French, just like the spanking they received at Waterloo, 'one choice only MERCI' then cracks the whip on the old hot plate, and turns on the un-innocent Spanish (remember the Armada). Not to be undone, the French turn their attentions on the sweet counter, only to be thwarted by W. W. F. **Pte Sarah Wardle**, and her death stare.

Now it's time to leave the kitchen (destruction zone) and make our way to our cosy en-suite bedrooms, to shower, change and hit the bar (ouch not literally). Once there we find ourselves divulging in Moet and Chandon 1967, NOT. More like Fosters Ice 1996, not that the poor old night shift get to sample the delights, except on peoples breaths in the morning. Remembering the Army marches on it's stomach (like John Fisher), we produce fine cuisine in unremitting conditions, bad weather, tight rations and lack of hours in the day, for unappreciative soldiers, but hey the money's in the bank.

IDNX–THE MEAT OF OUR COMMUNICATIONS

Staff: **Sgt Lee Coffill**, **Sgt Andy Coughlan**, **Cpls** 'Peeps' **Medcraft**, **Jim Beech**, **Danny Bird**, **Ron Schoonderwoerd** (Dutch), **LCpls Bob Collins**, **Ian Wells**, 'Tel' **Venebles**, **Phil Gavan**, **Cpl Dave Kemley** (7 Sig Regt soon to be going home).

'Oh by the way' says our resident Dutch man **Ron Schoonderwoerd**, 'there was a phone call for **Sgt Coffill** . . . or was it **Sgt Coughlan**? **Coffill**, **Coughlan** they sound the same to me on the phone'.

'OK I'll phone then'. 30 seconds later, **Lee** it was for you!' and so continues another day in the Integrated Digital Network Exchange (IDNX) (incorporating Video Teleconferencing).

To paint a Rembrandt the IDNX room is 3 metres wide and 5 metres in length. In this palace of a place there are four racks of communications equipment, two computers, three tool boxes, 11 bodies and **LCpl Bob Collins**'s pockets (these pockets are amazing, I thought ladies handbags were never ending but these pockets contain the world) and just to make life comfortable there are just two chairs. In case you are wondering, no there isn't enough room to swing a cat!

A normal days work at this time, is from 0800-1900 hrs. Night shifts haven't started yet but are in the pipeline. Things are pretty slow at the moment. The plans have gone in for our new IDNX room, which if agreed, means not only will there be room to swing a cat but there'll be room to play tennis (send us some racquets please). This will also mean that we will have some serious grafting to do as we transfer the comms equipment, ensuring our users don't lose too many of their phones. Whilst the weather is good us IDNX chappies have been doing a spot of the physical stuff–running, gym work on rowing and cycling machines, even a bit of weight training (for the really keen).

This Sunday (10 November) we attended Remembrance Service. It was held outdoors in the November sunshine by a place that is known as the Krystal Palace here on the Ilidza complex. The hills of Sarajevo overlooked us as we remembered the dead of ALL wars during the two minutes silence–a poignant reminder of why we are here?

NEWS FROM THE SARAJEVO TRUCKERS
(B PLTN LSC TRANS COY)

Since arriving in Sarajevo in mid October the 280 lads attached to Trans Coy have clocked up some 80,000kms in 10 different types of vehicles and have travelled around most places in Bosnia including Split, Banja Luka, Vitez, Mostar and Slavonski Brod, moving everything from baggage to corimec containers, this is in between duty dvrs, bus escorts, guards and other security duties.

We form 50% of B Pltn which is the freight and fuel section of the multi national Trans Coy, the remainder of the Pltn is made up of Germans and Romanians. Highlights so far include the field promotions of **WO2 John Fisher** who is now Pltn Commander and will also be SSM of Zetra Stadium and **Sgt Dave Honeyman** who is now the section commander of fuel section. **Cpl** 'Cas' **Casswell** has been selected to play for Hardup United which is the LANDCENT football team who are playing a local league team. **LCpl Jeff Smith** has already managed to escape (only for a short time) to be educated prior to tiffy selection. We welcome **Cfn Chelsea Humphries** as his temporary replacement. **Cpl Al** 'my boss is hard' **Pearson** was chosen from a cast of thousands to drive **Col Brunner** Commander LSC and has developed a slight Texas drawl and now supports the Dallas Cowboys.

Sgt Dave Honeyman and **LCpl Jase** 'no mail' **Dukes** are busy everyday refuelling LANDCENT generators and then proceeding to drain E.C.O.S (like YMCA but posher) of it's coffee. **LCpl** 'Mozzie' **Collins** has had a high and tight haircut and now resembles a London cab with it's doors open. **LCpl** 'Taff' **Thomas** has finally rejoined us and can now sit comfortably without pain. **Cpl Jock** 'The Serb' **Galloway** who looks more like a local than the locals do, claims to have lifted more weight with his crane in the past month than any other reccy mech has in a lifetime.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HQNI and
15 Sig Regt
BFPO 801

CO **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M. A. Simcox**

The Regiment has been particularly busy since 7 October 1996, in the wake of the bombing of this Barracks. A number of personnel in the Regiment were injured but, with the exception of **WO1 (ASM) Bradwell** (HQNI), all the injured have now recovered. Obviously this has had an impact on all the Sqns and Depts in terms of additional work and the need for revised procedures, but the Regt is continuing to make best use of all the sports and training opportunities available, as well as performing its operational tasks. The bombs have in fact highlighted the importance of our operational tasks and strengthened our resolve to defeat terrorism.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj M. P. Llewellyn**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) G. Hodgson**

SHQ

The Autumn period has seen great changes in SHQ personnel with SQM **SSgt Dave Inman** moving to 2 Sig Regt in York, possibly via Bosnia, **LCpl Jaki Robson** being selected for promotion and starting her maternity leave–good luck. Finally **Sig Bob Shaw-Rowlands** has at last been selected for promotion–congratulations. The new characters have now just about settled in, a warm welcome to **SSgt (SQMS) Graham Weavers** from the mighty seven and **LCpl June Pugsley** from RHQ.

COMMCEN TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 (YofS) Andy Drummond**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow**

COMMCEN Tp would like to wish a fond farewell to **SSgt Anne Wilde**, **Sgt Elaine Musgrave** and **Sig Sam Hindson**, you'll all be missed. We would also like to welcome the million that have 'flocked to our fold' - **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow**, **Cpl Sandra Thompson**, **Sigs** 'Rosso' **Ross**, 'Scouse' **Lloyd**, **Nicky** 'Don't look so sad' **McRae**, **Sam Skyvington** and last but far from least **Kelly Ruddy**. A quick note for the new ones! It's not that bad, it does get better–honest! Good luck to **Cpl Sandra Thompson** and her illustrious shooting team.

The Troop are quite busy socially with the Tp Christmas '70's Night and helping out with the Regimental 'Bash' too, it should prove to be quite a Chrimbo, our hats off to **Cpl Wayne** 'Nike Air' **Robson**, and **LCpl** 'Buy another ticket' **Watson**.

INDIA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Martin Bever**
2IC **WO1 Chris Mountain**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mick Ginty**

EXERCISE PINNACLE FINN–OCTOBER 1996
SSgt (FofS) Al Scott
SSgt (FofS) Sue King
Cpl 'Dinger' **Bell**
Cpl Chris Potts
Cpl Steve Munro
Sig Tommy Mcloughlin

Ex Pinnacle Finn was a chance for members of 233 Sig Sqn to visit the Isle of Skye and discover why it is not very densely populated.

On Saturday 19 October we set off from Lisburn and caught the midday ferry. Everyone enjoyed the crossing except **Sig Tommy Mcloughlin** who, although the sea was like a mill pond thought we were in a force 10 gale and had to go and get some fresh air otherwise he was going to give us all a five finger spray. We then drove to Glasgow for an overnight stop and a cultural tour round Glasgow led by **SSgt (FofS) Al Scott**. (We didn't know he knew so many places of interest.)

The following morning we set off early for the final leg of our journey arriving on Skye late afternoon and finding our accommodation which was a converted school house in the sprawling metropolis of Portnalong. There was a small pub within walking distance. When we walked in the pub it was like something out of An American Werewolf In London and the landlord proceeded to tell us how he was a big time gangster and was only there because he was hiding out from the filth. (Really?) The next morning we went for breakfast and all decided that with an arduous day ahead of us we would have a 'Skyewalker Gutbuster Breakfast'. It wasn't enough to feed a budgie on a diet!

Well off we set on our travels under the expert guidance of our illustrious intrepid leader **SSgt** 'true or false' **Scott**. The planned route was to ultimately take us to the Inaccessible Pinnacle better known as 'Inch Pin' on the Cuillin Ridge which is a vertical column of rock with the intention of climbing it under instruction from our resident T.R.A instructor **Cpl** 'Dinger' (Father Ted) **Bell**. After a two hour climb to the top of Scurr Dearg we stopped for a rest and watched as clouds came rolling in from about 2km away and totally engulfed us, soaked us through and gave us winds of 70mph to contend with. We forged on ahead and reached the top of Scurr Alistair with **Sig Tommy Mcloughlin** sucking the rock like a limpet and telling us all to get away from the edge. From our vantage point we could see our intended route, it looked quite daunting given the weather conditions and considering the lack of experience the group decided to retreat, with promise to return and conquer it another day in better weather.

On day two the weather was too bad to even contemplate going on the hills so we decided to pay a visit to Portree which is supposed to be the capital of Skye. We had a pleasant couple of hours there and **Sue King** tried to buy every fleece available, we also bought that nights evening meal which was 'Haggis Neeps and Tatties'. Well they do say 'When in Rome'. After we had exhausted all the recreational facilities of Portree we went to do the tour of the Talisker Distillery which **Al Scott** found most enjoyable. On day three we decided to try and reach the Inch Pin from a different route however at a mere height of 300m we encountered appalling weather conditions so diverted to explore the impressive Corries in the area for the remainder of the day.

All in all we had a good few days away from the province and a bit of a laugh usually at each others expense and we all agreed to go back and do it again sometime.

ROMEO TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Rich Rumsey**
2IC **WO2 (YofS) Billy Bingham**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Brown**

The Troop continued its usual busy routine but still managed a creditable second place in the McKelvie Shooting competition. The budding replacements for Tom Berringer–a la SNIPER were **Cpl Louise Hunton** who was second and **Sgt Steve Buckley** who came fourth. Amongst all the work there was still time for the Troop to let its hair down (except the newly arrived **Cpl** 'Skinhead' **Butler**). Mid November saw the Troop occupy the Shamrock Club and don clothes of yesteryear–the 70's! The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all those involved, thanks to **Sgt** 'Dolly' **Parton** for organising a great bash and setting-up a scenario which gets the troops asking whether **WO2 (YofS) Billy Bingham** is really qualified to be a Yeoman or an undercover Hippy? And is **Cpl Gaz Shuck** related to Huggy Bear or **Cpl Mark Parr** to Kevin Keegan? Maybe all these questions could soon be answered by our newly qualified Leadership Course candidate **Cpl Pete Lawn** who we are sure will add his own variety of spice to the Christmas festivities on his return from Colerne.

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Gig Plumb (TOT)**
2IC **WO2 (FofS) Ian Rutherford**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ged Keane**

As usual the Troop has provided the backbone of all the Sqns Sporting Teams and as such has already secured the McKelvie Trophy again.

Fond farewells go to:–**Maj (TOT) Morley** on posting to AFCENT, **Sgt Jimmy Ross** and wife **Jackie**, **Sgt John Sutton** and wife **Elsie**, we wish both of you all the best on your Foremans course. **Cpl George Quar**, T1 course. The Troop would like to welcome the following into our fraternity:- **Capt Gig Plumb**, wife **Dawn** and family; **Sgt Karl Bremner**, wife **Kim** and family; **Cpl Pete Nealis**, wife **Maureen** and family; **Cpl Andy Simmons**, wife **Ruth** and family and last but not least **Cpl Mark Clark**, wife **Sharron** and family.

Congratulations go to **Mark** and **Charlie Cartwright** on the birth of their second daughter **Holly.** The Troop is still in mourning at the loss of a great singlie when **SSgt Ged Keane**'s reserve failed to open and he got married to **Wendy**. Congratulations.

SQUADRON CORPORAL'S DINNER

On Friday 22 November 233 Sig Sqn had their Cpl's dinner on board HMS *Caroline* in Belfast, with the Sqn Comd **Maj Llewelyn** attending as the guest of honour. Thankfully the boat didn't go down as well as his jokes! **Cpl Vince Saunders** was **Mr Vice**, but didn't provide as much entertainment as **Cpl Steve Armstrong**, who while mingling with the heirachy asked the RSM 'where do you work mate?' and then wrote a note to the SSM–**WO2 Geoff Hodgson** asking who the OC was! We think maybe the FRT's join on more Regimental parades!

Mess rules were a new experience for some people but **Cpl Dean** 'colostomy' **Davies** came well prepared! The PMC for the evening was **Cpl Stan Stanbury** who got up from his chair and sat at the top table for another briefing from the SSM! He also holds the record for being fined 13 bottles of port–well done **Cpl Stanbury**!

We would all like to thank **Cpl Mick Hanson** for organising a very memorable evening. Who's turn is it next **Cpl** 'O.C's wife' **Thompson**?

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj T. C. Wadey**
SSM **SSM Hymas**

During this period, the Squadron suffered considerable damage during the bombing of Lisburn Barracks, but carried on regardless.

GOLF TROOP

Golf Tp has been busily steam rollering along as ever smoothing out the many bumps in the unforgiving ravaged plain that is the road ahead. The forward motion was only slightly slowed by **Sgt** 'Get that flying taxi to wait there while I pop off to get the keys' **Muggleton**.

A number of personnel have been away from the Troop recently on courses, some people more than others. It is believe that **Sgt** 'I need the practice' **Brown** asked just one question on one course, but it was at the end. 'Could you just repeat that?' There is a rumour that **SSgt** 'The Shredder' **Whiting** is trying to get on a course but he can't fit it in amongst his leave plans.

There is a significant changeover of personalities due, prior to the festive season therefore farewell drinks will be mixed with the Xmas spirit. Farewells to **WO2 (FofS)** 'I'll Pick up the dry cleaning bill' **Simpson**–destination SHAPE. **Sgts Jim Yule** and **Nige Frith** are both off to Civvy street to conquer the world after completing many resettlement courses. Good luck in the future. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Angie Setchfield** (formerly **Campbell**) on her marriage in October.

HQ SQUADRON

The end of September saw the end of an era here in HQ Sqn, with the posting of **Maj Paul Connors** back to the mainland after almost five years in an operational environment, starting as MTO and then OC HQ Sqn with the many hats that go with it. Suffice to say that the three functions on his final day as OC, culminated in a Dinner attended by all Officers, WOs and SNCOs 'Barring a few who fell at the first hurdle' from the Squadron. **Maj Connors** departed the Squadron having said goodbye to each and every soldier under his command as was normal with a man whose work capacity would never detract him from giving his all for those in the Squadron in need of help, advice, condolence, or just a plain old boot up the backside. From **Maj Gerry Hegarty** and all HQ Sqn personnel good luck in the future, we will meet again I am sure.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome **Maj Gerry Hegarty**, his wife **Carol** and family into the Province, I think the new OC along with OIC RSMRO had the first day in Province that you would not wish on your worst enemy, 7 October 1996, a day that will be remembered for many years to come.

Life has continued as normal as possible since that day, with HQ Sqn doing what it does best, supporting the Regiment 'literally' with scaffolding, makeshift offices, food for the droves of guests and counselling for those in need of moral support. The planned CSE Show, farewells to other members and our medal parade went ahead as usual, **Jim** would have wanted it no other way.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTO **Maj (QM) Aspinall MBE**
MT SNCO **SSgt Swan**

Now that **SSgt Ian Swan** has finally got his feet well and truly under the table, the unfortunate events of Monday 7 October were soon to change all that. Slowly but surely the events of that shocking day seem to have disappeared, with vehicles slowly being replaced, just in time for the PRE. Young **Sig Tim McGuckien** has continued to baffle people with his accent, **LCpls Al Hyland** and 'Shakey' **Wilson** try to win the Leave Pass Race, however Staff is now catching them up.

Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Griff' **Griffiths** on selection for promotion to Cpl. Finally the Troop would like to pass on their congratulations to **LCpl Steve Hughes** for proving that our drivers can still have their fair share of accidents. Thankfully nothing serious–twice shunted in the rear!!

QM REGIMENT

QM **Maj (QM) Aspinall MBE**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Huzzey**

Thanks to a little help from a 800lb bomb the QM Dept decided to have an open plan building with wooden windows. The only casualty was a visitor to the department. After a day spending cleaning up glass and bits of roof etc it was back to business as normal as you can get in spite of no water or heating.

QM's Dept welcomes **RQMS Pete Huzzey** (biscuit face) from 3 UK Div. The department said its farewells to **RQMS Geoff Hodgson** who has moved down to being a SSM of 233 Sig Sqn. Congratulations to **Cpl Alex Dack** and **Kay** on the birth of their second daughter, **Shannon Zara**, on 3 October 1996. Good luck to **Sgt Bill Edwards** and family who are moving to Ashchurch in December.

EXERCISE MORANI SIMBA FINN 25 AUGUST-10 SEPTEMBER 1996

THE WILDERNESS YEARS

On the 22 August, two members of HQNI and 15 Sig Regt, **Maj Tim** 'Don't Call Me Dicker' **Dickinson** and **Sgt Steve** 'Easy Life' **Bennett** departed from Heathrow Terminal 2 on what was to become the adventure of a lifetime. Ex Morani Simba Finn had begun in earnest. Little did they know the next two weeks were to be turning points in their young unfulfilled lives. Without hesitation they boarded the aircraft and unwittingly led the way for the other 18 young, innocent members of HQNI and 15 Sig Regt to follow on three days later into the realms of deepest, darkest Africa.

On arrival at Nairobi, after 11 hours on a Greek Airliner, with only a stop at Athens thrown in for good measure (don't knock it until you've tried it); the follow up party were met by the smiling faces of **Maj Tim** 'Only 5 kms more' **Dickinson** and **Sgt Steve** 'It's my leg you know' **Bennett.** They were then bundled with ALL their kit along to Kahawa Barracks, home of the British Army Training Liaison Staff Kenya (BATLSK). After some scoff and a quick briefing, it was time for some final kit prep and ration distributions before getting some well-deserved shuteye in anticipation of the next day's move out to Mt. Kenya National Park.

At the crack of dawn the next day, we got up and split into two separate groups for a tactical two pronged assault on Mt. Kenya. With one group climbing up along the Siromon route from a north westerly direction and the other counter attacking from an easterly direction along the Chogoria route. Leaving **Maj Richard Lapslie** and **Sgt Steve** 'What? My name in *The Wire* again?' **Bennett** to form the backup/admin party. Only two hours into the expedition and disaster struck the Siromon group. Their transport broke a fan belt and overheated. Unfortunately being in deepest, darkest Africa, no-one was wearing a decent pair of tights so immediate repairs could not be effected. Luckily after a wait of only two hours, the group were rescued by another BATLSK 4 tonner that happened to be travelling along the same route on the way back from Nanuyki (spooky, huh)? Meanwhile, the Chogoria group had made good progress, and after explaining to the local driver that the big stick in the 4 tonner's cab did actually put it in 4-wheel drive, we made it to our drop off point some 4 kms from our first night's camp site.

There, we made what was to be the first of many realisations about our new home, it's not very warm, it's not very dry, and as the song says in the jungle, the mighty jungle, the lion sleeps tonight. Well someone's got to be able to sleep through all that racket because we certainly couldn't!!! Shortly after 8pm that night, the admin party struggled into our location after driving up a track that the Chogoria group had had enough troubles simply walking up! So, with yet another orange dot on the landscape we finally settled down for the night.

After their initial setbacks, the Siromon group had arrived at their first camp site after bravely deciding to drive the whole way rather than walk in like everyone else. They were now, however, busy being terrorised by the local baboon population. Luckily, being used to performing anti-terrorism operations, they soon overcame the troubles and restored peace within the campsite. Well we've got to manage it somewhere haven't we? This was to become the routine for the next four days that it would take to ascend to McKinders Camp where the two groups would meet on Saturday 30 August. But not before some of our parties had fallen by the wayside . . .

One of the main problems with climbing to any altitude is the risk of getting altitude sickness. The two groups had tried to combat this by either descending into their overnight stays or by gaining another 500 ft in altitude from the campsites by walking out without packs after setting up camps to acclimatise. Although great pains had been taken to adjust to the altitude, it still managed to virtually disable three members of the Siromon group and one member of the Chogoria group. This meant that three members from the two groups needed to be taken off the mountain to reacclimatize. **Sgt Keith** 'Look I can juggle so I wish you'd stop staring' **Muggleton** and **Cpl Mac** 'Moses' **McGuicken** escorted **Capt Ali** 'Big Bergan' **Lapslie** down to the Chogoria **Jim** 'Gadgets' **Holden** and **Sig Phil** 'Scandinavia' **Calloway** escorted **LCpl Terry** 'Deepest Darkest' **Barnes** and **Pte Smudge** 'I can talk to the animals' **Smith. Cpl Carl** 'Mountain Man' **Rossall** was suffering badly but declined the offer of the climb down, and promptly spent the next four days throwing up everywhere. With **Capt Lapslie** safely down to Chogoria Camp Gates,

Pt Lenana–16,355ft

Sgt Muggleton and **Cpl McGuicken** quickly managed, without thought of their own personal safety, to arrange a three bed chalet for the night, rather than the luxury of three people in a three man tent.

On the other side of the mountain, the four members from Siromon were being recovered back to Kahawa barracks, where tea, medals and soft fluffy beds awaited.

The following day, the Chogoria evacuees were picked up by **Sgt Bennett** and taken to the Mountain Rock Hotel. This was to be the staging post for **Sgt Muggleton** and **Cpl McGuicken**'s return to the mountain by way of the Naro Mora route. This was the route chosen for both groups to descend from the mountain. The route consists of a 10km uphill (or downhill, depending on which way you go!!) hike, including a 6km vertical bog, which is probably the most soul destroying thing you can

The Complete Party at the Met Station–10,000ft

ever do in your entire life. With the remaining climbers already at McKinders Camp and joined by the CASEVAC escorts, the final phase of the expedition could begin in earnest. The Climb to Pt. Lenana.

At approx. 6 am, the next day, six people set out to conquer Pt. Lenana for probably only about the 10,000th time in its history. Ably led by **Sgt Andy** 'Mr Chumly Warner' **Chubb**, we made our way up to the Austrian Hut, which is sited above an ice cave at the base of Pt. Lenana. After some revision of ice axe work and hasty modifications to the Mothercare crampons, we were ready to climb the peak. But, first we decided to sleep on it, as an early morning start would ensure spectacular views from the peak.

It was early next morning, when we set out for the peak. After an hour of snow kicking and losing crampon's left, right and centre; we finally arrived at the peak. Was it worth eight days climb, cramped tents, dodgy food, and noisy monkeys? Yes, I think it was. After using all our camera films up, we descended back to the Austrian Hut, where we were met by the next days' climbers. We then made our way back down to McKinders Hut whilst the remaining group practised snow and ice work before the next days ascent to the summit.

Now with all those who were able having conquered the summit, it was time to plan our retreat back down via the Naro Mora route to the Met Station at 10,000 ft that was to be our next overnight stop. T'was early next morning, when the remaining climbers from the Austrian Hut rejoined us at McKinders and after all the kit was evenly? distributed, we started down on our way home. Four hours later after much bog jumping and many pairs of soggy feet, we arrived at the Met Station where we made camp for the night. That night around a blazing fire we relived our experience of the mountain, told lies about each other, and generally looked forward to when it would be all over, so we could go on some much needed R+R, before retiring for the final night on the mountain.

40 Sig Regt (V)
Belfast

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

We warmly welcome **Sgt** 'Ned' **Kelly** and **Sgt Rigg** and wave farewell to **Sgt Gaz Tuff** off to 1 (UK) Armd Div.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following for their well deserved promotions–**Maj Cathy Sutherland**, **Capt Aaron Ballantyne**, **Sgt Arlene McKeeman** and **Cpl McArdle**.

EXERCISE FAIRFIELD FINN–PSI ADVENTURE TRAINING 9-16 AUGUST

It was early on a bright Sunday morning, too early for some as it turned out due mainly to the fact of a Squadron function the night before. We eventually made it out of the gate all personnel accounted for. The destination for our annual PSI jolly was the Lake District for a spot of challenge pursuit training.

A short ferry journey and a long drive later we arrived in Ambleside after a couple of very unsuitable shortcuts thanks to our TA master driver **Sig** 'Trigger' **Caldwell** and then after ferrying all of our supplies up the road in a Landrover (the rest of our vehicles were equally unable to get even close to our hut) we finally settled down to an evening of briefings and a chance to get to know the locals.

Day 1 Saw us split into groups for a jaunt around the Fairfield Horseshoe. The racing snakes aim was to get around as quickly as possible (who cares about the scenery anyway), while the rest of us went at a more leisurely pace.

SSgt Howarth, SSgt Barrass, SSgt Coleman, and Sgt Ord 'geographically embarassed' on 'The Horseshoe'

Day 2 Again saw us split into groups this time some for a little rock climbing courtesy of **Capt** (The Adjt) **Cathro** nothing too challenging and thankfully no broken bones. Meanwhile the other group under the leadership of **WO2** 'Neil–I haven't got a nickname' **White** decided to challenge the might of Helvelyn and Striding Edge, what they didn't tell him was the swim scheduled at the top by **SSgt** 'Mo' **Howarth**, **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Tuff** and **Sgt** 'Spence' **Ord**.

Day 3 Mountain Biking Day or Watersports (depending on your attitude to the mountain biking). The speed group was led over hills through dales under rivers and eventually off the map by **WO2** 'Dougie the Diver' **Tate**. The second group also found a river into which every rider found the bottom much to the amusement of the locals. The final group however **SSgt** 'Em' **Barrass** and **SSgt** 'Cabbage' **Coleman** only came close to water by cheating and taking the Ferry back. The day finished off with a barbecue where the Adjt was clearly the top of the list of entertainment with his guitar and we all sang until the sun went down (about five minutes later).

Sgt Ord, Cpl Johnston and WO2 (AQMS) Bennett making hard work of cycling up hill

Day 4 The real watersports day, Canoeing and Windsurfing were the order of the day, the Canoeing ably taught by a borrowed civilian instructor finished with a traditional game of Lemmings with the Adjt fighting a closely fought battle with the QM, **Capt** 'Aaghh' **Mackay**. Meanwhile closer to shore **SSgt Howarth** was trying to explain to **Sgt** 'Lee–I don't have a nickname either' **Warren** that the idea is to stay on top of the board and not underneath it. That afternoon we all disappeared for a well deserved spot of R&R into Blackpool and the surrounding areas.

Day 5 Pack up and return home for most of us but not the HQ Sqn PSI'S who continued the movement with more adventure training on the Isle of Man.

EXERCISE MANX WAY FINN–HQ SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING 16-18 AUGUST

After such delights as Magilligan, Ballykinler and Stranraer, the MTO, **Capt John Standen** and the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Victor Beggs** REME decided that a more challenging location was needed for this year's Adventure Training. With this in mind, the Ramsey area of the Isle of Man was selected. So over the weekend 12-16 August, the Sqn deployed to Belfast Docks for loading onto the Isle of Man Steam Packet Ferry. An advance party of guess who? (MTO & 2IC) ensured all was in order for the main party's arrival.

Day 1 First stop was an Inter Tp Tenpin Bowling Match. The final result is still a mystery, due to the 'fatigue' of everyone, **Sgt Bobby Ballance** is still claiming the match was fixed.

Day 2 Saw the Squadron move to their permanent location at Lewaigue Farm, Maughold, having spent the night at a local cadet hut. The day's activities consisted of archery, Abseiling and Shooting. It was noted that the Training Major, **Maj Tony Lomax**, was abseiling for the first time at the grand old age of 50! Much has to be said for the persuasive powers of the instructor **WO2 (SSM) Mark Brotherston** from 85 Sig Sqn. The Squadron was split into two teams with the regular element proving once again, if you cannot win fairly, Cheat! In particular **WO2 (RQMS) Dougie Tait** acting as a submarine, trying to sink all serious threats to the 'regulars' team. The worrying part as far as the MTO, **Capt John Standen** was concerned, was how he was going to explain to his wife just how he lost his wedding ring. Yes it's true, Mrs Standen, it was lost during the watersports competition. A spot of R&R was in order that night, sampling the delights of Douglas the Capital.

Day 3 Saw the Squadron continue with it's training programme with Hillwalking. Looking down on the routes of the famous TT races and visits to local places of interest. The mandatory barbecue followed that evening, with the PSIs providing an excellent faire, with the LAD providing the entertainment in the form of **LCpl** Elvis' **Stitt**, and the Dirty, Dirty Beast, which charmed the locals and unfortunately, **Cpl April Dow** injuring herself (carrying her buffet back to the camp fire). The evening drew to a close with the virtues of Recruit Training being debated by **Sgt Rab McCluskey**, **Cpls Jim Reilly** and **Ken Blair** at 0430 hrs the following morning, everyone else having gone to bed–bored!

It was rumoured during the weekend that the YofS, **SSgt Mark Dennis** was on the Island, the question being asked, what was the Golf like? All in all, everyone got something out of the weekend, with a promise to return next year.

ANNUAL CAMP–ALTCAR 14-28 SEPTEMBER

September means Annual Camp and this year the Regt deployed to Altcar for a trade training and courses camp. During a packed 2 weeks the Regt ran upgrading courses for Tele Op (Sys), Tele Op (RR), Tele Op (Tg) and Dvr Elec. Driver training took place and 28 Cat C+E licences were obtained. With the approval of 11 Sig Regt a RSCC (TA) was run with 17 people completing the course. Officers were not left out in all the training and underwent a course under the direction of **Maj Robert Kelly** and **Maj John Lampton** of 35 Sig Regt. As a finale to the training a short comms exercise was deployed to confirm all the newly learned skills. As with any activity and especially Camp, a number of visitors is to be expected. The Master, SOinC, Comd Comms HQ LAND, Comd 11 Sig Bde, Comd 107 (U) Bde, Chairman and Secretary TAVRA NI, former Commanding Officers and assorted minor dignitaries were warmly received and well looked after by the Regt.

The Master gets a briefing on Dvr Elec Training

The SOinC shares a joke with the RMQ Course. WO2 (SSM) Mark Brotherston thought it funny also

Brig Griffin sees some of the technical training

LANYARD TROPHY 3 OCTOBER 1996

It was February when the Lanyard Trophy was mentioned around the Regt and plans were formed to allow gradual preparation. As with all the best laid plans these were completely disregarded as higher priorities came to light. Preparation for the Lanyard Trophy–a couple of TABs around Altcar Training Camp and along the beach and a quick route recce three days before the event. The team assembled in Crick Howell Camp–**Capt Cathro WO2 (RQMS) Tait**, **SSgt Goodson**, **SSgt Fettus**, **SSgt Cammack**, **SSgt Howarth**, **Sgt Kelly**, **Sgt Ackland Snow** (from 14 Sig Regt) and **Sig Stevens**–average age 32.1. Seven regulars and three TA. Unfortunately the course bore no resemblance whatsoever to the flat beaches of Altcar. The weather appeared as if it might remain good. It didn't. Horizontal rain and gusting winds on the ridges were the norm. The team gave it's best and at the end, after 13hrs and 53 mins **SSgt Goodson**, **SSgt Fettus**, **SSgt Howarth** and **Sig Stevens** crossed the finish line as third TA team. During the competition the team swore never to take part in anything like this ever again. However, there is always next year.

66 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Annual Camp was spent at Altcar Training Camp, near Southport in September. Familiarity of the camp was high due to previous camps at this location. So it was straight into routine with a hectic work and social schedule ahead for the following two weeks. It is funny how annual camps never quite seem like two full weeks but more like one long day with lots of shower breaks!

As this was a training camp, the first week involved several courses being run with a comms exercise the second week allowing a more advance practical element to the learning process, 'Ex Fast Ball', helped identify several areas of strengths and weakness for the individual but generated a growing confidence in all involved. There were many visitors to camp, including a field visit from the Commander of 107 (Ulster) Brigade–**Brig Alasdair Wilson OBE**. The element of surprise was upheld by friendly forces catching **Lt Ballantyne** off guard and promoting him to Capt during a field luncheon.

In usual 40 Sig Regt style, the ethos of 'Work Hard–Play Hard' was upheld with heavy schedules for both training and social. It was suggested that the packing list should have included several packets of 'Resolve' for the morning after the night before the morning after the night before the morning after the . . . (get the idea!). The Squadron function was invaded by two strange Scottish men with orange locks of hair singing in a slightly off beat manner. It is rumoured that these two individuals were actually **SSgts Irvine** and **Mullen**. This rumour has yet to be confirmed, however, straitjackets have been ordered from the RQMS and appropriate action will be taken.

Annual Camp proved to be a very busy two weeks in which many qualifications were gained. The opportunity to exercise these new skills on the exercise was warmly welcomed and led to a higher level of confidence all round. We now look forward to deploying to Germany next year.

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
BFPO 801

Sqn Comd — **Maj R. J. Healey R Signals**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) D. McCluskey**

SHQ NEWS

This month sees **Maj Bob Sharp** off to Sandhurst to be a Company Commander. Good luck to you **Erin**, and '**CJ**' in Camberley. We welcome **Maj Rob Healey** from MoD, back to the real world of 39 Bde. We hope you and your family have a successful and happy tour in the Province.

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS — **WO2 (RQMS) G. Stoker MBE**

The RQMS Department have had a busy month with a Board of Officers and the LSAI (stores speak for some kind of inspection). They both must have gone well because the RQMS still has a job! Although we are the busiest, most undermanned department in the unit (we think it is) **LCpl** 'Sindy' **Sheridan** has managed to wangle herself on leave, on a course, adventure training in the 'Good old US of A', and her B1 course, all in three months. The rest of us are still chained to our desks.

Cpl 'My name is NOT Alex' **Keir** can be found trying to find his kit, he was last seen in the west wing of this great castle we call 39. **Cpl** 'Supertrooper' **Keogh** is still trying to find out which unit or department hold him on strength. **SSgt** 'Sportbilly' **Hodgson** moves back to his old job in TM Tp, no you can't have disturbance allowance, even if you are disturbed.

COMMS TROOP NEWS

Tp Comd — **Lt Paul Merry**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Kev O'Neill**

Comms Tp are as fluid as ever (this has nothing to do with the festive season just passed). Hails and farewells are, **Cpl Mick Turnbull** off to the Royal School of Signals on promotion; good luck to you, **Fiona** and **Zoe**. **Cpl Duffy** has joined us from Cyprus with a suntan, it won't last! **Cpl Buchan** arrived from the armoured world of HQ 3 Div, and **Cpl Holden** from 1 Mech Bde, Bon Voyage and welcome. **LCpl Matt** and **Rachel Booth** celebrate the arrival of a new baby boy **Jack**.

SSgt 'Smallbloke' **O'Neill** felt a little down in the mouth when Preston North End were beaten at home and consoled himself with a Conduct under Capture course, he should be called 'Sadbloke' not 'Smallbloke'. **Cpl Andy Eley** has got engaged to **LCpl Linda Brown**, congratulations to the both of you. **Sig Rick Hartley** continues to model himself on Bodie and attended a pistol users course to help him along the way. In Rover Group **Sgt Chesters** celebrations on return of the Armoured car were shortlived thanks to the help provided by **LCpl Quigley** to rearrange the front end again.

Meanwhile the Troop sent four people to the annual adventure training exercise in Colorado; **Lt Merry**, **LCpls** 'JC' **Moses**, 'Vinnie' **Vincent**, and 'sporting hero' **Ridsdel**. There will be a full report in the next issue, suffice to say the snow in the USA is far better than the Mournes! Finally **LCpl Dean Heath** and **Sig Daz Wearmouth** joined the Royal Navy for 48 hours aboard HMS *Itchin*. They set sail from Belfast harbour and returned with tales of the high seas, too much rum and feelings of unsteadiness, enough said.

TM TROOP HAPPENINGS

Tp Comd — **SSgt Steve Hogdson**

We welcome **Sig** 'JR' **Ewing** from Laarbruch, and the return of **SSgt Steve Hodgson** from the RQMS department. Back to work staff the holiday is over.

SSgt Tim Comyns has left us for the idyllic charm of the BTLOs office and an easy life before he leaves the unit for Comms and Sy Gp. His briefings will be sorely missed (we can knock off 30 minutes early now). **Cpl Kev Ingley** is off to Cyprus, even if he has to crawl there. **LCpl Andy Beddows**, one of the longest standing members of the unit, leaves us for Laarbruch, his indecipherable wit will be missed by us all, good luck to you all for the future.

Congratulations to **Sgt Ted Heath**, having finally attended a Sergeants' course, passing flying colours (we told you it was easy, there was no need to keep going sick). **Cpl Mick Lee** went and passed his corporals course, again a good pass. **Cpls Pete Sorrell** and **Billy Evans** both passed their T1 entrance, well done. Finally congratulations to **LCpl** 'Shippy' **Ship** on his recent promotion.

The Troop have had a very busy time and would like to thank **SSgt Tim Comyns** and **Cpl** 'Tosh' **McIntosh** for their assistance, provided by disappearing to Colorado for two weeks skiing. Hope you had a good time!

The riggers would like to dispel any rumours going around about **Sig** 'Geordie' **Tonks** and **Sig** 'Kathy' **Lloyd**, just because of her concerns about 'Geordie' getting cold up Divis KP. The RSM has also had to speak with the riggers about dressing as Trekkies for work.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy for April edition must be received by 15 February–latest!

8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
BFPO 807

Sqn Comd — **Maj M. J. Perry MBE**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Toon**

CAPE MARCH 1996, SOUTH AFRICA
The official story:

The Cape March competition is an annual event run by the South African Army in Cape Town and involves a team of 10 soldiers marching 50 miles over two days, carrying approximately 20lbs. 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn entered a team for the competition, which took place between 1st-2 November 1996.

Thirteen personnel (the team and 3 support personnel) from the Sqn took part in the march. The Squadron's operational commitments made it difficult to have such a large number of personnel out of Province for 2 weeks and therefore manpower cover for the COMMCEN was provided by 24 (Airmobile) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. This allowed the best team to compete whilst not leaving the Sqn undermanned.

Training in Northern Ireland proved difficult due to security restrictions and availability of personnel. As part of the training programme the team entered the R Signals 1996 Lanyard Trophy competition, which took place in October 1996 and involved a team of 10 soldiers, each carrying 40lbs, covering a 40 mile route across difficult terrain in the Black Mountains of South Wales. A thorough training programme was planned and undertaken for this event, much of which was conducted out of Province.

Transport requirements and arrangements were complex and made up the majority of the cost of the exercise and the bulk of the administration. The team flew from Belfast to Gatwick by civilian airline, whilst the obvious military equipment was sent by road. Once both were reunited the team flew to Johannesburg where the South African Air Force were waiting to fly the team to Cape Town. After the march the OC, **Maj Perry**, decided that he ought to return home early and flew back to Johannesburg by C130. The remainder of the team returned from Cape Town to Johannesburg by train.

The march itself covered 50 miles of the Cape peninsula and afforded superb views of Cape Town, Table Mountain and both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It was challenging, worthwhile and the Squadron Team performed well. With the temperature during the march staying well above 30°C the biggest problem faced was the heat. In order to overcome this, copious amounts of fluid were required and the four litres of water that were part of the specified load were vital. The team was entered in the 'Prestige' category, which entailed carrying extra weight and stipulated that all 10 team members must finish the march. Regrettably, only three miles from the end, one of the team collapsed with dehydration and was prevented from finishing on medical grounds. Nevertheless, the team finished the course within the cut-off time, in just under 14 hours, coming 82nd out of 169 international teams. Those who completed the course received medals and certificates at a small parade at the end.

All who took part enjoyed the trip and benefited from the experience. As well as being very good training value, it was a welcome break from the rigours of operations in Northern Ireland and in particular the restrictions that come with service in Londonderry. Participation in training such as this has an essential part to play in the retention battle and it also provided a huge boost to the morale of the Sqn as a whole. The list of those who made the Sqn's participation is long but special thanks must go to 24 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, and also to the Corps for it's financial support.

The Team
Back Row (*L to R*): Cpl Lowe, Sig Martin, LCpl Foster, Cpls Dearden, McIlroy, Bibby, Sig Barrs
Front Row (*L to R*): Sgt O'Hanlon, SSgt Griffiths, Maj Perry, Maj Gen Lamprecht (SA Army), WO2 Standaloft, Sgt Lynch, Sgt Eldridge

OPERATION 'BILTONG'
by LCpl 'I'll barter for anything' **McIlroy**
The real story:

Calling all COs and OCs, if you're planning a military training expedition, then the Cape March is the one for you.

The expedition started off with enthusiasm and prestige planning by first missing the flight from Northern Ireland to London (new autumn schedules apparently!); then the flight to South Africa was delayed by a number of hours at Gatwick because of weather. On arrival in Johannesburg we were met by the South African Air Force, who flew us down to Cape Town and looked after us very well (for any SAAF stewardesses reading this, please transfer to the RAF!). Finally, after a day and a half of travelling, we reached our destination. After such a long journey it was reassuring to think that we were to be accommodated in Officers' Mess bungalows provided by our hosts–9 South African Infantry Battalion. Imagine our surprise to find out we were to be in a 64-man, one-floor Nissan hut! That evening we were let loose on an unsuspecting Cape Town, and the team made every effort to take in all the sights. **Sgt** 'Drink 'em dry' **Eldridge** got the first round in and to our disgust the cans cost R25.30 (about £3.00), but due to the March being on the horizon, we didn't drink or stay out long–really!

The preparation prior to the march included remedial sun-bathing, a strenuous drive round the course (which severely tested the OC's map-reading skills and the drivers patience) and a six-a-side rugby match against the locals. With **Sig** 'Mong Major' **Martin** and **Sig** 'Mong Minor' **Barrs** leading the way; we lost by a small margin of 6 tries–nil. Back at camp it seemed that the other teams were getting plenty of PT, while in marked contrast, our young athletes were getting plenty of CB (Castle Beer). The day of the March was a chilly 27°C and thankfully we were marching in full combats and bergens to keep warm. Very quickly in to the march we all developed squaddie tans (above the neck, below the elbow) in the finest traditions of the British Army. The March took us over some spectacular sights, which included marching up Table Top mountain and around the Cape coast, with views of both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It took two days to complete and the course stretched over 90 km. The evening of the first day was spent popping blisters and being looked after by **WO2 (SSM)** 'When's scoff' **Standaloft** and **Cpl** 'You know' **Lowe** (our trusty admin team, who were joined later by **Cpl** 'Is it Joop' **Dearden**). The course was almost all tarmac which proved excellent for blister development. The team put in an admirable effort, showing commitment through difficult conditions. This was by no means an easy 'stroll in the park' and the only way to experience it is to do it. We finished the March with **Maj** 'Drillpig' **Perry** leading us in to the main square with a quick eye's right.

The end of the march signalled the start of the phase which had recruited most of the participants–the R'n'R. Despite most of the team walking as if the pavement was hot coals everyone managed to summon the courage to visit the world famous Stellenbosch vineyards, where we were forced to consume copious amounts of wine. This was followed by a trip to the beach (the sights made Baywatch babes look like Nora Batty) and an evening in Cape Town. Everyone managed to integrate with the locals and the night concluded with a well deserved meal at a Chinese restaurant. **LCpl** 'The Stomach' **McIlroy** managed to consume everything in sight.

After spending a week in Cape Town we travelled to Johannesburg by train. The journey involved travelling 1000 miles in 24hrs, during which **Sgt** 'Flex' **O'Hanlon** doubled the yearly profits of Castle Beer, and **SSgt** 'GTI' (Gin and Tonic Injection) **Griffiths** did the same for Gin. After a punishing 24 hr drinkathon we arrived in Johannesburg. The sun was shining and we were heading to 'Sun City', nicknamed 'Sin City' by the locals. The JNCO chalets were excellent with air-conditioning provided, while the Sgts' Mess had to rough it with none. The resort had a swimming pool, stables and best of all a large Lion Park. The majority of time over the next five days was dedicated to the Sun God–sun-bathing and visiting Sun City. Within Sun City was the 'Valley of the Waves' which had one of the largest wave machines in the world and a massive man-made beach. This made it an ideal area to check out local attractions whilst tasting cocktails, with **Sgt** 'Because I am gorgeous' **Lynch** flaunting his charisma around the whole continent. Life was hard!

Unfortunately our final day soon dawned. We spent the morning at the Lion Park where **LCpl** 'Rip Van' **Foster**, having got out of his bed, was mauled by the lion cubs. With the day coming to a close a barbecue was called for, and **Sgt** 'Drink till you drop' **O'Hanlon** created a meal of biblical proportions. This was followed by bunny games and cans of, yes, Castle Beer. Ultimately every good thing must come to an end, but it was a tanned, happy team that returned to Costa-del-Derry. Everyone except **Cpl** 'Weeney' **Bibby** who managed to return to Northern Ireland paler than when he left. The whole trip was a great success and everybody had a fantastic time in South Africa. The march, and associated R'n'R is recommended to everyone.

Squadron Rowathon Team
Back Row (*L to R*): LCpl Fulstow, Sgt Paine, Maj Perry, Mr. Burns (Cancer Research Rep), LCpl Muhsin, LCpl Cooper, Cpl Passant.
Front Row (*L to R*): SSgt Griffiths, Sig Archibald, LCpl Preece, LCpl Gronn, Cpl Williams.

SQUADRON FUND RAISING

The Squadron continues to make efforts to integrate with the local community, which is often harder for units in Northern Ireland than elsewhere. In the last three months however, the Squadron has organised two sponsored events, a rowathon for Cancer Research (Northern Ireland) and a somersault-marathon in aid of Children in Need. These events maintain the high level of trust and mutual understanding that exists between the Squadron and the local community.

24 HOUR SPONSORED ROWATHON IN AID OF CANCER RESEARCH
by LCpl Mick Preece

Comms Tp, thanks to a fantastic (?) idea by the Tp Comd, recently organised and completed a non-stop 24 hour, dry land rowing event. This was run on the Concept II ergometer and was in aid of Cancer Research (Northern Ireland). The event was run in the Waterside Club so that supporters could relax and enjoy a drink whilst encouraging the rowers. The team consisted of 10 rowers each required to row 12 times, each row lasting 12 minutes. The team averaged 2900m per row with a grand total of 354,382m being achieved over 24 painful hours. This was just short of the World Record but the team now believe that they could give Pincent and Redgrave a good run for their money.

The admin team were also actively involved for the duration of the event, supplying much needed refreshments and morale boosting encouragement. They also helped to raise extra cash by running a tea break stall attended by all the Sqn personnel at the finale. The team would also like to thank **Capt Andy Parsons** for proving it was as hard as it looked. The event, though physically hard was enjoyable, and most importantly raised over £1000 for Cancer Research.

SIX HOUR SPONSORED SOMERSAULT IN AID OF CHILDREN IN NEED
by LCpl Minns

On a cold and wet morning early in November a team of nine people took their lives in their hands in order to support Children in Need. The aim was to beat the present World Record of 7720 somersaults in six hours whilst raising a bundle of cash for a worthy cause. The first couple of hours were enjoyable with some fine somersaults and all competitors getting some good twists in. The 3rd and 4th hours proved the hardest for the team as the supporters knocked off for NAAFI break and the first of many injuries started. The 5th hour proved slightly easier as the end was coming into sight, but our somersaults were getting lower and lower. By the end of the six hours the team were thoroughly shattered, but had run up a total of 8102 somersaults in six hours–'A New World Record' raising over £650 for Children in Need in the process.

The successful Sponsored Somersault Team

BRIGADE SPORTS DAY
by SSgt Hughes

The Brigade sports day was held at Ballykelly on 15th November 1996 and the Squadron combined with 176 Provost Company RMP to enter on an equal footing with the Brigade major units. The sports were 10 a side Rugby, six a side Football, Tug of War, Skeet Shooting, Waterpolo and finally a superstars relay. The football team ably led by **WO2 (RQMS) Higgins** started badly losing the first match, and the less said about the other games the better. A word of praise must be given to **LCpl Geordie Knott**, the goalkeeper, who was the most active team member collecting the ball from the back of the net. The rugby team fared far better achieving a highly creditable 3rd in their league. The highlight of the entire competition was the match against 1 Cheshire, who went on to win. The Squadron was the only team to score any points against them in the whole competition. The Volleyball team went one better finishing 2nd. All the volleyball games were hard fought with the team winning four out of five with notable performances produced by **WO1 (RSM) Dave Toon**, **SSgt Pete Griffiths** and **Pte Debbie Uttley**. All the Squadron and Provost Company personnel who owned a pair of trunks were recruited into the waterpolo team under the supervision of **WO2 (FofS) John** 'The Management' **Skelton**. As a result of the tough selection process 5 RMPs, 2 Signallers and 4 'white elephants' turned up at the pool. Some hard matches were played notably against the Highlanders and 2 PWRR but the team persevered and won all their matches. **Capt** 'Sharkey' **Vaudin** and **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** both put in superb performances scoring bucket loads of goals each.

SHQ TROOP
by LCpl Malone

Once again it has been a hectic period for SHQ with personnel deploying as far afield as South Africa and Blandford. The Chief Clerk, **WO2 (SSM) Standaloft** deployed with the Cape Marches team as the Admin Warrant Officer. The Chief told us to state that he worked just as hard as the rest of the team, but he did develop blisters on his bottom from some strenuous sitting around. There has also been a large turnover of personnel with the 2IC, **Capt Andy Parsons**, leaving us to become the Adjutant of 33 Sig Regt in Liverpool; **LCpl** 'Shaza' **Skelly** going all the way to Brigade HQ and **Pte Suzanne James** who leaves to re-cap badge to R Signals (another convert from the AGC). We welcome **Capt** 'Taff' **Watts** taking over as the 2IC who joins us from Bulford and **Pte** 'Simone or is it Simon' **Box**. We hope you both have a peaceful and enjoyable tour.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Griffiths**

Comms Tp as usual has been spread out to all four corners of the planet, from South Africa to the Lake District, Blandford to Bangkok. The Troop management has had a hard time keeping track of everyone's movements, apart from **Sig Stan Martin** who is guaranteed to be on leave. This combined with the large turnover in manpower has led to a difficult time for the Troop. We take this opportunity to say good luck and farewell to the following: **Cpl Andy** 'give the recruits hell' **Gill** off to be an instructor at the RSS, **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Briscoe** off to 1 ADSR, **LCpl** 'Ash' **Williams** off on his AAC pilots course, **LCpl** 'Ginge, I want more medals' **MacDonald** on his dream posting to 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl** 'Ginge' **MacGillvary** to 7 Armd Bde and finally to **LCpl Mick Preece** off to 3 (UK) Div via the Falklands. The Troop would also like to say thanks to **LCpl Steve Milne** and **Sig** 'Gaz' **Evans** from 24 Bde who jumped into the breech to man the COMMCEN whilst some of the Troop were away in South Africa. We are not sure what **Cpl Sheena Motson** did to them but **Sig Evans** did not want to leave.

Congratulations go to **LCpls** 'Fozzy' **Foster**, **Sven Gronn** and **Mick Preece** as well as **Sig Kath King** on their promotions. The praise continues in congratulating **LCpl Sven Gronn** on his excellent report from RSCC and **LCpl Sumo McWha** on passing his upgrading course. Last but by no means least we welcome **LCpl Danny** 'I'm off to the White Helmets' **Cooper**, **Sig Ivor Carr**, **Sig Daz Smithurst** and his wife **Lesley**.

P.S. To MRO can you now post in our next set of 'Gingers'.

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes**

The Troop has had, as usual, a high turnover of personnel, firstly it's goodbye and goodluck to **SSgt** 'Anabolic' **Simmons** who leaves us to go to 19 Mech Bde; **Cpl Ian Bibby** off for a well deserved rest at AFCENT and **Sgt** 'Jock' **Robertson** off on promotion to JCUNI. Newly arrived is **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** from 20 Armd Bde who takes up the reins, and **Sgt** 'Col' **Bentley** back in Province after having a 'stab' at life with 37 Sig Regt. Congratulations go to **Cpls Jim Martin** and **Stu Crossman** on their recent promotions and to **Sig Paul Creeley** who has just come off the board. Other notable events are the successful passing of the T1 entrance exams by **Cpls Martin Dixon** and **Jim Burnham** who can now look forward to 10 months at Blandford.

With the high number of personnel being posted or off on courses the Troop hierarchy has had to undergo a major reorganisation. **Sgt Mark Fitz-Patrick** takes over as chief rigger and brings a welcome English accent to the Troop. **Sgt Andy** 'Jock' **Craig** is going for the record of holding the most posts whilst in the Squadron. He started out as Training Wing Sgt followed by Comms Tp Sgt, he then advanced to the TM Tp Sgt and has now become the site manager (watch out the OC Sqn he is after your job next).

QM TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 (RQMS) Higgins**

The QM's department continues it's hard, essential but unglamorous tasks. The recent Log Support Inspection took place and excellent results were achieved so well done to all involved. The issue of Combat Soldier (CS) 95 equipment is now complete with all the Squadron's personnel now looking very dapper.

We must also say a sad farewell to **Sgt Steve Lynch** who leaves us and is off to sunny Cyprus to top up his tan. We say hello to **WO2 (RQMS) Alan** 'football is my life' **Higgins**, his wife and family and also to **Sgt Mark Chivers**, we hope you both have a quiet and peaceful tour.

MT TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 (MTWO) Simpson**

As always the Troop has been busy providing transport to the Bde and Sqn while attempting to fit in training, courses and, only when there is time, leave. The MT had its PRE on the 12 November and we were all relieved when we achieved an excellent report. To make it all the more important the Master Driver also popped in to conduct his annual Log Support Inspection. Two inspection teams on the same day meant that the office became a little cramped and the brew fund took a bit of a hammering.

Congratulations to **Cpl Steve Page** and his wife **Elaine** on their recent marriage and farewell to **LCpl Andy Roy** on his posting to 5 Field Ambulance.

All Cheques should now be made payable to:

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

The past year has seen exciting changes within our organisation which has put us in a strong position to develop and grow our own business for the future.

April 1996 saw the formation of the Bombardier Services Group. This Group has combined the existing activities of a workforce of Shorts Support Services Division and the Defence Systems Division of Canadair. It also incorporates the Industrial Division of Bombardier's Motorised Consumer Products Group.

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SHORTS
Support Services

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2 Sig Regt
York

HQ SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Les Wood MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bob Cook**

Once again the senior Squadron has been much in demand, supporting operations in Bosnia and the Falkland Islands, Bde Exercises and preparing the Regt's 'out of use' detachments for PRE. A busy Families Officer, **Capt Ray Cory**, welcomes back a tanned **Maj Les Wood** following his five weeks in Cyprus and two weeks in Bosnia 'visiting the men'! His tan is only bettered by the CO, **Lt Col Jo Fletcher**, who has also been visiting, and the MTO **Capt Bikramjang Gurung**. Manpower shortages are biting and the Squadron extends a warm welcome to 12 Gurkha soldiers who are to be employed in the MT. We look forward with anticipation to the first 'Baht' night.

The Squadron is proud to report that in October they won the Regt Winter Sports Competition, against all odds, when the very depleted HQ Sqn bravely took on the remainder of the Regt. After the presentation several 'Sabre' Sqn Comds were spotted behind the bike sheds armed with razor blades.

The SSM's office has been a fever of activity as the hand over of the appointment takes place. The Squadron bids a fond farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Rob Ibbotson** and **Helen** who leave us to go to the UOTC at Leeds and extends a warm welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Bob Cook** and **Claire** who join us from Harrogate.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON COMPERSIT
EAGLE TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Seymour**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wood**

New arrivals to this glorious troop **2Lt Seymour**, **Sigs Brown**, **Furse** and **Parker**, all straight from the factory. Welcome to them all and enjoy 2 Sig Regt. Since our last report we have been busy as usual preparing for all the major and minor inspections and examinations you can think of. We would have been in deep problems if it were not for the single handed guidance of **Cpl Derek Tidswell** who has had to look after the Troop in the absence of **SSgt Andy Allan**. Talking about our Tp SSgt when does your six month attachment to RAF Headley Court actually finish?

On our return from Cyprus, we were greeted with the following statement, 'Welcome back to York. Um er . . . by the way you you and you are going to assist 3 Div next week . . . and um er some of you have been selected to participate in the Regt Cadre Course so enjoy your weekend off'.

As we write this article we are still busy in the middle of a well earned PRE, sorry got to go I've got to prep something else for someone to look at . . .

EXERCISE HADRIANS EBOR 28 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER 1996

On Sunday 28 October five would-be Legionaires and one Centurian set off up to Newcastle to retrace the steps of the Roman soldiers who manned and patrolled the famous Hadrians Wall. The previous week a recce had taken place to find places of interest and camp sites. During this recce they happened to meet a friendly local who explained, 'That only silly people walk East to West, and why would anyone walk into the weather if they didn't have to?' Yes we were Legionaires for the week and yes we are military so we walked East to West.

We set off on the Monday to start the walk. The instructions were turn right out of Albermale Barracks and keep walking along the B6318. As we were walking on a concrete road with no visible sign of the wall, we all started in good military fashion doing a CFT due to **Gaz Shilton** leaving his PTI head back at York, no one was paying much attention to **Dunc Cupit**'s superb quotes from his Hadrians Wall hand book untill we passed the 1230 dinner stop at 1030. By early afternoon the older members of the group were complaining of hotspots on their feet, so asked when we were going to walk on the Vallum (Big Ditch). Our illustrious UEL Instructor gave the most famous quote of all and one he lived to regret for the rest of the week. 'Just round the next corner.' When we had gone round a few more corners he tried in vain to right a wrong by adding 'how many bends can there be in a Roman road?'

On the second day we eventually found the illusive wall as well as the prevailing winds, we actually allowed ourselves to take our time and take in some of the scenic views while being quoted from the known bible of Hadrians Wall. We arrived at our camp site after a quiet day to find the field over run with Peacocks, Ducks, and **Gordie Harper** slaving over a hot stove not letting on to anyone where he had got the meat from.

We woke up on the third day to a downpour, so luckily we had to wait for another member of the Squadron in the form of **Tam Dick** to meet us. As we were walking along the up and down parts and past Robin Hood's tree (who must have been lost) we were informed that the Roman soldiers had to patrol along the top of the wall with 70lbs on their back and no navigation aids. We all looked at each other somewhat bemused, as at this point even **Graham Rennie** was noted to say a sentence to the effect that not even a modern day R Signals Officer could get lost walking along this stretch of the wall, even with a map. Towards the end of the third day we left the wall to head for our last camp site, which we found to be locked up for the winter, so we had to rush to find a new camp site before dark.

All in all it was a worth while week away from the monotony of work down at the garages. We are especially grateful to **Richard Hayward** who was the Author of Hadrians Wall Walks who gave us many hours of pleasure trying to work out which Planet he was on.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON ON OPERATION RESOLUTE– 26 OCTOBER/12 DECEMBER 1996
Sqn Comd **Maj I. K. Bucklow**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Forshaw**

After returning from five weeks on Ex Ulan Eagle in Poland on 24 September, 214 Sig Sqn vehicles were turned around and driven to Marchwood to be loaded onto a boat bound for Croatia. Meanwhile, the Squadron deployed to Westdown Camp on 30 September to complete the mandatory pre-Bosnia training. After four days of UNTAT training we loaded AWO boxes into ISO containers and the Squadron stole away for two weeks leave. The Squadron deployed to roulement 230 Sig Sqn, who had been in-Theatre for six months and to use Ptarmigan to aid the withdrawal of ARRC and MND (SW) Tps.

After the usual logistic headaches of getting a Squadron from York to anywhere that involves the RAF, we arrived in sunny Split. A week later we had taken over detachments in Trogir, North Port and Dalma with the plan to put a detachment in Ploce shelved moments prior to our departure, making several members of the Squadron who were stood down very happy.

Life in Slipper City was quite bearable. The weather was glorious and everybody was content to save lots of money for Christmas whilst training hard in the adjacent mountains. The OC, **Maj** 'Once Again' **Bucklow**, tried to encourage roller-blading but for the safety of others the idea was shelved as the terminal velocity created by his momentum around DJ Barracks could prove lethal to himself and others. The Hotel Resnik, although similar to one of those dodgy places you stayed in whilst Inter-Railing, was better than a tent. **SSgt** 'Q From Hell/Poirot/Gandhi' **Bristow** did an excellent job and has acquired yet another nickname–'Mannuel'– due to his expertise as the hotel concierge. The Entertainment's Committee was formed and organised various functions in the bar which included the Quiz night which ended in a slanging match when everybody did not win. The QM **Maj** 'Meldrew' **Walker** celebrated his 50th birthday which gave him an excuse to be grumpy.

Congratulations to **LCpl Lester** who, after whining about his lack of promotion to the OC and 2IC, learned that he had been promoted upon posting to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt (whining obviously a proven technique–all note). Other operational promotions included **Sig Williams** who won his promotion in a game of bingo and **Cpl Blagg** who returned to the UK to take up a posting in 11 Sig Regt. **Lt** 'Yeh, Like, Y'know, Well, Cos, But' **Edwards** passed the JOTES I Exam and presumes he will be promoted soon.

A Squadron football team organised by **Sgt Jerry McGachy** had numerous successes against various units based in Split. The first operational injury of the tour was received by **Sig Walker** playing soccer. He later required an operation on his knee in the palacial surrounding of the French/German hospital before being MEDIVAC back to the UK. The excellent medical facilities were also urgently required by **LCpl Elliot** who woke up to find that his aching jaw was not caused by the amount of rubbish he talks but by an abscess above his eye tooth.

Various trips up country were organised by **Lt Murray**, our Australian Longlook exchange officer. It was thought however that **Lt Murray** was probably a jinx upon flights as he obtained the only flight that left on time. **Sig Howard** went to Sarajevo to work on a hilltop Radio Relay Detachment, whilst **Maj Buckiow**, **Maj Walker**, **Capt Gaffney**, **YofS Jackson**, **FofS Jones**, all managed to think up some operational excuse to travel to Italy. The good weather broke fairly early with the onset of monsoon type conditions. The PT programme got washed out as several members of the Squadron got drenched on a daily basis.

The Squadron task also included Motorola radio coverage to the RW with a repeater station established in the hills north of Split by **Sgt Fielding** to provide coverage of the main withdrawal route. The Detachment manned by **LCpl William's**, **Sig Walker**, **Sig Giles**, **Sig Moses** and **LCpl Douglas** was nicknamed Base Station Zero, which apparently had something to do with the temperature on the mountain.

The Squadron had a number of VIP visits during it's short sojourn in-Theatre. Amongst the lucky few was the GOC MND (SW), **Maj Gen**

Kiszely who received the Squadron's well rehearsed Operational brief and a tour of the Comms complex. News of this thrilling '214' experience spread quickly along the corridors of power and soon Comd UK (NSE), **Brig Ratazzi**, Comd Comms Land, **Brig Griffin**, CO 30 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Oldfield** and CO 2 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Fletcher** all booked themselves in.

Just as we were beginning to enjoy ourselves 30 Sig Regt arrived and stole the show with their excellent EUROMUX system that the Staff felt overwhelmingly lucky to have. We handed over various responsibilities to 30 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt and 20 Armd Bde and the withdrawal of 214 Sig Sqn began in early December, finally departing on 12 December. The operational tour provided the Squadron with yet another opportunity to prove it's expertise and flexibility in taking on another non-standard task. The return to the UK marked the end of another busy year for the Squadron with tours in JCUFI, Scotland, SPTA, and Poland. Another whirlwind success for 214 Sig Sqn, home, in time for Christmas and medals!

TORNADO TROOP (217 SIG SQN)

Tp Comd	**Lt Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Morrison**

EXERCISE DEVON EBOR 4-8 NOVEMBER 1996

Ex Devon Ebor was four days adventure Training at Penhale Camp Newquay. The first day consisted of a 17 mile bike ride after which we were all a bit saddle sore, but not **LCpl Carty Cartmell** who's legs were a bit worn after having to walk the last seven miles, but light was at the end of the tunnel. After the last 1.5 was a steep climb we were rewarded with a well deserved drink and spot of lunch at the Royal Oak.

Day 2 consisted of abseiling off a coastal cliff 150 ft into a cove. The going down was easy it was climbing back up which was the hard part, up a scramble net, as **LCpl Duvet Morton** would tell you. The afternoon consisted of 60 ft across the cove with **Lt** 'I'll check it's safe' **Wilson** going first

The last day ended with a quad bike relay race, with **LCpl** 'Where's me bike gone?' **Thirsk** being the show of the day.

ROYAL SIGNALS OFFICER RUGBY

The Officers team took the field for the first time this season against the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on 4 December. The last time the team had played it was against the same opposition. That time they walked away 22-10 winners, this time it was not to be.

The teams were, not surprisingly, unevenly matched. Where the Cadets had youth the Corps had experience, where they had height we had width and where they had enthusiasm we had panache and flair. The Corps started well taking the game to the younger Cadets up front and making several surging drives with **Maj Jo Cooper** and **Capt Pete Drew** to the fore. Domination soon gave a penalty which **Maj Ollie Halstead** slotted over for a 3pt lead. Despite several piercing attacks by the Academy the Corps' defence held. A dynamic run down the wing by **Lt Roddy Wilson** increased the lead as did a classic forwards try by **Pete Drew** which **Ollie Halstead** duly converted. A try for the home team on the stroke of half time saw the Corps turn around 15–5 leaders.

It was suspected that the Academy had drugged the oranges at half time as the Cadets started at a frenetic pace and before the Corps had time to restart their weary legs the score was 17–15 to the home side. Another incursion into the Academy's half saw **Capt Robbie King** burst through for a solo try. Sadly after this the flood gates opened and the Cadets showed their fitness, and heels, to the Corps Officers despite valiant defence they ran in a further three tries and walked away deserved winners 34–20.

Several more fixtures are planned for 1997 all interested parties should contact **Capt Bob Strawbridge** on York Mil 2627.

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

CO	**Lt Col G. R. Leach**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Rook**

THE CO'S SPOT

Carrying on this hugely successful column, and because these will be the last *Wire* Notes I edit and submit, here is another photograph that the CO would rather was not submitted.

The Multi National Divisional HQ Building, Banja Luka
'A functional building in the post-modern style, encapsulating all the finer points of mechanistic architecture. Light, airy and open, it affords sensational views of the industrial landscape across the Verbas Valley.....
Offers over 1 million DM and 2 bottles of Grouse (tenant pays damages–leasehold)'
Would you buy a used Metal Factory from this man?

FAREWELL TO THE REGIMENT FROM MAJ JIM DRYBURGH, REGIMENTAL 2IC

No Army Officer is bred to be 2IC of anything! We are trained and prepared for command! It is with some measure of surprise therefore that I say goodbye to a Regt which has given me two of the most varied and enjoyable years of my twenty two year career. I have had the privilege of serving with the very best of the Corps' Officers, SNCOs and tradesmen soldiers during a challenging and eventful period. On behalf of myself and my family, we wish all ranks and families the very best of luck for the remainder of their tour in the Iron Division Signal Regiment and take the opportunity to welcome **Maj Adam Ewell** from N. Ireland . . . I will not miss editing *Wire* Notes!

FAREWELL WO1 (RSM) STEVE ROOK

This edition also marks the last mention for **WO1 Steve Rook** as RSM of 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. We wish him, **Sue** and **Stephen** all the very best in their new tour at Blandford. We welcome **WO1 (RSM) Kev Fitzpatrick** and his family from 7 Bde Sig Sqn and wish them all the best for their tour.

LANYARD TROPHY

Team Leader	**Lt Coulston**
Team Sgt	**Sgt Wakeling**

The task of training the Regiment's Lanyard Trophy team this year fell to 206 Sig Sqn. Selection for the team proved to be a major issue within the Regiment as it was vital to get the right men for the job. At 0500hrs, Thursday 3 October 1996 the team, consisting of **Lt Andy Coulston**, **Sgt Matt Wakeling**, **Sgt Steve Davies-Morris**, **Sgt Jason Harvey**, **Cpl Matt Clish**, **LCpl** 'Taff' **Ansell**, **LCpl Billy King**, **Sig Dan Pearson**, **Sig** 'Spence' **Spencer** and **Sig Ross Williams** lined up to set off on the 40 mile march. We were second off in a staggered start, still in the pitch dark at that time of the morning.

(*L-R*): Lt Andy Coulston, Sgt Matt Wakeling and Sgt Steve Davies Morris approach CP4

For the first four legs all went well, then **Sig Dan Pearson** went for an 'Oscar' with a spectacular roll in the heather. Unfortunately after losing Dan the team then had to drop **LCpl** 'Taff' **Ansell** at the half-way stage due to badly blistered feet. This left the team with only eight–the minimum required to finish. At this stage **Sig** 'Spence' **Spencer** was suffering quite badly so he set the pace and 'dug in'. The last two legs were completed in 'white-out' conditions with high winds and driving rain. This resulted in the now saturated bergens weighing well over the required 40 lbs. After 12 hours 8 minutes of continuous tabbing the team finished in an extremely respectable seventh place. Just wait until next year !

HQ (THE SOMME) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj B. M. P. Inglis Gren Gds**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tarr RLC**

TRAINING WING

Trg WO	**WO2 Campbell**
YofS	**SSgt (YofS) Mckie**
Trg SSgt	**SSgt Flooks**

REACH FOR THE SKY

The kit was on and the ground training was over. We were ready. Surely there had to be more to it than that! The Instructor shouted 'My section. We're off in ten minutes'. That's my lot. Slowly the six of us began to move towards the checking area. Fear and excitement hung in the air. No one yet realised the full impact of their decision, or what lay ahead. 'Too late mate!' a voice said in the back of my mind. The Islander was on the grass runway waiting for us. 'Keen lot', I thought. With the check complete, we followed the Instructor in single file to board the plane. One by one we took our turn to check the static line roll at our feet and wait. Wait till the pilot got us off the ground and over the drop zone 3,000 ft below us. No one said a word. The faces of the guys said it all, but the wait was short lived when the silence was broken by the instructor 'Number one in the door, head up and smile you ugly b******, GO, next' My turn! I moved with the speed of a sloth, cautiously feeling my way into the dreaded doorway. The rush of the wind was awesome, and then the tap on the shoulder indicating that the Instructor was ready for me to jump. The movement was automatic, one minute you're hanging out of a perfectly safe aircraft, the next you're falling to the ground and all the while the Islander is getting smaller by the second above you. You're on your own! You count, then check to see if the chute has opened in the so-called perfect square. End cells have collapsed and the slider is caught at the top. The chute hasn't opened properly–emergency drills. Grab brakes and pull twice. The slider will move. 'Good'. Then turn left and right to inflate end cells. 'Good'. Above me was the perfect square–Reach for the sky!

EXERCISE IRON FURY

Ex Iron Fury 1996, was the CO's annual Military Skills Competition held on Salisbury Plain Training Area and the Training Wing's trade test. Run over three consecutive days, it was designed to test and develop individual and group skills through a series of tasks based on planning, organisation and leadership. After a lie-in till 0700hrs, the first day was used to prepare the competitors for tasks which may have been unfamiliar to them, or just to remind the old sweats amongst us, on how to survive in the ulu, section attacks the proper way and a combined LAD/Medic stand on how to recover a Land Rover and administer first aid to the injured. Cold, wet and hungry, the teams then bashered up and prepared themselves for winning some points in the night navigation. HQ Sqn (Team 1) gave the DS reason to laugh, gaining the maximum points for accuracy and then losing them all for being over the deadline, way over–Unlucky!!

Day 2 started with yet another lie-in till 0700hrs and a very cold start time for the patrol competition of 0800hrs. Each stand was run professionally and showed plenty of imagination. The First Aid stand run by **Sgt Daley**, seemed almost real with the use of giblets and vegetable soup for open stomach wounds. Overall, all the teams showed lots of enthusiasm and good soldiering with 222 Sqn coming out on top, Well done **SSgt** 'Geordie' **Marshal**.

Day 3. The March and Shoot was probably the most demanding part of the whole exercise although only over a distance of 5 miles, the teams had to cover the course in 50 minutes or under, otherwise incur severe penalty points. 222 Sqn being the only team to beat the deadline received maximum points but only got an average time in the falling plates. All other teams came in fast behind with some teams getting faster times than 222 Sqn in the shoot. This all led to a close finish between 222 Sqn (Team 9) and 206 Sqn (Team 6). After a short wait of thirty minutes, the scores were calculated. 222 Sqn came out as the overall winners–so a big congratulations goes out to **SSgt Marshal** again, **Sgt Robertson**, **Cpl Campbell**, **Cpl Doak**, **Cpl Foord**, **Cpl Yelland**, **Cpl Milsom**, **LCpl Plumb**, **LCpl Lok**, **LCpl Wells**, **LCpl Ward** and **Sig McDougal**.

Finally, all members of the Training Wing would like to bid farewell to **Cpl** 'Pete' **Wetherell** who has been promoted to the dizzy heights of brewboy for SSM HQ Sqn–Remember milk and two sugars **Pete**! To replace Pete, we've now got the up and thrusting **LCpl** 'Robo' **Robinson** on loan from 32 Regt RA for the next six months while his unit goes to Cyprus. Unlucky 'Robbo'!!

MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE REGT MT

by Sig Goode (MT Section)

As I was coming to the end of my course at the Royal School of Signals I started thinking about my posting The majority of my friends on the course had been posted to Germany and a couple had gone to Nuneaton, but not me, I was posted to Bulford, well I thought never mind, a posting is what you make it.

My first day started with practically everyone on leave, so I didn't find out what Sqn I was actually posted to until the following week. A mate of mine off my liney course had also been posted here but a couple of weeks earlier so he had to do guard all week, unlucky **Andy**.

The MTWO interviewed me and told me more or less what I would be doing whilst I was here. This didn't include line work, what a surprise. After my first week here I was kindly volunteered for the military skills competition, which was great fun! Four days of playing around in the field waking up at 0600hrs with ice on your face then shaving in cold water Oh What Joy!!!! So far working in the MT has been an experience, practically everyone I've spoken to is either getting out or posted, could this be an omen!!

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN INTO THE BOXING RING

by Pte Taylor (Catering Section)

As my trade training at the Army School of Catering was coming to an end my thoughts were on my perception of life at a working unit. Surely the time had now come for me to concentrate on the skills I had learnt as a Chef? How wrong I was!!! My first day at the unit started where my training days had left off, on the drill square, but nothing had prepared me for right marker, I thought that honour was reserved for those over 6 feet tall. After the parade I was greeted by the Master Chef who thought it might be an idea to introduce himself to me, I thought how nice that was of him as I thought it was always the other way round, however he soon made it perfectly clear that, that was normally the case. After a tour around camp with the Kitchen Manager I soon settled down and started adjusting to catering for large numbers.

After three weeks it was put everything I had learned into my first trade test, I was given three hours to cook and serve a set menu so the Divisional Catering Warrant Officer could come and prod, taste and comment on my efforts. Fortunately it went very well.

What then followed was not exactly how I perceived unit life to be. Over the next few weeks I left my trade training behind to become more of an Infanteer and a Boxer. First there was the Military skills competition, four days taking part in various Military activities ending with a March and Shoot. It was an enjoyable few days but I wish the cooking instructions in the 24 hour packs were a little easier to follow.

Within three days of the Military skill competition finishing, with no training what so ever, I was in the boxing ring squaring up to an opponent who had spent the last two weeks training to give me a good hiding, he didn't quite manage this, but took a close points decision, it must have been the huge black eye and split lip that swayed the judges decision.

Well not exactly what I thought but I have certainly enjoyed my first couple of months and long may it continue.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Graham Complin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Keith Fisher**

The Squadron has seen yet another extremely busy few months during which we have managed to squeeze in a Divisional Exercise, a Military Skills Week, RSIT and the Regimental Boxing. Not forgetting the on going commitment to Bowman and a few additional Exercises that Ops managed to slip in to the already tight schedule. Reflecting on our achievements, Ex Iron Resolve was a resounding success thanks to the help from 2 Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 1 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn and 216 Sig Sqn who swelled our ranks and without whom we would have been unable to deploy into the field.

A swift turn around was required in order to embark upon the laborious task of preparing for RSIT. At the same time we were able to enter two teams into the Military Skills Week, who did the Squadron proud with their enthusiasm if nothing else. Our crowning glory has been the Sqn Boxing Team led by **Sgt** 'Dino' **Cox**. After a gruelling week of training and some spectacular preliminary rounds the team were ready for the big night! Despite the odds being stacked against us the boys put up an impressive performance with **Sig** 'Ski' **McKie** and **Sig** 'Bomber' **Lancaster** showing us how it was all done. Our hero on the night was **Sgt** 'Dino the Destroyer' **Cox** who not only won his fight but clinched an overall victory. Well done also to **Sig Shackleton** and **Sig** 'Dave' **Hudson**! The results were as follows:

Bantamweight	**Sig Greenough**	Lost in Final
Featherweight	**Sig Shackleton**	Lost in Final
Lightweight	**Sig Hudson**	Lost in Final
Light Middleweight	**Sig McKie**	Won in Final
Middleweight	**Sig Lancaster**	Won in Final
Light Heavyweight	**LCpl Chalmers**	Won in Final
Heavyweight	**Sgt Cox**	Won in Final
Super Heavyweight	**Sig Mason**	Lost in Final

On a sadder note the time has come to say farewell to two of the Sqn's key personalities. **WO2 Keith Fisher** is heading off, on promotion, to Northern Ireland as the new RSM of 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, we wish you and **Denise** the best of luck. To add to the deluge **WO2 (FofS) Ian Stringer** and his wife **Dianne** are heading off, on promotion, to Blandford to take over as the Foreman of Radio Group at the Royal School of Signals.

Congratulations go to the following who have been selected for promotion to LCpl in 1997; **Sig Rogers**, **Sig Darkes**, **Sig Holden** and **Sig Wilson**.

OVERLOON TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Alan Garrett**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Jim Stillie**

Since the last entry in *The Wire* the Troop has been through a series of highs and lows. Most worthy of note was **Sig Spencer**, **Sig Williams** and **LCpl** 'Get your heels together before you speak to me' **King**'s performance in the Lanyard Trophy in which they did the Squadron proud by successfully completing the course.

Congratulations to **Sig Grant**, **Sig Hay**, **Sig Mourning** and **Sig Williams** for joining the tracked brotherhood after expert tuition from **Cpl Jamie Gardner**. Welcome also to **Sig Wood**, **LCpl Kemp**, **Sig Peacock**, **Sig Angie Wright**, **Sig Hunter**, **Sig** ' Psycho' **Criswick**, **Sig** 'Sandman' **Piper**, **Sig** 'Scouse' **Davies**, **Sig** 'Worm' **Walker** and to Relay crew **Sig** 'Flutter' **Thompson**, **Sig** 'Jelly Belly' **Freeth**, **Sig** 'Bomber' **Shackleton** and finally **Sig Grant**.

Farewells go to **Sig** 'Scott' **Lewis** who after four and half years of loyal service is finally leaving for the excitement of 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and to **Cpl** 'Jamie' **Gardner**, who is soon to depart for the Royal School of Signals where he may eventually learn to be a 'real' systems operator. A fond farewell also goes to **LCpl Alex Burnham**.

WATERLOO TROOP
Tp Comd — **SSgt Crawford**

The rebuild of the Divisional Alternate HQ is now well under way. **SSgt** 'Ginster' **Crawford** has provided more than adequate direction to the troops and improved the house moving skills of most of us tremendously.

After crawling around amongst the various unidentified cables for a week or two the re-build of the panzers is now progressing according to plan (a first, maybe!). **LCpl** 'Eyeballs bleeding' **Scott** has demonstrated his amazing AFV recognition and to everybody's amazement can now spot an AFV at five yards and has proved to be a path finder amongst the CFT team. **LCpl** 'Off to Brecon this weekend' **Rudd** has also played a major part in the rebuild programme in between his Iron Man competitions.

Over heard in the garage during OC's inspection of the Armd HQ:

OC –'This is a good det don't you think Foreman?'
FofS –'I just hope it is Battleworthy, Sir.'
OC –'Why? Seems fine to me.'
FofS –'Well Sir, I think the RSIT team would like some tracks on it!!'

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj I. D. Westerman**
SSM — **WO2 T. P. Crane**

SUPPORT TROOP–A REPORT BY SIG 'CADGE' CADGER

Prior to departing for Ex Iron Resolve I was promoted to the dizzy heights of 'Tea Boy'. This was to be my first ever exercise after leaving training. I was looking forward to it (sad isn't it!). We left for the exercise and I quickly learnt that I was going to be working very hard but I was lucky to have some of the finest Lineys in the Regt to teach me (creep). People like **Sig Kev** 'The Foghorn' **Reeve** who taught me all about cam and concealment, (you could never find him when there was work to be done), and **Cpl Bes** 'The Fossil' **Beswick** from whom I learnt the finer arts of posture and bearing whilst watching telly with a brew. The exercise went very well and we were able to try out a new concept when moving the HQ by sending the Lineys on ahead to pre-lay line (actually it's not a new concept because there are reports of **Bes** doing it in the Crimean War–but it was new to me). To be honest everything was new to me and before I finish I must just mention the discussions I had with 'Q' **Miller** about past battles between England and Scotland (which he lost as usual). So to finish off–a good exercise by the best Liney section in the Corps!

MONS TROOP–A LOAD OF DRASH
Tp Comd — **Capt Bruce**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Kidd**

Ex Red Tricorn and Iron Resolve, our first major exercise in over a year, enabled us to deploy HQ DSG to a variety of places on SPTA and also co-locate with Div Main at a hangar in Hullavington. The rebuild of HQ DSG had been the Regimental main effort since the return from Bosnia–all eyes were upon us. The DRASH (Deplorable Rapid Assembly Shelter for one of it's more tame titles) complex was tried, tested and lived in by the Staff who all seemed to approve (and disapprove when it got a little bit cold).

Unimpressed by their moaning the GOC had an idea to warm them up and at Endex marched his entire staff across the Plain and back to barracks. **Sig Kev Meek** was also left suffering from the cold after he decided to fill his Kero heater with petrol. **Sgt Matt Wakeling** (desperately keen to improve his physique) and **LCpl** 'AB' **Brown** (desperately needing to improve his) indulged in a 'heaves' competition in a 12 X 12!! No guesses as to who won! Even **Capt Nik Bruce** and **Sig Dan Pearson** managed to eventually get to grips with their 'landrover orienteering' in DSG Recce vehicle. Altogether the deployment was a total success.

The Troop says a sad farewell to **Cpl Willie Rushton** who is off to 1 (UK) ADSR and **LCpl Arthur Buchan** who is off to NI on selection for promotion to Cpl–congratulations. Congratulations also go to **LCpl** 'AB' **Brown** for coming off the same board. Welcome back to **LCpl Keithy Langan** who returns after successful completion of his BI.

Mons Tp give the traditional farewell to Sig Jonah Jones on his last exercise with the Tp.

CAMBRAI TROOP–SINK, SWIM OR BURN
Tp Comd — **2Lt McGregor**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Day**

After working hard on both exercise and in barracks it was decided that Cambrai Troop needed a few days off, and this was duly arranged by the Boss. At first it seemed it would be two easy days in Portsmouth with the Navy. As the plan came together this idea was quickly quashed and it became a two day Sea Survival and Fire Fighting course. As the Troop gathered together bright and breezy to meet the transport, with bellies full of a well organised breakfast that **Sig Dave Blaney** will never let the OC forget, we set off. Arriving at HMS *Excellent* we hastily moved to the Sea Survival ground and were given a quick brief on the activities for the next two days. The morning of the first day was taken up with lectures on sea survival which pulled together some frightening statistics and gave us all something to think about before we would be thrown in the water.

The afternoon was spent putting the lessons into practice with a simulated abandon ship then lifeboat drills. At the end of the day we moved back to our accommodation and prepared to go out on the town under the 'instruction' of **LCpl Jim Walton**. After a cold day previously the next day of Fire Fighting demonstrations were just a little hotter. We watched a number of demonstrations then some more lessons on the threat to a ship from fire. The day quickly passed by and the transport arrived to take us back to Bulford. In all the two days were fun but also very informative for us *Pongos*.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj R. A. Mulholland**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) G. Johnson**

EXERCISE IRON RESOLVE 4-17 OCTOBER 1996

Ex Iron Resolve was GOC 3 (UK) Div annual CPX. 222 Sig Sqn deployed as a whole to the Salisbury Plain Training Area. Initially the three Nodes; 073, 083 and 093 were deployed widely to bring all the various communities into the network. The exercise started with the CO's Comms Ex to prove the Ptarmigan connectivity as well as to allow some node movement, TN073 being the only foot on the ground at this tenuous stage. With complete connectivity established the exercise proper began meaning a static remainder of the exercise for Ptarmigan assets.

EXERCISE ARABIAN HUNTER 8-15 NOVEMBER 1996

Ex Arabian Hunter was an exercise in which 222 Sig Sqn acted as hunter force for the final phase of 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn's probation course. All soldiers not involved in the Regimental Military Skills Competition deployed on a cold Friday morning to Hereford. Spirits lifted considerably when the Sqn saw **Capt Simon Meadowcroft** and **Sig** 'Bruiser' **Lyons** leave the warmth of the cookhouse to spend a week with 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn as guest runners. The weekend was utilised by the Squadron to familiarise themselves with the area while the runners had instruction in combat survival techniques. On Monday afternoon the runners were released onto the area and the hunter force moved into action. The runners had to use sketch maps in order to move around the area and meet agents at various RV's. A number of techniques were used in an attempt to catch runners. OPs were deployed to watch strategic areas and a number of searches were conducted in order to 'flush out' runners. At the end of the four days of hunting, the Squadron had caught a total of seven runners, one even being unfortunate enough to be caught twice and caused the remaining runners a number of difficulties in reaching RVs. At endex, all participants agreed that it had been an enjoyable, if cold and tiring exercise which gave everyone the opportunity to use equipment such as night vision aids and Cougar Radio in order to catch a live enemy who were not easy to catch,

ADEN TROOP
Tp Comd — **2Lt N. Morris**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt O'Donnell**

With Ex Iron Resolve now over the Troop has 'settled down' back at camp to prepare for RSIT, although with the Regimental Patrol Competition and Ex Arabian Hunter, the vehicles are still pining for the crews caring touch. The social agenda for Christmas is firmly upon us and with each muster parade the Troop looks more and more weary.

BALACLAVA TROOP
Tp Comd — **2Lt F. Hay**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Marshall**

SSgt 'Geordie' **Marshall** is still on a high following his promotion to WO2, and for commanding the winning team in the Regimental Military Skills Competition. Well done and good luck in Aldershot (PS–Can we all have some Para Smocks, please?').

Congratulations also go to **LCpl Steve Wells** and **Sig Duncan Brown** on their promotions. The drinks are on you! Farewell to **Cpl Allan Brown** who has left the Troop for the bright lights of OSC. Elsewhere in the Troop a number of potential Oscar winners have been strutting their stuff in a new CDT video filmed 'on location' in Bulford and starring Balaclava Troop. The video hits the shops in December and we eagerly await Barry Norman's congratulations.

OMAN TROOP
Sqn Comd — **Lt H. Bosley**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Hill**

October, for the Troop, commenced with Ex Iron Resolve and ended with a maintenance week and a week of Bosnia leave. The start of November, and the Troop became a part of the hunter force for one of the 264 Sig Sqn exercises. **Sig** 'Billy' **James** was still not found; he was last seen with a hockey stick somewhere between Washington and Aldershot. **LCpl** 'Clobber' **Campbell**, **Sig** 'Killer' **Kilpatrick** and **Sig** 'Pounder' **Pierce** have been boxing training for the last month.

Congratulations to **LCpl Campbell** for winning his fight and being crowned the heavyweight champion of the Regt. Congratulations to **Sig Bartlett** on the arrival of his daughter, **Jena**. The Troop are now heavily involved in preparation for the RSIT team and the Christmas festive season.

9 Sig Regt (R)
BFPO 59

EXERCISE JEBEL RAMM
Offr Leader: — **Lt Piers Clishing**
The Pack: — **WO1 Martin Denton**
Sgt Paul Gittins
Cpl Dave Miln
Cpl Kev Thompson
Cpl 'Doc' **Livingtone**
JT Jo Hughes
LCpl Nicky Glen
LCpl 'Oz' **Ozanne**
LCpl 'Boots' **Bootle-O'Reily**

Ex Jebel Ramm was a 9 Sig Regt (R) adventure training exercise that took place in southern Jordan between 12-23 October. Our aim was to march Lawrence of Arabia's trail and climb the highest mountain in the Wadi Rumm region, Jebel Ramm (1754m). This turned out to be far more challenging that any of us had imagined. After a quick flight to Jordan's capital Amman, we boarded a coach southwards taking us to the Gulf port of Aquaba; our start point. Our kit and supplies now loaded on their vehicle and the first phase due to begin.

The march from Aquaba to Wadi Rumm. The 70km march took two days to cover, temperatures were moderate but the novelty of sand soon wore off, that sinking feeling was becoming hard to shake off. We had made good speed and had covered over the expected distance before the day ended. The guides found our resting place and brewed up, while we sat in awe of the scenery as the daylight disappeared.

After a good nights' sleep our second day should have started well, apart from the early start which unfortunately would remain a habit of the group. The breakfast could have been better as 'Boots' did his utmost to discourage our appetites, having deposited yesterdays socks in the bread bag. It was going to be a hungry morning. The group trekked on, eventually coming face to face with the final straight and the race to Wadi Rumm village. Our resthouse was feverishly located and a number of large beers consumed. While relaxing our leader was given a hot tip of trying Sheik Hamden's route to climb Jebel Ramm, Hmmmn . . .

That evening we returned to the desert and established a base camp ready for the climbing phase the following day. The climb started early (just for a change) beginning as a walk, then a scramble to the entrance of the Great Siq canyon. This was beginning to take on monster like proportions with everything becoming very vertical, and no easy access to Jebel Ramm's summit. Choice glances were exchanged with our leader going into sheepish mode, he should have died on the spot.

The technical climbing (or disco knee spot) commenced with **Dave** and **Kev** showing us the way, not that all of us followed it. The pitches were fairly short and not that technical but the abrupt height was to become a knee trembler for some. Ten people trying to climb does not make for easy motoring, confessions of a total fear of heights were being spilled from the group. We made slow time and only managed 150m before retreating to base camp trying to hide our blushes.

The second attempt started with an aggressive stance with **Martin** 'Mr Motivator' being the instigator. The initial ground was covered very quickly but we were still slow to gain ground when it came to the technical aspects. We had gained a further 30m (wow) when a crisis came upon us. A very narrow ledge confronted the group followed by a slightly naughty chimney. The ledge offered no protection just a rapid descent, it was now decision time as one member of group could not go on. After careful deliberation it was considered wise for the group to descend to the base of Jebel Ramm, we were all desperately disappointed. Morale had hit a low point.

Today was our third and final attempt, all or nothing. We made outrageously good time covering the groups previous personal best within 15 minutes. The chimney section was overcome with the minimum of fuss with **Dave** admirably top roping the rest of the group. Top tips were beginning to emerge from the group such as; 'Don't say those three magic words–don't look down'. Once amongst the domes we had to navigate our way to the summit as quickly as possible. With no road signs available and midday upon us, it was time to get a move on. We reached the summit just before 1pm, but our kamikaze slimmers (food poisoning victims) were beginning to feel the pace. The view was magnificent and the climb a truly worthwhile experience but now for the descent. This could be very rapid if not taken with some care, but our confidence was now sky high. Abseiling over the chimney, although very exposed was done with some aplomb and rock hopping became very hip indeed, We quickly came across the very well practised climbs and the base of Jebel Ramm was soon obtained. The race to reach base camp commenced although not without it's hiccups. A few of us were totally impressed to see our guide, a dot in the distance willing him to get the brews on. To our dismay our faithful lad decided to do a runner in front of our very eyes. Much to our relief his mate turned up only to have minor hot-wiring problems with his 4WD. We eventually returned to the village ready for a few lemonades. Mission accomplished.

The next morning brought a fresh challenge, the Burdali rock bridge. The team divided into two, the walkers and the climbers (bad climbing move). The five walkers quickly reached the rock bridge impatiently waiting for a glimpse of the climbers. The climbers however did not experience deep joy and having come face to face with a grade 6 wall we withdrew. Experience being the better part of valour with **Doc** being the ultimate dancing queen, still twitching despite being back on solid ground. The view might have been splendid but we were sick of hearing about it from the walkers. This had not been a good experience. Our journey home through Burrah Canyon was awe inspiring with virgin peaks still to be climbed. We posed for our final photograph in the village on camels, we looked ready for the off and some R&R.

We visited Petra and Amman and had a good blow out with British Embassy staff–Cyprus was beginning to beckon, our bags definitely bulging especially for one female member. **Nicky Glen** had managed to buy four new pairs of shoes despite having limited time and baggage space. We departed gracefully most of us having picked up a bit of Arabic, some climbing tips, and a great sense of achievement.

EXERCISE AKAMAS PURSUIT

A team of eight people travelling on an arduous journey across and around the Akamas Peninsular with the aid of mountain bikes. Approximately 50 miles of sweat and tears as these men applied all of their skills and technique to the challenge laid before them. The organiser of this journey was HQ Sqns's **SSM Banner**, along with **Cpl** 'Mick' **Micklethwaite**, which made the trip successful and a laugh for us all. The other mixed members of the team were, Navy (Bust an oar) **Dave Osbourne**, flying over the handle bars RAF **Mick Hannon** and young **Steve** 'Tin Tin look' **Harness**. The man with all the gear **SSgt** 'Foggy' **Dewhurst**, our very own fire starter **Cpl** 'Dean' **Whitworth** and **Al** 'I didn't know I had 21 gears' **Spearman**.

Before the drive to Polis, the start of the first leg of the journey, one of the bikes got a flat. This was followed by a crumpled drive and cold weak Cypriot tea from a local cafe when dropped off, this did not feel like a good start. The first part of the ride from Polis through Latchi, a nice easy ride, then the hill hit us. Half way up the hill was the village of Neochorio, what a relief for **Al** who was still in 18th gear. The next stop nearly at the end of our first climb was a picnic area, where we feasted on the divine

picnic supplied by our local restaurant. Now it was just a nice slope down to our first camp site.

The second day arrived, all up bright and early, every one eager to get going, only to be thwarted by a suspect flat tyre from an unnamed member of the group. Finally we began the most challenging ascent to date, with several members of the group thinking it would be easier to carry their bikes to the top. With the hardest part out of the way we soon came across the local light house. This being the perfect place to get something to eat. Now being able to see our second camp, we proceeded down the tracks arriving at our destination within the hour. In the evening we were treated to the culinary delights of a barbecue prepared by our very own 'Keith Floyd' **Mick Micklethwaite**. After copious amounts of alcohol (not) and being refreshed on the various constellations, it was now time to close the curtain on another exciting day.

Now the last day of our intrepid expedition, feeling somewhat saddle sore, we made progress on what was allegedly a flat route back to Latchi. Not being able to miss a photo opportunity, **Steve Harness** rose to the occasion by carrying out a daring stunt, not to be out done, **Mick Hannon** was soon to follow in his tracks adding an extra difficult trick of leaving his seat and jumping over the handlebars, this also being caught on candid camera. The rest of the route was downhill (so to speak). After soon arriving in Latchi, it was soon decided that we would leave sleeping under the stars to the animals and splashed out on a nice spring mattress for the night.

Back Row (*L-R*): Lt 'Ossie' Osborne, SSgt 'Foggy' Dewhurst, SSM, Sig Steve Harness
Front Row (*L-R*): Pte 'Al' Spearman, JTech Mick Hannon, Cpl Dean Whitworth

SIGNALLERS HOST LOCAL ORPHANS

On 4 November, children from a local orphanage spent the day at Mercury Barracks. The children, who were aged 8-13 years old, were hosted by **Sgt Pauline Cappleman**, **Sgt Teri Lees**, **Sig Si Dennison** and **Sig Lee Pailing**, of Communications Troop.

The 13 youngsters began their visit with a look around a Gazelle helicopter, courtesy of 16 Flt AAC, who kindly let the excited children sit inside the helicopter and play with some of the controls. After ensuring the helicopter was still in one piece the group made their way to the Gymnasium. Here, the children boisterously played on the Bouncy Castle and kept the PT Staff on their toes, going all out on the indoor assault course, which had been set up. After wearing out the children (or was it the other way round?), they enjoyed a meal at a local Restaurant, and were thoroughly entertained by a local magician.

The visit was brought to a colourful end, when the children were taken to the bonfire and fireworks display, which they enjoyed immensely. Then it was time to wave goodbye to the tired, but happy children. The hosts then swiftly made their way to bed with a couple of aspirins, exhausted, but happy the visit had gone down so well.

EXERCISE MERCURY BREAK BATTLE CAMP–OCTOBER 1996

The month of October was upon us and it meant, Oh joy! Battle Camp season again. This is the time when the personnel of 9 Sig Regt 'get out of the office and into the field' to practise at being soldiers again! It is an opportunity to brush up on all the military skills that tend to get neglected throughout the year while they practise their various specialist trades. **Capt Gordon Anderson**, **SSgt** 'Taff' **Webb** and the Training Wing team devised the exercise which is divided into four identical week-long phases and takes place twice a year, in May and again in October.

The week is structured so that much of it is spent on instruction. Subjects covered are all the fundamental soldiering skills that every soldier learns in basic training, but which need to be regularly revised:- fieldcraft and tactics, battlefield first aid, map reading, how to present orders and soldiering in a nuclear biological and chemical environment (NBC). Two whole days of the exercise are spent on the ranges, and for the final 24 hours the students are deployed on a miniexercise in the field in which they encounter various situations and scenarios that test their grasp of the above-mentioned skills. The journey to Melanda ends on a bumpy dirt track leading to the encampment set on a plateau right on the sea, which resembles a sort of forgotten outpost of civilisation with the tents and military vehicles set neatly round a square, at the centre of which the Union Jack and the 9 Sig Regt flag proudly fly. A night navigation exercise tests the map reading skills of the students. No one got seriously lost and most came in in good cheer, although none had found all five checkpoints!

A long day is spent on the ranges at Akrotiri where the most popular phase of the exercise is the Close Quarter Battle Range; Involving patrolling as an individual, on the alert to the Figure 11 targets which spring up around the area and must be engaged with live ammunition. At the very end of the range, a straw mattress is attacked with a bayonet charge and ferocious war cry. On one occasion, a certain hapless **LCpl Circo**, never short on enthusiasm, engaged his boot as well as the mattress! A couple of stitches later, however, he had made a full recovery.

A mini-exercise took place at the end of the week and the aim was to test the students on every aspect of military skills. Each section had to navigate towards set grid references and react to situations at each point. Situations included a section attack in an NBC environment, delivering orders to set up a rebro site in a war zone and first aid under enemy fire. It was on the night of Thursday 10th October that the almighty thunderstorm struck the island, and more specifically Melanda Camp! Evacuation was necessary to Bloodhound Camp, as the tents had all been washed away . . .

Just when they all thought it was over, having boarded the transport home, the DS had one last surprise–a vehicle ambush half a mile from Ay Nik and a stretcher race back home! The Battle Camp ended on a high if exhausted note and all involved were relieved to put the kit and their tactical heads away for another year!

16 Sig Regt
BFPO 40

RHQ

CO — **Lt Col Hewitt**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Boyle**

It has once again been a very busy period for RHQ trying to juggle the number of commitments coming in to the manpower available to do the tasks. There have been numerous visits to the Regt, including OIC Manning and Records, PB11, **Brig Shaw** the Comd 1 Sig Bde and not least of all a visit to the families centre by **Gen Guthrie**, Chief of the General Staff.

OPS CELL

The Ops cell have been extremely busy trying to plan the recovery of personnel and equipment from theatre as Op Resolute draws to a shuddering climax for members of 16 Sig Regt. The Ops Offr **Capt Ian Parry** runs the office almost single handed as **Capt Willie Dott** (Tech Adjt) is too busy with Regt football, **WO1 Nige Cullen** (Regt FofS) is too busy with the Regt X-Country, **WO2 Phil Jones** is too busy running the Regt's social events in the Wall and Willow club and **Cpl** 'Two Dads' **Godridge-Evans** the Ops clerk is either off sick or lost in the local area looking for a Fire NCO's course!!!

Quote of the month from Ops: While commenting on the state of his new Combat 95 issue goretex trousers the Tech Adjt was heard to say, 'These new trousers are pants!'

MEDAL PARADE

A medal parade was held mid September to present the IFOR medal to members of the Regt who were back home in between Roulement tours. There were over 50 officers and soldiers on the parade who were presented their medals by the CO, **Lt Col Bernie Hewitt**.

SPORT

RHQ goes down to skeleton staff every second Wednesday as the 'old uns' get out and compete in the X-Country league with commendable performances from the Adjt **Capt Sally Rees**, **RSM Jim Boyle**, **Regt FofS Nige Cullen**, Chief Clerk **Jai Patel** and the **ORS Sgt O. B. O'Brien**.

LEICESTER TROPHY FOOTBALL

A combined RHQ/HQ Sqn team won the Leicester trophy football competition with a superb display of skill from **Capt Willie Dott** and **RSM Jim Boyle** showing that the old heads and stamina could triumph over youthful enthusiasm.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Welcomes to RHQ are extended to **Sgt O. B. O'Brien**, **Sgt Steve Wetherill**, **Cpl** 'Two Dads' **Godridge-Evans** and **Cpl Kel Kelly**.

Farewells go to **Sgt Debbie Lockley** who has left us to have a baby, **Sgt Paul Buckley** who leaves us on promotion to SSgt as Chief Clerk at 216 Sig Sqn, and finally to **Mrs Kaye Ogle** who has left us on her retirement. We wish them all the best of luck.

SWISS RAID COMMANDO

It was an early start, the venue Switzerland, the competition 'Swiss Raid Commando'. It was 0700hrs and we were off to Switzerland which was seven long hours away by minibus. 16 Sig Regt had entered three teams in this year's competition, two male and one female (the first ever to enter the competition).

The event comprised of teams of 4 walking over 40km in a 31 hour period with various military stands along the way. Our teams consisted of :

Team 1 - **SSgt Kev Smith**, **Sgt Dave Butler**, **LCpl Nige Rogan**, **Sig Jason Sheath**.
Team 2 - **Sgt** 'Daz' **Evans**, **Cpl** 'Lofty' **Lofthouse**, **Cpl** 'Chalky' **White**, **Sig Martin Sheridan**.
Team 3 - **WO2 (QMSI) Helen Sleightholme**, **Sgt** 'Daisy' **Mundy**. **Cpl Angela Kelly**, **Sig Sarah Hodson**.
Admin - **Cpl Nick McAnulty**.

On arrival in Switzerland we spent the first two hours getting changed and sorting our kit ready for the off at 1900hrs that evening.

16 Sig Regt's three Swiss Raid Commando Teams

There were teams from Germany, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Switzerland and UK. The English teams that were based in UK and were Para trained had parachuted into Switzerland earlier that afternoon. At 1900hrs we were off, we were all loaded on a large Barge and taken across Lake Neuchatel for insertion. After an hour on the barge we docked and leapt off and disappeared into the darkness like lemmings running off a cliff. Our first checkpoint involved a seven hour orienteering event with each marker giving a variety of points. The aim was to collect at least 600 points.

At 0530hrs we had attained our goal and moved on. Most of the stands involved long timed forced marches with points awarded varying on the length of time it took to complete. Other stands involved an Assault course, grenade throwing, Molotov Cocktail throwing, Pistol Shooting, a 150 ft abseil off a viaduct into rubber dinghies, an Anti-tank simulator, like Milan, a FIBUA course, and a timed Burma bridge run. We carried on through the day and on into the darkness of Saturday evening. At stand 19 we arrived only to be told that it was closed and all teams that arrived from now on were out of the competition. Our other two teams came off here also.

On the Sunday we all paraded in No 2 dress with the other English teams prior to the medal parade as Commander 5 AB Bde wished to address all the English teams. The female team were given flowers by the Swiss organisers but this did not reflect their achievements as they had beaten lots of male teams foreign and English, not to mention beating a 5 AB Bde team (watch out next year!!). After the parade we jumped in our minibus and headed back to JHQ very tired but having enjoyed the competition and looking forward to an eventful 1997 for military competitions.

SHQ 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

At the time of writing SHQ 252 Sig Sqn has almost a Full House for the first time in many months, the SSM has returned from Kiseljak where he was detached to 255 Sig Sqn, HQ ARRC Rear as the SSM and **Sig John Walsh** has recently gone to Kiseljak for 30 days (medal time).

(*L-R*): Lt John Carter, Minister of State for Armed Forces (with cup of tea!!), Nicholas Soames MP, WO2 (SSM) Mick McKenna at HQ ARRC Rear, Kiseljak

HELLO, FAREWELL AND CONGRATULATIONS

Hello to **Capt Steve Goodwin** our new 2IC from 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn - hope you have a good tour, and a sad farewell to **Capt Wendy Kirby** posted to the School of Signals–thanks for all your hard work and the impact you made in your short time with the Squadron (hope your new CD player is OK, where did you stick that brass plaque!)

Congratulations to **LCpl Clair Mason** AGC on her selection for promotion and subsequent posting to HQNI, where she can be reunited with her other half–she's smiling now.

SYSTEMS TROOP 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Welcome to **WO2 (FofS) John Dennis** and wife who have joined us from 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204). **John** is taking over the well worn chair from **WO2 (FofS) Phil Cuttforth** who we are all sad to see depart and head for his new post at The Royal School of Signals at 'sunny' Blandford Camp on promotion. Thanks **Phil** for all your great ideas and the 'joy' you have brought to the Troop. Also welcome to **SSgt Bob Clubb** and family who have joined us from the really sunny 9 Sig Regt. Bob is lucky enough to be taking over the relaxing Tp SSgt (admin.) role from **SSgt Steve Reeve** whose hard work and long hours will now be put in at the Regimental Training Wing.

Moving on to the menial JNCO's farewell to **Cpl** 'Scottie' **Szaranek**, **Cpl Nige Wier**, **Sig Shane McKeown** and **Sig Pippa Harvey** (nee **Williams** congratulations) who are all leaving us for places new. Hello to **Cpl Terry Waite** who is joining us from places old. Thanks for all the hard work that **Sgt Mick** 'the Moose' **Keeble** put into our excellent Halloween Party. He deserves special congratulations in his lack of panic and the keeping of his hair.

Welcome back to **Sig Kev Young** who recently returned from his jolly in Colchester, a reformed soldier eagerly awaiting and deserving promotion as he proved to us all by his excellent performance on the Cadre course (?) keep trying **Kev**.

Congratulations to the victorious 252 A Leicester Trophy hockey team. From the Tp **Capt Dave Boxhall**, **Sgt Andy Crabtree**, **Sgt** 'Doc' **Docherty**, **LCpl Kev Brooker** and **Sig Kev Young** all participated. With all the talent that was shown on the day, I would not be surprised to see a Corps player or two develop from the team. We feel we should also congratulate **Cpl** 'Taff' **Nicholls** who talked an excellent game, without him we would never have managed to finish third in the Leicester Trophy Basketball competition.

Finally we would all like to congratulate **LCpl Lee Street** on coming off the board for promotion to Cpl.

VISIT OF CPL MACKAY (R AUS SIG) TO 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

In September 1996, 252 Sig Sqn received a visit from 'Downunder'–**Cpl** 'Sheila' **Kylie Mackay** of the Royal Australian Signals. **Cpl Mackay** has been working at 238 Sig Sqn in Chelsea on Ex Long Look and her Yeoman of Signals thought that a short trip to Germany would be in order before she flew back to sunny Australia. She was invited to spend two weeks with 16 Sig Regt and was even provided with her own personal hostess, **LCpl Caroline McMahon**.

During her stay, she visited several Signals units, including 220 Sig Sqn at Laarbruch and Bruggen, and 280 (UK) Sig Sqn at St Tonis. She saw demonstrations on various types of British communications equipment and at 7 Sig Regt she was given the opportunity to take part in Ex Cygnet Globe, communicating to Signals dets in New Zealand and Australia. As **Cpl Mackay** is an instructor on all aspects of comms in her job, this proved to be both useful and interesting to her and she was surprised at the many similarities between British and Australian systems. The Regiment would like to thank all units who were involved in making **Cpl Mackay** welcome.

Cpl MacKay's farewell was a traditional German affair!

Cpl Mackay also settled in very well to the JHQ nightlife, although **LCpl McMahon** remarked that the familiar cry of 'Lob another shrimp on the barbie, "Sheila",' was becoming a trifle monotonous by the second week. With a couple of sightseeing tours thrown in for good measure, the

visit ended with a few 'tinnies' in the Regt Bar and the presentation of a Regt plaque and a German Stein by the CO, **Lt Col B. Hewitt**. This quickly turned into a double celebration when **LCpl McMahon** learned that she had been nominated for the Regt Summer Sports Personality of the year.

We wish **Cpl Mackay** all the best for the future and look forward to the first invitation for a cheap holiday in Australia!

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Following a year of separation 255 Sig Sqn are finally starting to regroup as personnel return to JHQ from all four corners of Bosnia. A period of hard work reconstituting the Squadron is ahead, but not before everyone has enjoyed the Christmas parties and taken their post tour leave. The last few months have seen a number of departures from the Squadron. Good luck to **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Szaranek**, posted to 220 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Wayne Ballard**, off to 21 Sig Regt in Colerne and **Cpl Billy Stephens**. Amongst this group of techs disappearing is the only Elec Dvr, so good luck to **LCpl** 'Charley' **Chester** in the White Helmets. Good luck in the New Year to **LCpl Neil Tarry** who after over five years in the Regiment has finally got a posting to 24 AB Bde Sig Sqn.

The Squadron welcomes a number of new arrivals: **2Lt Kate Simmonds**, OC Echo Tp, good luck with the lineys! **Sig Matt Wild**, **LCpl Andy Nuttley**, with his wife **Mona** and son **Sean**, **Sig Coleman**, **Sig Goulty**, **Sig Prest** and **Sig** 'Mac' **McNally**.

Congratulations to **LCpls Berry** and **Wilson** 777 for being selected for promotion to Cpl. Also to **Cpl Tom Maynard** for his recent promotion. Good luck and congratulations to **Sig** 'Johno' **Johnson** who will be taking up his new post as a LCpl in Glasgow before Christmas. We also say congratulations and goodbye to **Sig** 'Babs' **Williams**, posted on promotion to 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. The final congratulations goes to **Cpl Phil Whitehead** and his wife **Claire** on the birth of their baby girl **Megan**.

THE END OF AN ERA

Herr Agon Griese BEM retired on 31 May 1996 ending a period of service with fixed comms sys in Germany of over 40 years. For those of you who have been part of 4 Sig Gp, 21 Sig Regt and 16 Sig Regt the passing of this unique individual into retirement will be something of a shock. **Agon** started his work in static systems in 1954 when he was employed by Siemens but worked for the military at Goch. Eventually **Agon** moved to JHQ and arrived in 1957 where he was employed by 4 Sig Gp on the repair of intercom systems. He spent some time working in STARRNET but moved within JHQ to work for Alpha Tp, 21 Sig Regt in what is still known as RAF(G) systems. He remained there throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's while all around him came and went. His masters changed from 21 Sig Regt to 1 Sqn 16 Sig Regt and eventually to 252 Sig Sqn 16 Sig Regt. **Agon** was responsible for the installation of the low speed VF equipment in RAF(G) systems in 1967. The system has reduced considerably in size and is now a shadow of its former glory. It is still operational and provides Tg, Met and RAFAN circuits to the remaining RAF airfields and other locations in Germany. **Agon** lovingly tended the equipment for some 29 years and must take great credit for maintaining the operational capability of what is now an antiquated system. There is a project in hand to replace the VF equipment and it's eventual departure will finally bring the curtain down on a very special and unique area of fixed communications within Germany.

BRITISH ARMY (GERMANY) BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS 1997

The UKSC(G) stage of the Army Major, Minor units and Women's team Inter Unit Basketball Championships 1996 was held on 26-27 November at Hammersmith Barracks in Herford. 16 Sig Regt entered one male and one female team, and having left Rheindahlen at 0500 on Tuesday 26 November, we arrived at Herford suitably refreshed and ready for battle.

The men's team played two matches in a knockout to qualify for the following day's competition. They played well, but were unfortunately knocked out of the competition in their last match. The ladies' team played three matches and won two. Two of the other teams also won two matches and eventually the competition was decided by points for. Our last match finished at 1800 that evening and we left believing that we had achieved second place in the competition and that our trophies would be sent to the Regt later that week. It was a nice surprise, therefore, to be called into RHQ the following day to receive the winners' trophy from our Regt 2IC, **Maj I. R. Grant**. Suffice to say, the ladies team are now training hard for the next stage of the championships in UK, which will take place in March 1997.

21 Sig Regt (AS) Colerne

This submission concentrates on those elements of the Regiment that have not featured in *The Wire* recently.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AS) DETACHMENT–SPLIT

Det Comd	**Lt W. Anderson**
Det SNCO	**Sgt S. Seddon**
Wire Notes Editor	**Cpl Timberley Robinson**

This particular det arrived in theatre in June of this year, full of trepidation for what lay ahead. After a comprehensive hand over from our relieved predecessors we quickly settled into our role in providing communications support to the RAF Support Helicopter Force, the forward based MAOT teams and Fuel Escort duties for the Joint Service Support Helicopter Force. Our tour has coincided with a significant number of VIP visits including, **HRH The Princess Royal, HRH The Duke of Kent** and CinC LAND. Each was given the well polished VIP Brief, outlining the detachment's role and structure and the unique situation we find ourselves in, an Army unit supporting the 'auld enemy' the RAF.

Off duty there has been a combination of organised and disorganised activities to entertain the boys–a football match with local team Hadjuk Split being one of the highlights although the shopping trip, Croatian style, left its mark!! One of the more memorable events was that pinnacle of entertainment culture, the ever popular CSE Show . . . NOT.

The 'Pathfinder Section' of the next det have already arrived in theatre. Bob Carolgees and Spit the Dog were the early arrivals, aka **Sgt** 'David Bailey' **Weeks** and **Cpl Grant** 'Boris Becker' **Campbell**. The Tech CP will never be the same again.

Lt Bill Anderson explaining the intracacies of the MAOT Det to HRH The Duke of Kent. Cpl Andy Lowe is waiting for the opportunity to say his piece

All submissions for the April issue of The Wire should be with the editor by

FEBRUARY 15th !!LATEST!!

QM'S DEPARTMENT

QM(A)	**Maj R. W. Lockwood MBE**
QM(T)	**Capt J. J. Ashwell**
RQMS(Gen)	**WO2 (RQMS) V. G. Bannister**
RQMS(Tech)	**WO2 (RQMS) I. M. Wylie**
Stores SNCO	**Sgt D. M. Abson**

Life has been particularly hectic over recent months. Apart from the usual support to the Regt, the Dept has had a changeover of QM's and other support staff. **Sgt Darren Abson** managed to get himself a two week holiday to Split, supposedly to resolve the Op Resolute account. Not to be outdone **Sig Ritchie Preece** managed to wangle a six month tour to the Balkans. We're not sure if this is to sort out **Sgt Abson**'s accounting or to add yet another medal to his burgeoning collection. In the meantime **Maj Bob Lockwood** has handed over the responsibility of QM(T) to **Capt Jeff Ashwell**, recently arrived from Herford. Is there any truth in the rumour that he is thinking of taking up Golf??

'Over to you my friend . . . I'm off to the Golf Course!'

43 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–ANNUAL CAMP '96 (THE HIGHLIGHTS)

The Squadron was particularly active during the last quarter of 1996, culminating in the Annual Camp which finally saw off the OC, **Maj Graham Leyland**. Annual Camp this year was held in St Lucia where the Squadron lazed on golden sands sipping rum punch and soaking up the sunshine–anyone like to sign up for next year? In fact the Annual Camp was a multi location event with a MOBEX in Bridgwater, a tactical comms exercise centred on SENTA followed by a week of military training at Yoxter Camp. The nearest thing to sand experienced was the Sennybridge dust and the only punches were those exchanged with the enemy on SENTA. The weather was good however, remarkably good given the time of year, and the locations we visited, so suntans were achieved against the odds.

There were many notable events during the various phases with the three day comms exercise on SENTA providing some of the most exciting. These included the bravery of those at Alt SHF HQ, who under the dynamic leadership of **Capt** 'last stand' **MacLeod** chose to stand firm in the face of a massed attack instead of taking the possibly more practical option of a tactical withdrawal. The aggressive tactics of **SSgt** 'Rambo' **Reid** and his fighting patrol successfully repelled the assault but not before the 2IC demonstrated, much to **Sgt Tapley**'s amusement, why he was never considered for the Corps Gymnastic Display Team, by somersaulting down a steep bank onto the gravel below., This single act signalled the end of the attack, the end of a pair of tropical combats and the start of the great escape but that's another story.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON–ACPO

OC ACPO	**Capt (TOT) J. W. Oakes**
PPS 1	**SSgt S. Brealey**
PPS 2	**SSgt A. Jones**

It's not very often that ACPO get a mention in *The Wire*, so who and what is ACPO? ACPO isn't the Association of Chief Police Officers but it is the Airfield Communications Planning Office and amongst many other things, is responsible for the planning and maintenance of all cable infrastructures on the two remaining RAF airfields within Germany. Unfortunately we also have to look after the communications at Decimomannu in Sardinia and RAF Ascension Island–someone has to do it! ACPO comprises of three military personnel; the OC–**Capt John Oakes** and two Project Planning Staff, **SSgt Steve Brealey** and **SSgt Jonah Jones** plus two civilian personnel, **Mrs Michelle Mathews** the Draughtsperson and **Mrs Lyn Fadzilah**–the Clerk/Typist.

The last twelve months have been incredibly busy for ACPO, our role has been dramatically enhanced to include operational taskings over and above our normal commitments. The year started with ACPO and a team of 220 Sig Sqn Tele Mechs deploying to Split with IFOR to install the cable infrastructure for HQ Comm Z (Fwd). This was followed, almost immediately, by a similar job for HQ ARRC Main in Sarajevo. After a brief rest the team once again deployed to the Balkans, this time to do the business for HQ MND(SW) and their new Div HQ in Banja Luka. ACPO are currently in theatre heading a team of Telemechs who are installing cable infrastructures around Bosnia, in support of Euromux. This year ACPO have conducted 6 deployments to the former Yugoslavia, 2 to the Ascension Island and finally 1 to Al Kharj in Saudi Arabia, and the year is not over yet!

ACPO
(*L-R*): SSgt Jones, Mrs Michelle Mathews, Capt Oakes, Mrs Lyn Fadzilah, SSgt Brealey

EXERCISE GREEN LADY–BY AN ANONYMOUS BUT ACTIVE PARTICIPANT

On a bright and sunny autumn day the wives of 220 Sig Sqn took part in Ex Green Lady. We were particularly pleased to have picked the only dry day that month, sadly that happened to fall on the 13th!! A little apprehensive we proceeded to the Training Wing at 0900 hrs precisely. Here we met **SSgt Russ Dalton** and his able assistant **Sgt Carl** 'Carol' **Hindson**. 'Carol' was dressed in a slinky little number with a cleavage we all would have died for. We were given a lesson on how to 'avoid the shine' and all left appropriately attired and 'made up'. Next on the agenda was drill. **Russ** spent the first few minutes explaining the difference between left and right. Eventually realising he was on a loser, he gently took us through some fairly basic drill steps.

We were then marched off down the road wondering what lay ahead. It was not long before we found out. Guest 'wife' **Bianca** was chosen to lead us on a Command Task and was whisked away by **2Lt Michael Powell** and given her instructions, or should I say 'distructions'. The task consisted of finding a telephone, getting across a minefield and rescuing a casualty–to think that we could have been at home with a nice cup of tea. The first two of these were completed with little difficulty but on reaching the casualty, **Angelique** was thrown up all over (no more peas or carrots thank you).

At last a cup of tea and everyone was getting into the swing of the day. On the dog stand **Sgt Glen Kitchen** told us to split up and hide in a compound whilst RAF police dogs were sent to sniff us out. 40 minutes later five wives were still missing, three were found in a wheely bin, definitely not smelling of Chanel No 5, while the winners, **Angela** and **Ursula Cain** had clambered on a roof and remained undetected. Lunch finally arrived consisting of **Lt Andy Aitken** and massive 24hr ration packs–if only they normally contained all that!

Sgt Glenn Kitchen then let us loose on a bus, a hyster, an 8 tonne truck and a Land Rover. This was the finale to a brilliant day, all except for **LCpl** 'Daz' **Kemp** who will never be the same again after **Andrea** 'Schumacher' **Scott** broke the World Land Speed record at her first attempt. Finally we assembled in the Squadron 'Welfare Centre' to receive awards for our efforts. All the wives would like to take this opportunity to thank **WO2 (SSM)** 'H' **Wells** and all the guys (too numerous to mention) for their time and patience before and during the day. One more thing–When's the next one?

The Wives of 220 Sig Sqn after Ex Green Lady–Shaken but not Stirred.

30 Sig Regt
Bramcote

LANYARD TROPHY 1996

Once again 10 members of the Regiment accepted the formidable challenge presented by the Lanyard Trophy held this year in the Black Mountains and gave an excellent account of themselves. This is their story . . .

Training began some two months before the event, with **Capt Richard (SAS) Newhouse** as Team Captain laying a solid foundation of endurance and fitness with various locations and routes. Unfortunately towards the end of the training we lost some good men through injuries: namely **Capt Newhouse** a week before the event, **LCpl Guntrip** with bad legs and we almost lost **WO1 (YofS) Guy Benson** with shin splints and a stress fracture, however, having spent £100 to go 'private' he made the Line of Departure.

The team set off at a reasonable pace led by the new Team Leader, **2Lt John Brinn** and the 21C, **Sgt Si McGraw**. Excellent time was made over the first 20 miles, which was probably the hardest part of the route. Unfortunately **LCpl Chris Trundley**, our first casualty, had to be ordered to stop due to painful hips. However, the weather changed dramatically over the second part of the course with heavy rain and mist limiting visibility to under 20m. The team struggled on despite a number of other injuries which lost us valuable time and with two teams passing us in the last stages our morale was severely dented. However, in a time of 11hrs and 55mins the team passed the finishing line. Morale returned pretty quickly after a brew, a hot shower, some sleep and then into town for a curry! A special mention must go to the CO and RSM who met us at most check points and almost covered the same amount of ground as we did (it's the only time the lads have been pleased to see the RSM). The support team of **SSgt Icky Gratrick**, **Cpl Lee Ford** and **LCpl Steff Lake**, who kept us full of food and fluids for the whole course, and last but not least, **Capt Richard Newhouse** whose enthusiasm was an inspiration to us all.

(*L-R*): WO1 (YofS) Benson, LCpl Chris Trundley, Sig Gaz Humphries, Sig Danny Hold, Sig Debs Debnam and Cpl Kes Wrenn. Hidden from view are 2Lt Brinn, Sgt Si McGraw, LCpl Ian Cowan and Sig Arran James.

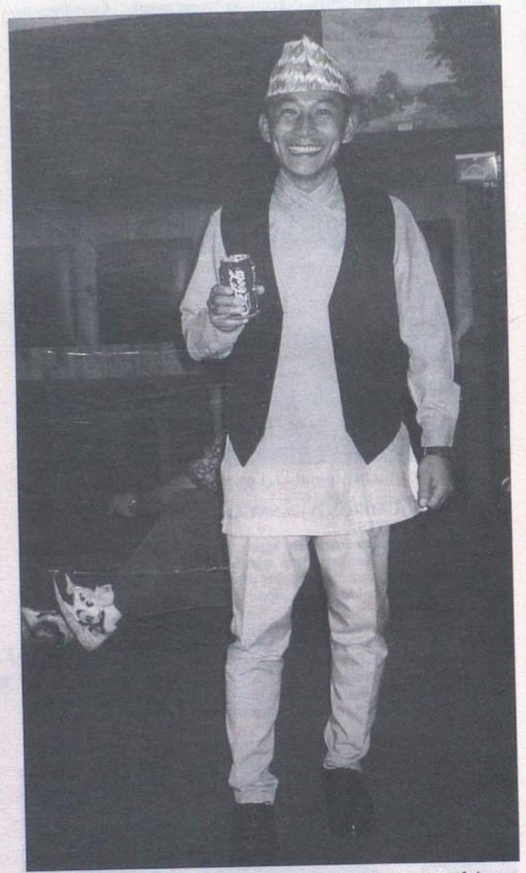
250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON TIHAR 1996

Despite the majority of the Squadron being away on Operations, Tihar was celebrated in the traditional way by those who were left behind in Squadron Lines at Bramcote Camp.

Tihar is the last of the Hindu big annual festivals which falls over the period October-November. It goes on for five auspicious days and each day has a special meaning and object for worship. However, in the Brigade of Gurkhas only the last three days are observed as holidays. This year the festival of Tihar fell over the period 10-12 November 1996 and celebrations commenced as follows:

Laxmi Puja (Goddess of wealth)–a special prayer was offered to Laxmi in the Gurkha Temple in the morning. The scenery within the temple was spectacular with little oil lamps and candles. After the prayers ended, the Gurkha Major, **Maj (QGO) Karnasher Tamang**, kindly offered 'Tika' (blessing) to everyone who was present and then everyone moved to the Ram Jham Kotha (function room) for further celebrations.

The second and third days (Govardhan Puja and Bhai Tika) were also celebrated in the same manner as the first day in the Ram Jham. Food was provided by the Gurkha chefs throughout Tihar and as ever, it was superb. In addition, the Gurkha ladies (over on a short visit) had made a container of Momo (meat dumplings) under the guidance of the SQGO, **Capt (QGO) Shiva Kumar Rai**, which made the evening even better. This concluded Tihar 1996, which has undoubtedly been a big success. JAI 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron



Cpl Birendra in the 'Ram Jham' after a very successful gambling session

INTER SQUADRON BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Inter Squadron Basketball Championship has been one of the most popular events in the sporting calendar in 30 Sig Regt. This year it was held on Thursday 28 November 1996.

250 Gurkha Signal Squadron Team with The Championship Shield and their Prizes

The Championship was decided on a league basis and each match lasted 40 minutes. The first match was played between 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn and Sp Sqn. It was a very aggressive and evenly matched game and the scores remained very close in the first half. In the second half 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn dominated the game with their prowess and skills and stretched the scores well ahead of Sp Sqn, with 250 eventually winning convincingly.

258 Sig Sqn were the second team to play against 250. The game started at a hectic pace, and much was made of fast breaks to get over the height disadvantage. However, as the game progressed, it slowed a little and once again 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn were the winners.

250's final game was against 256 Sig Sqn and as soon as the official blew the whistle both teams played very close, man to man marking and the scores were tied for the first half. The second half was very important for 250 and they demonstrated some extraordinary skills. When the final whistle went, they had again emerged the winners, and hope to hang on to the shield for many more years to come.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj P. J. Doherty MBE**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) P. Ellis**

Whilst the Regt zips about at 1000 miles an hour to find the manning to complement the surge effort for Op Resolute and the commitment, still unknown, for Zaire the Squadron has managed to maintain a degree of normality. That said the OC deployed to Bosnia in support of the Theatre Drawdown Unit for a five-week tour of duty over October and November and the SQMS is two months through his tour in Split.

The Squadron has continued to make good progress in the Inter Sqn Sports Competition. The excellent result of runners up to 256 Sig Sqn in the Commanding Officer's Challenge part 1, a hike around the Brecon Beacons in September, was followed up by a win in the Soccer competition and runners up to 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn in the basketball. At the present time the Squadron is two points clear of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn on the leader board with the rugby 7s and part 2 of the Commanding Officer's Challenge still to go. Should the final positions remain unaltered the Christmas celebrations this year will be started somewhat earlier than usual.

Congratulations also, to **LCpl Sean Whelan** for successfully completing his Junior Qualification Course with the Adjt Gen's Corps. He aims to be the next Superintendent Clerk by the turn of the century.

TRAINING WING

Trg Offr/Regt YofS — **WO1 (YofS) Benson**
2IC — **SSgt (SSI) Hicks**

GENERAL

The Training Wing has been heavily committed over the period September-November 1996 in support of Regt and Sqn exercises supplying manpower to Ex Cygnet Globe, Ex Cygnet Vine and Ex Surprise Bear. Training Wing, due to their professionalism, as always remain in great demand to provide assistance to both the Regt and outside units.

Cpl Lee 'handbag' **Ford** has spent most of his time down in Sennybridge with 243 Sig Sqn on their annual Battlecamp and **Sgt Gokama** has spent most of his time in Hangar 2 in EXCON in support of a world wide COMEX.

MILITARY/SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

The Wing continues to be at the forefront of military events with **Cpl Shaun** 'Bisley' **Arundel** cleaning up at the Tickle Test shoot as the best shot and the OC, **WO1 (YofS) Guy Benson** coming first in the 249 Sig Sqn reunion of old members and third overall in those who took part in the Kiwi Trophy (that means more old soldier stories). On the sporting front the Wing continues to excel with **Sgt Gokama** organising and then winning the Inter Sqn Badminton, **Cpl Lee Ford** and **YofS Benson** achieving gold medals in the Inter Sqn Competition, **YofS Benson** coming third in the Commanding Officer's Cross Country and finally **Cpl Shaun Arundel** cleaning up at the recent swimming competition.

STOP PRESS . . .

A number of vacancies will soon be available in the Training Wing if you want hard work, lots of sport, work with true professionals and get in lots of swans around the world then apply in writing, through the chain of command for the posting of a lifetime.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Bob Morris**
FofS — **WO2 (FofS) Martin Drake**

What's new and approved in the 30 Sig Regt think tank? New people for a start, welcome to **LCpls Dean Buckley** (the ginger Giggsy), **Matt** 'the brown hatter' **Mullen**, **Jason Meadows**, **Martin Parkinson**, **Liam McSweney** (made up name), **Andrea Sanders-Fox** and **Andy** 'the stick insect' **Williamson**. Everyone a potential FofS and 'bon couf tout circulaire' (having bought their arrival crates without much persuasion). Amidst much wailing and shedding of tears we are preparing to say farewell to the **FofS Martin Drake**, our pet, old bloke! Who is off to the life of Riley and 35 Sig Regt (TA), soon to be joined by **Sgt Mark Evans** who just can't bear to be parted from fossie wossie! Also off is **Sgt** 'Taff' **Tanner** who cannot wait to escape to marital bliss at Balado Bridge (and the sun, sea and SATCOM course at Latina).

SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS AND LOWS

At the Inter-Sqn Swimming held recently (at which the Squadron came an admirable second) the Troop water babies put up a fine show of their aquatic abilities with **Cpl Max** 'Baywatch boy' **Challis** winning the breaststroke, **SSgt Chris** 'Old Man River' **Higgins** doing all the long freestyle events including synchronised drowning, **LCpl Phil Marchant** doing the short course events and **Cpl Ryan Halsall** who won the 50 metre belly-flop. Talking of highs, **Cpl Steve** 'Grizzly Adams' **Robinson** has just returned from an expedition to Nepal where he climbed the heights, rafted the raging torrents and took the top layer of enamel off many a toilet bowl with his Delhi-Belly venting antics.

BOSNIA BLAH

Not long back is **Paula Matlock** who having put up with unspeakable deprivation on operations (Sipovo yah, hard life blah) found her route back to work one Sunday blocked by a rogue snowflake, she bravely decided to go home again (she who fights and runs away, lives to . . .?) also newly returned is **LCpl** (at last) 'Gaz' **Hobson**, who will shortly be deported to 258 Sig Sqn for crimes against technology along with **Cpl Nick Blake** whose crimes are many, including ramming a Police car (blue light was flashing) and not trapping like ten men when the opportunity presented itself–sexual tyrannosaurus he is not!!! Still hanging tough out in IFOR land is **Sgt Steve Bell**, **Paul Bond**, **Cpl Mick Turner** and **LCpl Dean Morgan**.

NEWS FROM MT TROOP

MTWO — **WO2 Andy Turner**
MT Sgt — **Sgt 'Ginge' McNeilly**

During the month of November there has been a lot of internal movement within Sp MT due to additional commitments of manning the Provost Staff, SQMS and Armoury. **Sgt Tim Pellett** was immediately sent to jail, via the Provost course at Chichester where he was nick-named Judge Dredd, or was it Brain Dead, with his trusted sniffer dog Leo. **Sgt** 'Ginge' **McNeilly** received early parole from prison and replaced **Sgt Tim** in the MT. He was very keen on this move and turned up for his first day of work wearing a Jeremy Clarkson pullover, driving gloves and carrying a thermos. **Sgt Phil Dixon** took over the SQMS and discovered a civilian storeman, **Mr Eric Simms** wearing World War II Battle Dress and asking 'Is the War over yet'. **Mr Aidan Kaczmarczuk** the MT AO, was over the moon with the 1968 computer that was installed after a mere three year wait. Rumour has it the power lead will come in the next year and a printer by the millennium. **Cpl Ian Homes** was involved in the Children in Need Charity Golf event and true to the form of last year, won the event. Over £4000 was raised this year by the Regt, well done! **LCpl John** 'Forest' **Watson** is now doing his spell in the Armoury and is 'believed' to be in there somewhere but there have been no sightings. Even his girlfriend has to prearrange through **RQMS Tony Bottomley** for an appointment. **LCpl Andy King**, while not caddying for the RSM, represented the Troop on Ex Cygnet Globe in the USA. Make the most of it **Andy**, the next time you leave the camp gates will be on Operational Duty Driver. **Cpl Nathan Ruff** had his long awaited ear operation and when asked if it was a success said 'pardon'. He maintains it will be the only Operation he will encounter in 30 Sig Regt, hey don't forget Op Wide Awake! **Sgt Nanda Bahadur Gurung** has maintained the Gurkha tradition in the Geny Bay, of removing a limb with his Kukri from any operator who has an 'A' job on their equipment. **Sig Ian Slocombe** is doing a fine job in the former Yugoslavia and sends his regards to the female population of Warwickshire who have been picketing barracks since his departure. Come back **Ian** was the cry. **Sig Balaram** also received a short reprieve and sailed to Alderney, on the HMS *Alderney*, to attend Remembrance Parade.

Arrivals have, as usual, been few and far between. **Sig Govinde** arrived from Hong Kong to take over from **LCpl Amrit** who is posted to 2 Sig Regt, York. Welcome to **Govinde** and a sad farewell to **Amrit**, best of luck in the future.

Inter Sqn Soccer Challenge–Sp Sqn
Back (*L-R*): Cpl Ovenden, Cpl Parkinson, LCpl Buckley, Sgt Palmer, LCpl Williamson, LCpl McSweeney, SSgt Smith
Front (*L-R*): Sgt Tanner, WO1 Benson, SSgt Eldridge, Cpl Ford, Cpl Challis, Cpl Ashton

Members of Sp Sqn and 258 Sig Sqn 'Chilling Out', at the end of their 26 mile march over the Brecon Beacons.

Sp Sqn Commanding Officers' Challenge Team at the Command phase
'Who needs a Daf when you have Pte Dunmore in the ranks!'

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Capt Andy Mould**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen**

Maj Gary Smith has temporarily left the Squadron to do his tour in Bosnia, leaving **Capt Andy Mould** holding the reins. The Squadron says a sad farewell to **Cpl Bruce Findley** who has left the Regiment after six years.

The Squadron competed in the Regt Swimming Competition. 258 having won nearly all the races, won the competition. **Lt Ian Hargreaves** and **Lt John Collyer** won three races each, whilst **Sig Helen Stanyer** proved conclusively that some women can swim faster than men. **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen** must be congratulated for putting the competition together and also for proving that old age is no barrier to the sport. As ever, pushing the very limits of physical ability and skill, the Squadron managed to put together an elite basketball team with less than a week to prepare (on top of the very high work load on the shop floor). Being friendly types the other teams were allowed to win, after all it's the taking part that counts!

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Ian Hargreaves**
Tp SSgt — **Sgt Kev Belam**

Delta Tp congratulates **Cpl Mick Elliot** and his wife **Sharon** on the birth of their first child. In addition **LCpl Pete Ashcroft** is congratulated on his recent promotion together with **LCpl** 'Wingnut' **Robson** and **LCpl Jase Wells** who have been selected for promotion in the next year.

The rest of the Troop has been hard at work with **Sgt Tom Gibbins** and **Cpl Steve Bishop** getting a Kenyan sun tan on Ex Grand Prix. They assure everyone that providing the rear link detachment for 1BW is very hard work. **Cpl Ted Heath** has taken his 501 det on a short tour of Bosnia.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt John Collyer**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ian Carter**

November saw a very busy period for Echo Tp, with three exercises and an expedition to Nepal, for a few select members of the Tp. In between exercises (having plenty of time for less serious events) we took part in the Regt Tickle Shoot. **Cpl Nige Kerr** ran the team with a 'few' last minute changes due to other commitments. We contributed to making a strong team and even though victory wasn't to be ours, we produced results to be proud of. **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen** and **SSgt Ian Carter** went off on a swan to Australia for two weeks. Here they got in lots of valuable training on the golf course, in the bar and managed to get some sight seeing in. Watch out Crocodile Dundee.

Whilst those more senior enjoyed hospitality with the Ausnav, **Sig Smudge Smith** was sent out to Germany to work with the only non English speaking German Regt. Upon his return his German driver asked him directions to the airport. He, of course, ended up at the wrong Munster. After missing his first plane he then spent the entire next day in the back of a van whilst his driver tried in vain to find the correct airport.

The whole of November was taken up by an expedition to Nepal. **LCpl Steve Binks**, as part of a 12 man group from the Regiment, flew out to Kathmandu and then spent two days travelling the Kanchenjunga region on the top of buses, tractors and trailers before trekking up to the base camp at Pang Perma. Tired of walking they then went white water rafting down the Tamur river. The expedition concluded with a two day safari in the Chitwan National Park. Words of warning, watch where you step, elephants are a lot bigger than dogs!

Finally, the Troop says farewell to **Capt Sue Pillar** who will be AMA to DSACEUR and welcomes **Lt John Collyer** from 14 Sig Regt in sunny Wales.

EXERCISE BEARS SURPRISE
by LCpl Al Stewart

This Exercise was meant to be kept a secret until the last moment. Unfortunately the escape and evasion exercise dreamed up by **WO2 (YofS) Steve Holt** was one of the worst kept secrets in the Regiment. The runners knew what to expect when their coach arrived at Leek Trg Area. The hunter force was masked and took the prisoners away for processing. The masking was quite comical because the prisoners could identify the hunter force by their height, accent etc. The prisoner processing went well and the prisoners were stripped of banned items. To their credit, the prisoners managed to hide some items on their bodies, getting them out on the exercise. The prisoners were allowed to keep their sleeping system and a set of clothing, but they all wore coveralls. Each person was given a Zap number. Throughout the entire processing they had to endure a tape of Les Miserables supplied by me. After three hours of processing everyone knew the words and the full running order of the tape. It was hell, even for the Hunter Force.

The prisoners were given a lecture on conduct after capture and then marched 9km to a farm which doubled as a PoW camp. Here they were given regular PT and more doses of Les Miserables. However, the directing staff ensured they had food and sleep, much to the disgust of the ex 14 Sigs soldiers and old sweats because it was much harder in the old days.

The prisoners were allowed to escape prior to attempting a river crossing and the real escape and evasion began. The hunters were ready and had been given orders by their OC, **Lt** 'Big H' **Hargreaves**. They were obviously very pleased when a contact report was heard after only an hour. The hunters had managed to capture **Sig Frank Eversfield** who was soaked having fallen into a bog up to his chest. The hunter force did not escape the bog either. A request for a new set of combats was sent by **Cpl Tim Parkins** who had been chasing **Sig Eversfield**. The hunters captured a few more during the night and were delighted when **Sig Jason Moore**'s loose talk revealed the location of four more runners. **LCpl Paul Shotton** was not happy when he was found in an abandoned farm house at 0400 hrs. **Sig** 'Woolly' **Woollard** refused to give his Zap number as it was not part of the 'big four'. Because of this he was given to the PTIs for some character readjustment. After fifty minutes neither myself or **LCpl** 'Wingnut' **Robson** had managed to break his will. After five minutes of Les Miserables we had the number. The captured runners were rereleased at 0700 hrs ready for another day.

After a day to catch up on sleep, the escape and evasion resumed for a second night. However, this time nobody was captured. The hunters searched the whole area but were faced with a 'pea souper' fog. We tried area after area, tactic after tactic and patrol after patrol, but to no avail. Eventually we attempted an all out assault on the only area that hadn't been searched but still no one was found. It turned out that the runners had hidden in the bog.

Overall the exercise was successful with both runners and hunters learning something new about themselves. I thought it was worthwhile especially as during it I celebrated by 30th birthday and got another 30 seconds for my BFT.

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following:
ALL PHOTOS accompanying Articles for The Wire, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they
MAY NOT BE USED

31 Sig Regt (V)
Southfields

CO — **Lt Col R. T. Weston**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) D. E. Hall**

A VIEW FROM THE TOP

The Regiment has been extremely busy since our last appearance in *The Wire*. A successful Bde Ex and annual camp in Ripon was enjoyed by all (especially the party animals), and was quickly followed by what has since been termed the Ceremonial Period. Firstly we were kindly invited to celebrate the Honours of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea by marching through Chelsea and parading at the Duke of York's HQ. The success of this prestigious event was then consolidated when the Regt combined with the University of London Officer Training Corps to provide the Guard of Honour at the Mansion House for the Lord Mayor's Procession.

(L-R) Pte Okon, Sig Woodhouse, and LCpl McGardty forming part of the Guard of Honour at the Lord Mayor's Parade, alongside London University Officer Training Corps.

Finally on Remembrance Sunday the Regt had the honour of representing the TA at the Cenotaph, as well as providing marching elements at numerous local parades and services, including St Paul's Cathedral. In the meantime the Sqns have continued with their routine training (in the UK, on board ships with the Navy, and in the USA) and are preparing for a busy schedule of bounty testing and Christmas festivities.

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj M. Jackson**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) M. Byrne**

A TOUR OF THE MOOR

The HQ Sqn Adventure Training Weekend in Dartmoor took place at the end of October. We paraded at Southfields and were issued with the new arctic sleeping system–was there something the OC had not told us? As we drove down to RAF Okehampton the rain got heavier and the roads narrower. We arrived in Dartmoor in the early hours of Saturday morning and were greeted by the smiling face of the PSI, **Sgt Phil Robson**. After a few hours sleep the day began with a stroll across Dartmoor with **AQMS Andre Scrivener** from the LAD sweeping the route behind the rest of the Squadron!

The activities continued throughout the afternoon with go-carting and quad-biking. **LCpl Tim Maltby** demonstrated his biking skills while **Lt Kate Harris** mastered the difference between the brake and accelerator. On the go-carts the Grand Prix drivers amongst us were in their element. **Lt Anna Darnell** was determined not to be lapped by **Maj Mike Jackson**. After an active day the Squadron went back to camp for more activity in the bar and local night-club. The highlight of the weekend was still to come. Sunday morning was spent playing Paintball. The Squadron sat in minibuses in the pouring rain trying to convince the organisers that it was far too wet to play. The competitive spirit, however, got the better of us. The red team led by **SSgts Pete Jones** and **Jim McMahon** were victorious leaving **SSgt Cynthia Jackson** with the bruises to prove it. An excellent weekend drew to a close with **SSgt Emma Orrell**'s mobile food supplies ensuring nobody went hungry on the way home.

REGIMENTAL DRIVER TRAINING COURSE 17-24 NOVEMBER 1996

The second Driver and Trade Training Course of the year assembled at a very wet and windy Browndown Training Camp on Sunday 17 November. The majority of the SNCO's arrived looking more than a little weary following the Sgts Mess Draw the previous evening. However, **SSgt Sheila Billing**, acting as I/C Admin for the week, soon woke everyone up as she detailed people to tasks and by 1800hrs everything was in place ready for a bright early start the following morning.

It was still dark o'clock on Monday 18 November (0600hrs) when everyone emerged ready for a session of PT under the expert guidance of **Cpl Amy McAulliffe**–well, this was not strictly true as some SNCO's must still have been feeling a little tired as the Mess Draw took its toll and decided a few extra minutes in bed would be worth a day on duty and an evening running the Mess Bar! A total of nine students assembled for the Driving Course, the first challenge being to pass the highway Code Matrix

NAAFI JOINS FORCES WITH HIGH STREET NAMES

Naafi is offering its customers in shops and clubs the best from civilian high streets and locals, through partnerships with some of the best known names in the business.

In shops, a cross-section of locations have been selected for trial partnerships with Costcutter, Londis and Spar. The exercise has the full backing of the Ministry of Defence, and is intended to strengthen the retail arm of Naafi's services. The partnerships give each of the stores involved the benefit of support services from one of the three partners.

Air Commodore Allan Vaughan, Naafi's retail and recreational services director, explained: 'Naafi must find a way to combine the expertise and support services of civilian retailers with its own 75-year experience of the Forces.

'As a result of these trials – and after consulting with its customers through surveys – Naafi will establish how best to provide attractive convenience shopping, stocking more competitively priced goods and employing high standards of customer care.'

A similar exercise is underway in Naafi clubs, as Naafi enlists three major brewers to help find a winning pub formula for its junior ranks clubs. Bass, Scottish Courage and Whitbread have gone into partnership with Naafi in one club each. As with shops, the clubs will continue to be operated by Naafi staff, but the brewers will be offering guidance on specific areas.

Allan Vaughan laid out the objectives of the trial: 'If the customers would feel happy to use the Naafi club as a matter of choice on a regular basis – much as a civilian would use their local – then the experiment will be deemed a success.'

Both the shop and club trials are scheduled for completion in Spring 1997, when the success of the operation will be gaged and the appropriate partnerships 'rolled out' to the other Naafi establishments.

Naafinews

Test. After 40 minutes scratching of heads and only one person managing to pass we all wondered whether a week was long enough for the course. **LCpl McGarrity**, 83 Sqn, insisted he had taken the test the previous week and passed, all that can be said about him was it's a good job plenty of blank answer sheets were available. A miracle did occur eventually and all students got the first hurdle out of the way, but with the warning that the test does consist of Highway Code questions–fail the questions and you fail the test! After revision on Works Tickets, fuel accounting and accident reporting, it was time for the instructors to brave the open road with their fledgling drivers.

The LGV Instructors; **SSgt Roy Smith**, **Sgt Tarqwell Travis** and **Cpl Gary Baker** had the easier task of teaching the LGV students (they can at least drive), while **WO2 (RQMS) John Middleton** and **Cpl Sharon Driver** once again took on the real challenge of instructing the Basic Light Vehicle students. Remember no dual controls for any of us! The first hour or so was spent out on the training area and then the inevitable decision time arrived when everyone was let loose to terrorise the local population. Slowly but surely against all the odds, students began to appreciated everything that Driver Training involves and the days raced on towards Test Day. Fortunately, The Kingfisher Pub offered the escape every evening, where the instructors were able to regain their sanity and the students replace some of the nervous energy lost during the day.

First up for test was **SSgt** 'Jack Russell' **Hawkins** who said he only needed the licence so he could drive the truck that would be needed to carry all the RSM's personal kit on exercise! **Cpl Wilson** and **LCpl Holder**, 56 Sqn, were soon through their test and then it was the turn of **Sig Walker** from 41 Sqn to step forward as the first of the Basic Car Licence students to attempt the test. Under the expert tuition of the RQMS, the result was never in doubt–another pass. **LCpl Sawyer**, 56 Sqn, unfortunately failed his test at the first attempt but who wouldn't fail if they had **SSgt** 'Roy–Pit Bull' **Smith** sat in the examiners chair. However, after a quick kick up the rear he soon put the course back on tracks passing at the second attempt. **LCpl McGarrity**, 83 Sqn, spent most of the morning prior to his test visiting the little boys room but managed to control himself and was successful at his first attempt. **Sig** 'Nursey' **Harrigan** managed to stop talking about her time in Bosnia just long enough to pass her test at the first attempt–a real shock to all the instructors who remember her attempts to pass the Basic Car Test on a course only two years previously. The pressure was now on **Sgt Phil Robson**, PSI HQ Sqn, as the last person up for the LGV Test–according to **Sgt Tarqwell Travis** he wasn't the brightest of students! However, pass he did and he can now hire the Golf Buggy for the next round of golf with the RSM. **Cpl Sharon Driver** and **Mrs Maggie McKenzie**, our token all female entry, were still busy working with the pedestrians in Gosport Town Centre–a pass by **Maggie** meant the Grand Slam for the course. **Cpl Driver** had little to say about her student–not surprisingly since she had raging toothache for the week of the course. However, she at last gave in and had the offending tooth removed. Unfortunately for us all this meant that **Sharon** was soon back to her normal self bumping her gums!! **Mrs McKenzie** passed the following morning–a 100% pass rate for the course. Well done to the instructors and students.

A combined end of course function with the Trade Course students was held in the Browndown Club. Thanks go to the organisers, **Cpl Cosgrove**, **LCpl Purves**, **LCpl Holder** and **LCpl McGarrity** for an excellent evening. A mention also for the chefs, **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Nealy** and **Cpl** 'Lesley' **Wade**, for their excellent culinary skills, especially **Cpl Wade** for her extremely 'interesting' pizzas. **Cpl Derek Fairs** and his merry band once again provided the vital admin support and all that remains to be said is roll on March 1997 when the next course is due to start.

41 (PLK) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. E. C. Davies TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) R. C. White**

OFFICERS' MESS DINNER

The Squadron managed to produce seven officers and one officer cadet for the occasion of **Capt Diane Burke**'s farewell dining out from the unit. The dinner was arranged at a local Coulsdon Hotel by the PSAO, **Capt George Devine**, to bid goodbye to a very popular member of the Mess who is disappearing to Canada with her husband **Mike** for a two year tour at the Canadian School of Signals. It was a superb evening and one of the bright spots was a presentation to the Mess by **Diane** of an antique map of Kensington which proudly now graces the wall in the Mess. She in turn was presented with a gift to remind her of her days in the Squadron; a surprise painting of all the Sqn Officers in the uniform of the Kensington Regt. A certain amount of artistic license was required in giving our Lady Officers long grey skirts but the finished article, it was agreed, was worth it. We all returned to the mess then to 'carry on the movement' and put the world to rights till the wee small hours. Haste ye back, **Diane**.

56 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. M. Bryan TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. B. Waterhouse**

Since the last *Wire* Notes, the Squadron has attended Annual Camp, as a Sqn of 31 Sig Regt (V) for the first time. This was held in September 1996, with the Squadron being deployed at Ripon, Edinburgh and Stirlingshire. Some 40 plus members of the Squadron were present for the two weeks. We also participated in the Freedom Parade held in the area of Chelsea and Kensington, having spent the weekend rehearsing at RAF Uxbridge.

A good turn out made the day the success that it was. Furthermore, recruiting events have included a very successful Open Evening held on 26

The CO leads the Regiment towards Sloane Square during the Regiment's Freedom Parade of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in October

November 1996, together with attendance by the Recruiting Team locally. This busy period has also seen the Squadron provide the majority of the manpower for the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph. With our Second in Command, **Capt Brian Howe**, being the Parade Marshall, who says we cannot stand in for the Foot Guards.

858 (RADIO) TROOP

The Troop has been particularly busy in the run-up to Annual Camp and had good turn-outs for Ex Cockney Rag 3, the final Regimental Exercise before Ex Purple Duster, and for the Sqn Camp Prep Weekend. We also had one participant in the recent Regimental Cadre Course: Well done to **Sig Amanda Blackiston** for an excellent performance there.

Annual Camp in September was undoubtedly the highlight of 858 Troop's Training Year, when we deployed as the Squadron's 'A' Type Troop during Ex Purple Duster 2. The Exercise was full of 'interesting' challenges which tested initiative, lateral thinking, diplomacy and, on more than one occasion, patience, to the full: How, for example, to deal with a delegation of burly Scots threatening unspeakable reprisals if we didn't immediately dismantle the FRT 618'S (very heavy!) 70 ft mast from the football pitch in time for the local Garrison team's next match . . . (We declined and live to tell the tale!); how to suitably entertain our two American visitors, attached from the US National Guard. (Solution: Send them for a night on the town with **Cpls Chris Maginnis**, 'Wilf' **Wilson** and 'Dickie' **Bonner**, and don't ask too many questions about which 'Sights' were seen and shown! . . .) The list goes on, and this is without mentioning the various comms puzzles set by our kindly DS which (perhaps to their surprise and chagrin?) we managed to solve every time. Our efforts were suitably rewarded, albeit briefly, by a flying visit to Edinburgh Castle and a chance to soak up some sun and indulge in an ice-cream or three.

The second week with the Regiment in Ripon provided the chance to relax after the hard work with a variety of activities including a walk along part of the Pennine Way, a Fun Shoot and an Orienteering Competition in which **Lt Jackie Blake** proved you really can trust an officer with a map by winning the Female Section, and **LCpl Colin Teo** was the Squadron's highest placed male.

Life after Camp certainly hasn't been boring. A large number of the Troop took part in October's Freedom Parade through the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and having got a taste for ceremonials, several 'volunteered' to form part of the Regiment's contingent representing the Territorial Army at the Remembrance Day Parade at London's Cenotaph. In between ceremonials, many of the Troop attended the Squadron's Training Weekend at Longmoor in late October where, amongst other things, they were treated to the delights of Harbour Drills, a Treasure Hunt and a Fun Shoot. Congratulations to **SSgt Tony Potter**, who was the runaway winner of best shot.

Finally, congratulations, to **LCpls Paul Greenhill** and **Amanda Blackiston**, on their recent promotions.

859 (RADIO) TROOP

Annual Camp 1996, our first with 31 Sig Regt has been and gone, 859 Tp were generous enough to share their expertise with the other two Tps, and hence some personnel were attached to 857 Tp, whilst others to 858 Tp. They showed them how to carry out their comms effectively, for which, I am sure, the other Troops were eternally grateful! Our **SSgt Jim Paine**, was an invaluable source of help to 858 Tp, as they grappled with the skills of communication. It was interesting for the Troop to experience

two weeks as part of another Troop, but they were pleased to return to 859. Three members of the Troop successfully completed their Cadre Course in July. **Sigs Butler**, **Renaud**, and **Sawyer**, all performed well and were worthy of their certificates.

We have welcomed **Sig Childs** back to the Squadron and into our Troop, after a gap of a few years. Additionally, **LCpl Eve** and **Sig Scott** have joined us. Congratulations to **Sig Sawyer**, on the birth of his child, born during the summer.

83 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. Irvine**
PSAO	**Capt D. Thomas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) R. Harding**

The Squadron has been through a great deal of changes in recent years and months, and to it's credit it has survived and now begins to grow. A hearty welcome back is sent out to our returning War Hero's from Bosnia, **Sig Martin Woodhouse** (now LCpl and dad there was obviously something in the water, congratulations), **Cpl Mark Lawrence** and **LCpl** 'Beekie' **Strickland**. To those from the Squadron still on Op Resolute, **LCpl Dave Misell**, **LCpl Sid Ahluwalia**, **Sig** 'Sully' **Sullivan** (our little Infanteer).

RHQ

CO	**Lt Col A. C. C. Lapsley**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) G. G. A. Reith**

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Capt Cammy Payn**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry McVey**

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **WO2 (SSM) Terry McVey** and **WO2 Karen Swan** on the birth of their daughter **Rebecca**. Well done **Karen**, we all know Terry only had a small part to play.!

BOUNTY QUALIFICATION WEEKEND

HQ and 61 Sqn ran a Bounty Qualification Weekend at Barrybuddon Trg Camp over the period 26-27 October. The weekend went exceptionally well with practices 10 and 11 (night shoot) being fired. Three members of the Squadron qualified as marksmen in the APWT and our new Col, **Lt Col Lapsley** awarded them with their crossed rifles (a very prized possession indeed). The three were as follows: **Cpl Tam McCartney**, **Cfn McInally** and **Sig Dodds**.

SSgt Davie McGuire and **Sgt Sam Fraser** ran the NBC, and First Aid Training and testing respectively. **Sgt Fraser** (who is the Regt's blonde bombshell) had no shortage of volunteers to act as unconscious causalities for her First Aid Stand (I wonder why).

RECRUITS

The Squadron continues to recruit well and would like to give a big welcome to our latest batch, they are:-

Recruit Leitch
Recruit Travis
Recruit Currie
Recruit Pardo

On the subject of recruits our Squadron RRTT member **Sgt Raymond McMillan** who is an ex Para (and never tires of letting everyone know) who has said not just once and I quote 'all those jumps and never had an injury' at our Recruit Weekend at Stirling Training Camp fell on ice and broke his wrist and cut his head. Bad luck **Raymond** we wish you a speedy recovery.

EXERCISE GRAND PRIX

Cpl 'Shug' **MacLean**, our Squadron Chef has deployed with 1KOSB on Ex Grand Prix to Kenya for a six week exercise. On the KOSBs return they will have two months with their families before deployment to Hong Kong for a six month tour in which they will be involved in the handover of the Island. But they are not getting our 'Shug' for their tour he's been badly missed and we want him back.

SSM NOTE

The RSM, who's favourite subject is NBC has been trying like mad to get the SSM on an NBC Instructors Course but up until now has been unsuccessful. Maybe it's because the SSM has been working in Trg Wng full time in the absence of **SSgt Karen Tindall** who is recovering from a knee operation. All the best **Karen**. Hurry back, the computer got a virus I think.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ian Walker**

WELCOMES AND GOODBYES

With the Annual Camp, Freedom Parade, Royal Tournament, Lord Mayors Parade, Cenotaph and lots more out of the way, it is with regret that the Officer plot has now swung into action and sad farewells are sent to **Capt Steve Baker**, **Lt Kate Harris** and **Lt Anna Darnell**, you will all be sorely missed.

As to welcomes, we welcome **Capt Seb Walker**, our man in the Ministry, **Lt Susie Sidwell** and **Capt John Russell**, who returns to us from Bosnia with, I am sure, a lot of War Stories. On the Regular front, it's a warm welcome to our new PSI, **SSgt Nick** 'He will be in it' **Wood** and **Cpl Steve Taylor**, PSI Tech.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to our recent promotions, the Long suffering Ex 39 Sig Regt's **Sig Paul McGarrity** to LCpl and our very own **Cpl Matt Cahill** to Sgt. Well done.

SQMS'S STORE

I must mention the good humoured, cuddly Ex 7 Sig Regt Lineman, **SSgt Roy Smith**, (if you believe that you will believe anything) who continues to supply this Squadron with all it needs. Thank you **Roy**!

32 Sig Regt (V)
Glasgow

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

With the ongoing operations in former Yugoslavia the Squadron has been well represented with outgoings of **LCpl John Macdonald**, and later this month, **Capt Dan Robertson**. They will join **LCpl Jimmy Douglas** who is holding the fort out there at the moment. Just a word to **Cpl Douglas**–your car will be feeling the cold back in Brechin–but not as cold as your location. We bid a hearty welcome to **LCpl Tina Youngson** and **LCpl Rory Milne** who have recently returned to the fold and to **LCpl Edgerton** who had a mishap over there and is making a speedy recovery.

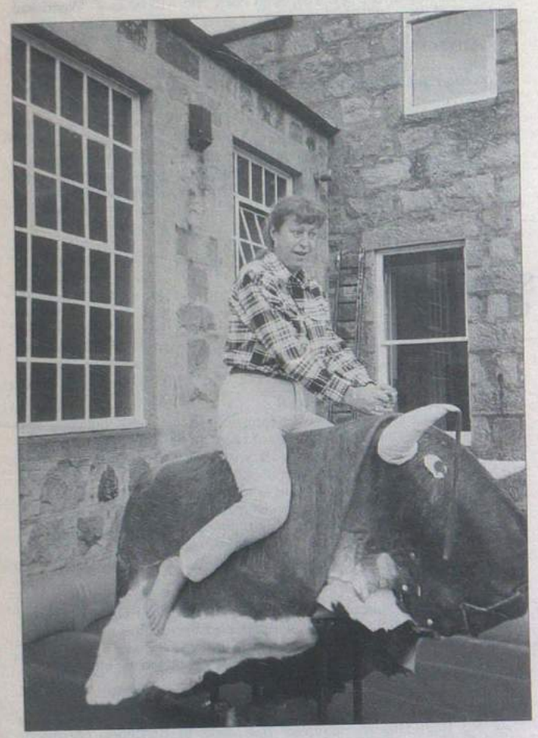
MOVE TO GORDON BARRACKS

The move of 51 Sqn to Gordon Barracks has finally been achieved–the result of years of dedicated hoarding by **SSgt (SQMS) George Fraser BEM** has come to light and many 4 tonner loads were lifted and shifted by exhausted Squadron members!! Although the physical move went well, we are still working on the social side of the T.A. and having other units in the messes takes a bit of getting used to.

SOCIAL CIRCLE

At our Regt Officers' Summer Ball, held in Banchory, organised superbly by Sqn 2IC, **Capt John Mackie**, the opportunity was taken by the younger officers to say farewell to **Lt Phil Donegan**. As you can see from the photograph a certain amount of ritual was involved and **Phil**'s new unit have the added bonus of enjoying his wonderful singing voice - albeit now boy Soprano. Our photograph shows **Capts Domnhall Dods**, **Brian Shankland**, **Lt Stuart Middleton**, and **2Lt Steve Mcbride** ensuring **Lt Donegan**'s stake was well done.

Our other photograph shows our OC, **Maj Morna Strachan** displaying all the dignity and poise that is expected of a field officer. If you are wondering how she got up there in the first place–check out the lineys ladder in the background. The occasion was the Squadron Country and Western night organised by Tech PSI **John Gorman** and his wife **Claire**–she deserves special mention for pitching in and helping the Squadron functions go extremely smoothly–her catering management course at Aberdeen College did not prepare her for some of the more bizarre requests that T.A. people come up with!!



EXERCISE STAGECOACH 96

Just in case you think it is all play and no work here in Siberia–the Squadron just had a major part in the above 2 (NC) Bde exercise. We brushed up on all our old skills that have become a bit rusty due to the advent of NCRS training. All our locations achieved comms and newer members saw a part of the Squadron's role that the old timers had perfected. A special mention must go to **Sgt Harry Buck** and his det–they were our mobile element and were testing some new equipment–tins and some very long string indeed. They had a very strenuous time and came back to barracks still cheerful–well done to all concerned.

'And Finally'. . . As the festive season approaches–we are all gearing up for the coming onslaught–we would like to wish all our friends and colleagues a very merry Christmas and have a typical Scots new year.

A joke from the SSM–2IC orders a Tarka vindaloo from the take away–when asked what it was he said 'It's like a beef vindaloo but a little otter' DO YOU SEE WHAT WE HAVE TO ENDURE UP HERE!?!

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj D. S. S. Andrews**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) H. I. McKay**

The Squadron finally broke with the habits of the past two years and got back to some concentrated Mould and mobile HF training–rather than NCRS–in early October. This culminated in mid November with Ex Stagecoach, the first of a series of Integrated Contingency Planning type exercises due over the coming months. This saw MIV's deploy from Glasgow across Scotland on the Friday night to locations ranging from Fraserburgh in the north, to Campbelltown in the west and Dumfries in the South. Also involved in this exercises were static detachments in Edinburgh Castle and Newton-St-Boswell where the local council provided the Det with a 10" TV and video, in case they got bored over the weekend.

November has also seen the return of **LCpl Carol White** from her adventures in Bosnia, and at the same time **Capt Donald Gordon** extended once again for his third tour (does he really dislike us that much), but he still found the time to return for armistice day parade, and just as well as he stepped in at the last minute to act as the wreath layer for the Glasgow location. On the way east for a tour with IFOR is **Pte Alistair Paterson** who will no doubt maintain the ability to produce the culinary delights that he is renowned for back in Glasgow.

The Squadron welcomes new blood in the form of **Sigs Lee Cuthbertson**, and **Robert McGill** who have both successfully completed their basic recruit course over the last month. On the departure side the Squadron wishes **Sig Rona Crawford** well on her move to HQ Sqn.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Fiona Farquharson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Bill Strachan**

Given that annual camp finished at the end of September it took some time for many of us to recover from the 'shell shock' of Warcop. Consequently October and November has seen little excitement in terms of unusual activity. There was the usual run of Squadron training weekends where we have been re-introduced to the wonder and mysteries of CPX land line communications. The 'D.U.S.T.' has not yet settled for a number of us who have for the past 18 months or so been concentrating on the foibles of NCRS. The Squadron did hold a very successful open night following on a local recruitment campaign master minded by **Capt Domhnall Dods**. Some good PR cover was secured by him.

It was in October that many of the Squadron had their first exposure to night shoot at Barry Buddon Ranges near Dundee. If you thought the shooting was good during daylight hours you should have seen this. Suffice to say that the 'best worse' shot overall was a recent addition **Sig** 'Cats eyes' (aka Anorak) **Forsyth** with two (out of 120)! Bisley here he (don't) come. Better performance was that of **LCpl** 'Wilma' **Moyes** who on good authority shattered the glazing in the local hostelry–with her karoake rendering of 'Fame' (it was brutal).

November saw the Squadron involved in their annual pilgrimage to the local church for their Remembrance parade. The local parish is somewhat privileged with a VC awarded posthumously to one of their number early in World War II. It is always a touching reminder at that time of the year brought home with a force when one learns that that particular VC was only a 26 year old Corporal. It was a privilege for the Squadron to place a poppy wreath, carried by **SSgt Helen Jephcote** and **OC John Fleming**, at the local memorial. The writer is pleased to note that on this occasion we preceded the Brownies into church!

61 Sqn has provided four personnel to IFOR operations in Bosnia. **Cpl John** 'FM' **Faichney** and our favourite Space Cadet **LCpl Jimmy Collins** are now home on completion of a six month tour (well nearly for **LCpl Collins**.) **LCpl Fraser Allan** (Smiler) our otherwise friendly postman will make it home mid December just in time for a spot of overtime delivering his Christmas Mail–you have to admire his timing–that is unless he's on strike!

It is no coincidence that the international news from Bosnia has been somewhat subdued lately. We here speculate that that is as a result of our latest posting to IFOR in the person of **Sgt Jaqueline Smith** (aka the Buckie Drifter) who was both delighted and terrified, at least initially, when she was selected for COMMCEN post. She keeps in frequent contact with her Squadron friends. Based near Split she is due home for a period of R & R in December. We expect her Serbo-Croat skills to have improved beyond 'gi'es a fag please' by the time we next see her.

On the domestic front the OC was delighted to hear of the birth of a baby girl (**Lauren**) to our former **Sgt Karen Young** and our existing **Sgt Stewart Young**. All three well. Congratulations too to **LCpl Billy Smith** on his recent promotion to LCpl and who is imminently also awaiting fatherhood. It is with a fair degree of excitement that we in the Squadron anticipate the TV debut of our very own 'Gladiator' **Sig** 'Skinbob' **Munro**. He's one of those guys who excels at anything he tries–ugh! His most recent and noteworthy achievement was to pass with relative ease all the assessment trials for the 'TV Gladiators'. Hoping to compete against 'Vogue' or 'Zodiac' he is due to attend a 'Gladiators' training camp in June with live competition that month. We wish him all success. A very successful athlete he is an accomplished boxer of nearly 10 years amateur experience, hopes to represent the Regt in forthcoming amateur competition, with a view to aspiring to Scottish representation in the Commonwealth Games in 1998. Thereafter who knows–The World or retirement. Among the other strings to his fiddle is his activities in the Regt Pipe Band where he plays tenor drum and is practising for the pipes. The noise is unbearable.

EXERCISE STAGECOACH

This saw the Squadron for the first time in eighteen months revert to its formal glories of CPX comms with standard line terminal TREND and DUST. A new outing for us was the introduction of INMARSAT communication. Ex Stagecoach proved to be both a very useful and chastening experience. How we were reminded of what we had forgotten. We look forward to renewing our skills in the coming months now that the frantic activity of NCRS has abated.

In Edinburgh we are blessed with a fairly local Small Arms Trainer (SAT) at which we can with ease and it has to be said with a fair degree of comfort practice our live firing skills. However, no computer processor even given a trillion Gb HD could cope or compensate with the degree with which **Maj** 'Mayhem' **Brian Murray** was missing the target! So frustrated was the Range Officer **SSM Bill Strachan** that he actually paid for the taxi to take **Maj Murray** to the Optician. The only defence the Major could offer was his Varilux lenses kept varying! Good job he missed the night shoot last month.

34 Sig Regt (V) Middlesbrough

50 (N) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

EXERCISE PUFFINS PUSH: [A SURVIVOR WRITES]

Staithes has never seen anything like it and nor for that matter have I. On a blustery Friday evening 16 of us travelled to Trig Point 49, an outdoor pursuits centre in the picturesque fishing village of Staithes, a few miles north of Whitby. We unloaded our kit and were briefed on the camp's layout by **Wolf**, a Caucasian archery instructor with waist-length dreadlocks. The OC, **Maj Mike Holman**, then explained the next day's programme and we decided to fortify ourselves for the rigours ahead. We descended the seemingly vertical cobbled street to the first of the village's three pubs. The rest of the evening can probably be left to the reader's imagination. Suffice to say there were no arrests.

We rose bright-eyed, apple-cheeked and clear-headed by 7.30 and managed a hearty breakfast, prepared by **Cpl John Ralph**. [The author refused to take a polygraph test: Wisely, we think.] Our instructors **Paul** and **Allan**, ex-regular soldiers, took us to the River Esk and formed us into two teams. Our suspicions were roused a teensy little bit when they zipped themselves into dry suits: they hadn't been on the kit list. One team subdivided into two teams of four, which built rafts from plastic barrels, ropes and poles, then paddled them across the river. They were far from streamlined but held together quite well. We then had to paddle to the middle of the river and swap rafts. At that point my team realised our raft's constructional limitations. It disintegrated. **LCp Kate Coate**'s words were muffled which is probably just as well, since I doubt they'd have been quotable without an awful lot of asterisks. Having waded back to shore we built Mark II which held together, but by this time we were all soaked anyway.

We then changed with the other team of eight and paddled something called a Bell Boat (see the photo). We had great fun paddling that back and forth and competing in sub-teams again, with the losers having to pay forfeits. These invariably involved getting even wetter than we already were, but despite out best efforts we were unable to disprove **Paul**'s claim that the thing couldn't capsize.

L-R: Sig Emma Martin-Law, Cpl Karen Jemmett, Sig Val Pritchard, Sig Claire Smart, LCpl Mel Nelson, LCpl Julie Mills

At midday we towelled down, rubbed salt on our leeches, changed into dry clothes and ate our death packs. Morale soared when the sun came out to warm our chilly bones and we drove via a coffee shack to a small crag high on a hill, with stunning views of the North Yorkshire Moors. There we hauled each other up two climbs, one easy, the other a real struggle. **OCdt Sarah Richards** was one of the few people to manage both. We made it back to Trig Point in one piece (so much tidier that way), thanked our instructors for not drowning or dropping us and returned to our TACs. Next time maybe two days, boss?

BIRTWISTLE TROPHY

As part of the Regiment's Birtwistle competition we gathered at Catterick's Shaiba Camp in mid-November. A forced march was an appropriate start to a strenuous but enjoyable weekend which also included: NBC, First Aid, Watermanship, Map Reading by day and a Night Navigation exercise. We returned to Darlington on Sunday morning and completed other ATD requirements. **Cpl** 'Fletch' **Fletcher** and his team could clearly have benefited from the raft-building instruction on Ex Puffins Push since their contraption performed a spectacular barrel-roll (yep, pun intended) as soon as they reached deep water. Muddy water at that, wasn't it Fletch? The team in the Regiment Training Office deserve congratulations for making routine training requirements so entertaining. Or that's what they say. In fact we were reluctantly forced to agree.

Foot Inspection–Squadron Birtwistle Weekend

OTHER EVENTS

Lt Max Garrety earned his organisational spurs by planning and arranging a weekend survival training exercise in Otterburn, based on his own training as a fast jet navigator in a previous incarnation. Since everyone made it back alive it must qualify as a success. People seem to have enjoyed the experience too and our next contribution may even contain a photograph of **Sig** 'Dagenham Dave' **Davies**'s ingenious method of warding off hypothermia by sharing body warmth with a sheep called Sally. Well, that's his story anyway, and his mates dahn the East End might not appreciate people spreading slanderous alternatives. Knah worra mean?

On 16 November **Brig David Wills**, Comd 11 (ARC) Sig Bde, presented IFOR medals to **Cpl Mike Jemmett, Cpl Steve Nelson, Cpl Paul Hemsley, LCpl Mel Nelson, Sig Mac McFarland** and **Sig Allan Urwin**. He also presented Efficiency Medals to **Sgt Pat Bell** and **Sgt Ron Clarke**.

Finally, congratulations to **Sgt Mac MacDonald, Cpl Paul Standing** and **LCpl Tony Hotchen** on their recent promotions.

EXERCISE SEA TO SEA–27/29 SEPTEMBER 1996

Ex Sea to Sea was to be a charity event organised by 90 Sig Sqn (V) in support of its local charity 'Youth Action, Middlesbrough'. The aim of the exercise was to cycle from the West to East coast of North Yorkshire raising money from sponsorship. The start point being Workington and finish Sunderland. It was planned to complete the entire event in three days commencing Friday 27 September and finishing on the afternoon of Sunday.

During the planning it was foreseen that punctures would be encountered during the journey, to this end puncture repair kits were deemed to be an essential item and placed top of the list, followed closely by maps! All participants met on Thursday evening and were transported to Workington TAC to prepare for the adventure. It was decided on the insistence **SSgt Ray Lang** that the first person to get a puncture would buy a round for all participants . . . a decision he would later regret!

Early next morning everyone got a good breakfast before meeting at the start point. Our team of thirteen set off at 0800 hrs. The pathfinder **Sig** (Maps are us) **Ball** managed to get the team lost within the first two miles–obviously beginning as he meant to go on!

Day one and our first casualty was **SSgt Ray Lang** who received the first puncture of the exercise! The hysterical laughter of all present was short lived when within 100 metres the group received a total of 27 punctures with only one rider escaping. Luckily, some would say, the disaster occurred outside a public house.

The end of first day saw our riders resting at Penrith–with still a long way to go. The second day the team set off with an extra four riders who had joined us during the night. There followed lots of comments about sore area's of anatomy and groans when the first set of hills came into view. Some being so steep that riders were forced to abandon their cycles and take to foot. Due to the hard going it was decided to split the team into two groups (old and bold & fit & mean)! On the third day the end was in sight. This was reflected in the heightened renewed enthusiasm. Speed increased to warp factor four and the day was spent mostly travelling through built up areas. The views were not so impressive but at least there were no hills to challenge the team much to their relief.

At the conclusion of the challenge the team had travelled a total of 147 miles and raised in the region of £250 for our charity. Congratulations must go to all participants for their hard work and perseverance–well done to all concerned.

35 Sig Regt (V)
Sutton Coldfield

XXXV

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

Husbands, wives, fathers, sons, brothers, sisters. When you look around the Regt you begin to realise what the term the 'TA Family' really means.

Throughout the Regt there are clear and close family connections making service in the TA very much a family affair. Within RHQ at Sutton Coldfield our esteemed Adjt **Capt Graham Inglis** has been joined by his wife **Melanie** who has taken up the reins as Regt Personnel Officer–guess which one deployed into the field on the last exercise though? 48 Sqn in Sparkbrook take the family biscuit with the **Morris** sisters (**Rhonda, Donna, Anita** and **Julie**) they attend all Squadron social functions and are amusingly known as the '**Morris** Dancers'. They are closely followed by the **Hussain** brothers (**Lal** and **Bahader**) and a spattering of husband and wife teams in the shapes of **Cpls Steve** and **Marian Hewitt, Cpls Keith** and **Sarah Nevitt** and finally **LCpls Tina** and **Pete Smyth**. 58 Sqn in Newcastle-Under-Lyne are trying to catch up with brothers **Sgt Phil** and **Cpl John Johnson**, sisters **Lt Dominic Hope** and **Sig Rebecca Hope** and an unusual husband and wife team in **Cpl John Heeson** who serves with 58 Sqn whilst his wife **Jill** serves as a Sgt with HQ Sqn–at least here she can't pull rank! Finally we move to 95 Sqn to find that even here there is a large brace of family members.

First is the long serving father and son team in **WO2 Clive Winstanley** and his son **Martin** who is a LCpl. Next we have brothers **Sigs Jonathan** and **Stewart Bailey** and last but not least a doting husband and wife team in **Sgt Craig Kinsey** and his wife **Amanda** a serving LCpl.

CHILDREN IN NEED

Our fund-raising efforts on behalf of the Birmingham Children's Hospital and Save The Children continue unabated and with a fervour not seen since the BBC's Children in Need marathon. Thanks in no small part to the magnificent efforts of our TA volunteers, £33,000 was raised for Save The Children through the sale of raffle tickets during the Motor Show at Birmingham. It is hoped that the eventual target of one million ticket sales is reached by all fund-raisers throughout the West Midlands by early next year. Regt efforts to sell tickets and raise money are continuing even now at the Merry Hill shopping centre at Dudley and reports suggest that ticket sales are going very well.

REBEL WITH A CAUSE

The sight of children enjoying themselves at any time of the year is a heart-warming sight that is guaranteed to lift the spirits of even the most melancholy. It is even more joyful when you are privileged to witness those children that have suffered major traumas in their short and often painful lives yet still manage to light up and touch the lives of everyone who come into contact with them!

The Regt has played a major role in supporting Ward 1 of the Birmingham Children's Hospital, raising much needed funds and equipment. To further brighten the lives of the children in its care, the Regt, under the masterful guidance of the RSM, **WO1 Phil Clifford**, hosted the Children's Christmas Party at 48 Sqn on Sunday 1 December. **SSgts Ed Perry** and **Bob Heaselgrave** transformed the Squadron Drill Hall into a Christmas fairyland complete with Santa's Grotto, Punch and Judy Show, Children's Disco, Face Painting artist, a visit from Batman and Robin and many other magical themes–the scene was set all we needed now was the children, their parents and last but not least the angels of mercy from the hospital!

Angels without dirty faces !

Children from the Hospital and those who were now outpatients descended on 48 Sqn in large numbers, some had travelled from as far away as York! The children themselves were delighted that the venue was actually away from the hospital. The children are naturally very brave but they still associate the hospital with medical treatment that is often associated with unpleasant side effects, so they were immensely relieved to be in a different environment.

During the party the children received a surprise visit from **Rebel** and **Trojan** from the Gladiators. This brought shrieks of delight not only from the children but also from their parents and ecstatic members of 48 Sqn. **Rebel** and **Trojan** spent a long time with the children and spoke to many parents and we are particularly grateful for their kind support. Thanks to the splendid organisation the party was a huge success and all those involved are to be congratulated for their sterling efforts!

Rebel with the Hussain brothers and Cpl Keith Nevitt

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations are extended to **2Lt Alan White** on his TA commission having successfully graduated from RMAS. A succession of Recruit Pass Offs have also been held during the last few months and we extend special congratulations to **Sig William Aston** of 95 Sqn on achieving Best Recruit on course E96 and to **Sigs Ben Eaton** and **Brian Read** of 48 and HQ Sqn respectively on achieving Best Recruit status on joint course C/D 96. **Sigs Eaton** and **Read** were presented with their awards by the Honorary Colonel, **Brig Ian Sim** whilst **Sig Aston** was presented with his award by the CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston**.

A proud Sig William Aston with his award of Best Recruit.

A proud pair of Best Recruits
Sig's Brian Read and Ben Eaton together with the Honorary Colonel.

Congratulations are also extended to all of our recently qualified Recruits who stayed the course despite some appalling weather conditions. Finally many congratulations to our long suffering medic, **Sgt Andy Rodgers**, on his recent promotion.

THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY

The Christmas festivities this year once again started with the renowned Council House Dinner widely acknowledged as the premier function of the year, which was held on Saturday 30 November. This notable event provides the highlight of the year for the Officers Mess whose members and guests celebrated Christmas in style in the stately and illustrious surrounds of the City of Birmingham Council House. Distinguished guests at this prominent function included the Deputy Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Birmingham, **Cllr David** and **Mrs Roy** and Comd Comms HQ Land, **Brig J. H. Griffin**.

Guests were welcomed by the CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston** and the Hon Col, **Brig Ian Sim**. Music was provided by the Band of the Staffordshire Regiment. Once again many old friends joined the Regt at this sumptuous occasion which again was expertly organised by **Capt George Cairns**. The following week the Squadron Christmas functions began with HQ, 48, 58 and 95 Sqn holding their functions on Saturday 7 December. By all accounts they were a tremendous success. As we go to print 89 Sqn are holding their uniquely themed 'A Night at the Circus' function, a **SSgt** 'Coco' **Walker** and **Capt** 'Bozo' **Brough** production, and this will be closely followed by the Sgt's Mess Christmas bash. Once again a busy year has ended on a light, refreshing and relaxing note!

IT'S A SPORTING LIFE

On Sunday 8 December a team from the regiment competed in the Divisional Cross Country Championships at Newbold Common, Leamington Spa. Unfortunately this year the teams entered were under strength and we were unable to field a TA team. However, the team from the Regular PS, with some of their strongest members unable to participate, still put up a brave attempt and in the circumstances achieved a very creditable fifth position almost repeating last years performance. Later that day the Regt inter Sqn Rugby competition was held at Whittington Barracks in Lichfield. There were some touch and go performances throughout the competition and one or two controversial decisions by the referee, but it cannot be argued otherwise that HQ Sqn were deservedly outright winners by a deft performance and a competitive spirit that dismissed the opposition with ease.

The Champion Rugby Team from HQ Sqn

ALL CHANGE

The saddest part of life in any unit is watchmg old friends move on and having to cope with the invariable adjustment to change. Fortunately this is always counterbalanced by the newcomers when new friendships are developed and strong working relationships forged as before. Changes to manning occur constantly and we have bade a number of farewells and extended an equal amount of welcomes in the past two months. First to leave during this period was **Sgt John Richards** of 48 Sqn. **John** leaves the TA after 25 years service and this was gracefully acknowledged during a recent Squadron dinner where **John** was presented with a decanter. We have also said farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Ian Flippance** and his family on posting to 16 Sig Regt and to **WO2 (YofS) Chris Rogan** on his retirement. Special welcomes are extended to **Sgt Den Nichol** and family to 89 Sqn and to **Sgt Mickie Mann** to 48 Sqn. As usual and traditional we wish all our new arrivals a happy and rewarding tour with the Regt.

Major Colin Meikle presenting Sgt John Richard with his farewell gift.

RSYC
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Skywave from £25
Contact Maj Graeham Neal
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36 (E) Sig Regt (V)
Ilford

EXERCISE FAN DANCE '96
by Sgt Steve Hollands

Once again the PSI mandatory training was upon us. The cunning plan was that all the PSIs from the Regiment would travel from their TACs to Sennybridge Training Camp, Wales, for some 'fun' adventurous training.

SSgt (Art Veh) 'Bruce' **Lee** and his sidekick **Sgt Craig Sinclair** conducted numerous recces and finally submitted a plan which was known only to the precious few. Two days, what could we do in two days?? The rumours were rife; potholing, bunjee jumping, catapult jumping. Rumours were explored but none bore fruition. Still, the precious few divulged nothing.

Arriving at Sennybridge Camp we were informed by Batman and Robin of the forthcoming events and asked to consult our social calendars for free time. Split into two groups, A and B, A was to take a gentle stroll over the slightly undulating terrain of Pen-y-Fan whilst group B went climbing, before swapping activities at lunch. I found myself in group A along with several other aspiring Chris Bonningtons, including the Training Major and the RSM. Being the thrusting officers and SNCOs that we are, we decided to dispense with the traditional warm-up and launched straight into our ascent. Minutes passed and the banter decreased from its normal roar to a strangled whisper. Up and up we went, further and further into the mist, swapping leaders as we went. **Maj Lewis Taylor** and **LCpl** 'Billy' **Dyson** proceeded, whilst leading, to relocate the glacial lake from it's resting place of many years to a completely new location. Once again proving that theory about officers and maps. Still upwards we went, spurred onwards by **WO1 (RSM) Benny Bywater MBE**, comments of, 'Don't worry lads, I've been here before. It's only a hundred metres to the top!' It was! Twenty metres along and eighty metres straight up. **SSgt Stan Haynes** peering into the mist called, 'This must nearly be the top?' 'Oh no, it isn't!' came **Sgt Martin** 'Lets Talk Helicopters' **Darlington**'s rotten reply. At this point it was decided that the group would lighten **SSgt (PAOWO)** 'Sticky' **Barry Green**'s Bergan by graciously eating the small corner sweet shop he had inadvertently packed. Fuelled by Mars Bars, the load taken from his shoulders, the spring returned to his step and we found ourselves at the lunch stop.

Monday afternoon found us in a quarry, practising our climbing and abseiling techniques under the watchful eyes of Batman and Robin. The climbs 'gradually' increased in difficulty although the RSM continually wished 'for just a few inches more!' The afternoon was rounded off with a bouldering competition, won by **Sgt** 'Six Inches' **Jim Pollitt**. The evening and most of the night was spent under canvas, pitched in a circle to ward off Indians and the like. **WO2 (FofS) Steve Elsworthy** decided to get the kindling for the fire and returned with a small tree which the Adjt, **Capt I. Hunter**, took a shine to for the rest of the night. **SSgt Anne** 'Where's My Kit' **McNally** finally found her Bergan in the stationary minibus after an hour and the CO continued the mess traditions by producing a Gin and Tonic from the depths of his pack.

Morning broke! The brave washed in the stream and the sensible watched them. The secret Tuesday activity was then revealed . . . horse riding! The trek started with an introduction on how to steer the transport, except the horse obviously wasn't playing and promptly went off in the wrong direction. A good start!! Armed with our new found skills we split into two groups and headed off into the fields. **Sgt** 'Smudge' **Smith** had 'picked' Rolo as his steed, or Flatulence as it came to be known. When they said, 'Smell the fresh Welsh air', I didn't realise it was to be straight from the horse's bottom. **Sgt Si Hadley**, not content with walking forward, decided to emulate the Mexican Cowboys by walking his horse backwards on its hind legs. We could smell who was the most frightened there! After two hours in the saddle we all understood why John Wayne walked as he did, emphasised by our slow amble to the pub for lunch.

After this we all look forward to Fan Dance '97 with fear and trepidation, knowing it can't be any harder than the last??

37 Sig Regt (V)
Redditch

CO **Lt Col Stanford Cartwright TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Paul Edwards**

When the Regt was re-organised in late 1992, and RHQ moved from Bristol to Redditch, a central location was sought for weekend training. RAF Cosford, near Wolverhampton, fitted the bill admirably and provided excellent facilities for the winter training cycle up to Spring 1996. However, increasing numbers of RAF trainees meant that sufficient accommodation was no longer available and Trg Maj **Maj Tony Shaw** sought a new home for the trade training. Unfortunately no single venue could be found and it was agreed to base the individual trades on the Regt's West Midlands TACs at Redditch, Coventry and Stratford. With few initial teething troubles after some careful co-ordination by **WO2 (YofS) Steve Townsend**, the first weekend went remarkably well.

(*L-R*): PSI 96 Sqn, SSgt 'Biddy' Baxter; PSI 67 Sqn, SSgt Pete Lamont and SSgt FofS Michael Cowie submit to the Regt camera during Trade Trg at Coventry

On the second such weekend, a Regt Cross-Country competition was held on the Sunday morning at Long Marston, the venue for the recruit training. **WOI (RSM) Paul Edwards** planned an interesting 3½ mile course around the Engineers depot and the results were as follows:-

lst	**Sig Adrian Smith**	67 Sqn
2nd	**LCpl Tom Phalp**	67 Sqn
3rd	**Sgt Paul Walsh**	93 Sqn

The ladies ran the same course, with the following results:-

lst	**2Lt Liz Hodges**	96 Sqn
2nd	**Sgt Lucy Sewell**	67 Sqn
3rd	**SSgt Diane Feest**	93 Sqn

After adding up the results from each Squadron, 96 Sqn pipped 93 Sqn to the Cross-Country Trophy. The winning veteran was HQ Sqn's SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian**.

WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian (left) receives his trophy from the CO

Tech Sgts Graham Low (left) and Steve Oliver enjoy a brew at Long Marston. They may have been to Bosnia and back by publication date.

HQ SQUADRON (V)–REDDITCH
Sqn Comd **Maj Les Porter**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian**

On a cold winter training night, HQ Sqn was visited in Redditch TAC by the Mayor of Redditch, Councillor **Roy Vickers**, and Col REME TA, **Col G. R. Illingworth TD ADC**. After initial greeting by the CO and briefing by OC HQ Sqn, the two visitors toured the TAC and visited all departments. A medal presentation in the drill hall followed, when ex-**Cpl Henry** REME received his third bar to the TEM. Ex-**WO2 Tony Graham** received his second bar to the TEM and **WO2 (AQMS) Dave Gautam** was presented with the TEM. The visitors then retired for supper with the officers and SNCOs.

(*L-R*) WO2 (AQMS) Dave Gautam, WO2 Tony Graham and Cpl Henry receive their awards from Col G. R. Illingworth TD ADC. Adjt Capt Steve Williamson pauses between reading citations and OC HQ Sqn escorts.

We welcomed before Christmas **SSgt Pete Dawson** as REME PSI. He comes to us from Omagh LAD, replacing **SSgt Tim Ridge** who after a short tour leaves us on promotion for the RMonRE workshop at Newport. Congratulations also go to him on adding to his family at the same time as moving. By the time this appears in print, Trg Maj, **Maj Tony Shaw** will have left us for the same post with 39 Sig Regt in our former home at Bristol. Our very best wishes go with him and **Lorna** and we look forward to his successor **Maj Steve McConnell**'s arrival after a gap of a few months.

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–CARDIFF
Sqn Comd **Maj John Duggan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Carl Walker**

Three Squadron personnel have recently returned from attachments with the Regular Army, in various parts of the globe, with a fourth still away. **Cpl Paddy Keogh** returned from six months in Northern Ireland, in March, having served with 1st Battalion The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) in Armagh. He promptly got married to **LCpl Rhian Price**, also from the Squadron. **Lt Tim Bamber** and **Capt Jon Loveys** both went to the Balkans on Op Resolute in December 1995. **Lt Bamber** returned having done a six month tour in Sarajevo, with the ARRC Support Battalion. **Capt Loveys**, who was serving with the ARRC CIS Branch, was initially based in Zagreb and later in Sarajevo. **LCpl Tim Haughton** is still on his attachment to 217 Sig Sqn in the Falklands and is not due to return until March 1997.

Camp this year, for the majority of the Squadron, was in Scotland. Most of the time was spent with the increasingly familiar NCRS equipment, in a plethora of different locations as far removed as Stirling (Drip Camp) and Carnbusbarron Training Area.

900 Tp, based in Brecon, did not attend annual camp with the rest of the Sqn. Instead they took part in Ex Western Warrior a 160 Bde Ex, This took them to sunny Thetford and brought them into contact with the Bde Staff for the first time. Undoubtedly an experience for all concerned.

Four of the Squadron's Sergeants, **Mel Giles**, **Lyndon Jones**, **Roger Jarnes** and **Wayne Russell**, recently attended and passed their Staff Sergeants course. The second week of their course was a field exercise on Sennybridge, a familiar training area to them all. Other recent highlights in the fun-packed calendar have included a mixture of Regiment and Squadron activities covering many aspects of TA life.

Marriages would appear to be becoming a regular feature of Squadron life. The PSI, **SSgt Rob Warren**, is due to marry **SSgt Lindsay Millet** early in the new year. A number of Squadron personnel have recently been blessed with offspring. **LCpls Louise** and **Duncan Little** have had a daughter, their second. **Sig Lisa Evans** has had a son, **Lt Fiona Middleton** has had a daughter.

Looking forward, the Squadron is awaiting details of the proposed move into yet another new, purpose built, TA Centre in Cardiff. Having only moved into our current accommodation in September 1994, it looks increasingly likely that another move is imminent. The move is as a result of the rebuilding of Cardiff Arms Park, to provide the Millennium Stadium, in time for the forthcoming Rugby World Cup in 1999, which is being hosted by the Welsh.

Who is this well-known Corps member, snapped at a recent Squadron function?

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
Sqn Comd **Maj Roy Naylor**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ray Campbell**

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE–SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER

The Squadron paraded at two locations–Warwick and Stourbridge.

The Stratford contingent had the honour to parade at Warwick, where the day began with a Memorial Service in St Mary's Church, followed by the wreath-laying service at the Cenotaph. Our wreath was laid by **Capt Steve Orr-Cooper**, thanks to **Tom Phalp**'s last minute efforts to retrieve it from the SSM's Office! The wreath-laying service was followed by a March past, with the Squadron keeping it's tradition of parading in No 2 Dress despite the increasing difficulties in doing so. The Squadron was led by **Capt Jo Billingham**, who was extremely pleased to call out '67 Queens Own Warwickshire & Worcestershire Yeomanry Signal Squadron, eyes left,' before they reached the Cenotaph. This could be the stuff of nightmares! The day was rounded off by a trip to the Mayor's Parlour for reception drinks and the old Comrades Association lunch, which was held on the Sunday for the first time.

The Squadron's Worcestershire Detachment, 871 Tp, paraded at Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge. As the senior serving unit on parade, the Tp paraded in No 2 Dress behind the Royal British Legion and Old Comrades Associations. Following the Memorial Service, attended by local dignitaries, 871 Tp paraded and completed the March past along with 'eyes right'. It was a privilege to parade and honour the living and the fallen, both Military and Civilian, and an even greater privilege to find that many Old Comrades expressed their praise and approval at the high standards that the Troop attained in dress and bearing.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–BLACKBURN
Sqn Comd **Maj Ross Parsell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Walshe**

The first post-Camp exercise, Ex Bonus Link, saw the Squadron deployed to Kinmel Park in North Wales. A non-tactical comms exercise gave the soldiers a good chance to practise the NCRS system and various other secure systems. As in past years when training in North Wales, the weather was very kind and although a brisk wind blew off the sea, the days were sunny and fine while the nights were cold but crisp. As the Regt will be having Annual Camp 1997 in Kinmel Park a bevy of VIPs visited during the course of the weekend to plan Regt activities.

A weekend of a totally different nature was planned for the Squadron by **2Lt Julie Lodge** for the beginning of November. Following a discussion on security matters, she enlisted the aid of the Lancashire Constabulary who provided a member of their Special Branch and a member of their Public Order training Branch. A number of invaluable points on security, searching and crowd control were raised. This was followed by a demonstration on how to remove protesters using minimum force. To complete an excellent weekend she also arranged for a visit to our local fire station to see the latest emergency organisation and equipment currently used by the fire service. All good stuff for future possible MACA tasks. A sad reflection on our society was observed when the watch station officer recounted the incidents when he and his fire fighters were attacked when putting out fires over the Guy Fawkes weekend.

38 Sig Regt (V)
Sheffield

CO — Lt Col R. Davenport TD, R Signals (V)
RSM — WO1 (RSM) M. P. Boyle R Signals

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the Adjutant, **Capt Neil Makepeace** and his wife, **Georgie**, on the birth of their son, **Jonathan**. Congratulations to the following soldiers, promoted at Annual Camp:

To SSgt: **Sgt Clark, Sgt Jones, Sgt Widows**
To Sgt: **Cpl Godbehere, Cpl Jones, Cpl Hartwell, Cpl Johnson**
To Cpl: **LCpl Swift, LCpl Wilson, LCpl Smith 918, LCpl Young 933, LCpl O'Malley**
To LCpl: **Sig Hughes, Pte Smith 941, Sig Smith 778, Sig Hineson, Sig Miller, Sig Willmer 619, Sig Gillham, Sig Elliott, Sig Furniss 363, Sig Bramhall, Sig Wilde, Sig Paton, Sig Blair, Sig Brittain**

LCpl Swift and Sig Bramhall (on crutches) being promoted by the CO

Congratulations also to the following medal recipients: **Sgt Andrea Pickles** (TEM), **Capt Sally Reading** (first bar to TD), **Maj Mike Wright** (third bar to TD), **WO1 Derek Wilkinson** (fourth bar to TEM), and **Cpl Sally Burton** (NATO medal for service with IFOR). **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, made the presentations.

Flowers for WO2 Gwen Wilkinson, whose husband, WO1 Derek Wilkinson, received the fourth bar to the TEM

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj W. F. Evans R Signals**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) G. Cundy**

Annual Camp 96 took the Regiment north of the border to Redford Barracks, Edinburgh.

The first week was taken by Ex Purple Duster 2, a Brigade exercise putting the new NCRS system through its paces, As usual, HQ personnel were attached to dets far and wide. The LAD element worked hard keeping both this and other regiments on the road. The catering department remained at Redford Barracks to receive and administer the vast array of visiting dignitaries. The remainder of the Squadron deployed into the field to the RCP and Echelon, taking care of the Regiment's needs. In the field, glorious weather throughout the exercise offset the annoyance of constant visits of the ACON forces. All who took part found the exercise beneficial and enjoyable.

The Squadron strengthened Reserve Forces links across the Atlantic, hosting two American exchange visitors. 2IC of the Regiment, **Maj Peter Williams**, hosted **Lt Brad Peacher** of the American National Guard, whilst **Sgt Andy** 'Thumper' **Thwaites** entertained **Sgt Kyle Thompson**. Both visitors said they had had an informative and enjoyable time, and indicated the most arduous part of the two weeks was each night's escape and evasion phase; getting out of the respective messes. Just as it should be!

Two days on Ex Western Deesider tested our map reading, navigation and general knowledge skills to the full. Organised and co-ordinated by **WO1 (MTWO) Ben Bentley**, the itinerary took in much of the magnificent scenery of Central Scotland, including an unscheduled invasion of a certain MP's house. **Cpl Ashley** 'Webbo' **Taylor**, obviously did not find this part of Scotland too interesting, and ended up exploring an air museum near North Berwick, some 100 miles from the rest of the teams.

Headquarter's past successes on the sports field continued. Victories in the football, rounders, tennis and tug-of-war ensured the Champion Squadron trophy remained with HQ. The architect of many of the sporting and shooting successes over the past few years, OC **Maj David Rigley**, attended his final camp. At a farewell dinner he was presented with a nut and bolt figurine depicting an officer accepting a table full of trophies. A fitting gift and tribute to 'The Trophy Collector'.

The Victorious HQ Sqn Team

EUROPEAN IRONMAN TRIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS
by WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle

Earlier this year, **WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle** and **SSgt Andy Baird** (now SPSI 5 Sqn, 39 Sig Regt) competed in the European Ironman Triathlon Championships in Germany. Like most major endurance events, they wanted to raise money for a deserving cause. **Cheryl Mullin-Ingham**, the daughter of **WO2 (RQMS) Bob Ingham**, suffers from an un-diagnosed neurological illness and is reliant upon a wheelchair. With this in mind, and the fact that Sheffield has more than its fair share of hills, the money raised would help to purchase an electric wheelchair.

Sunday 14 July loomed very quickly and, in temperatures around 90°, they swam 4 km in a lake, rode for 180 km and finished off (now that they had warmed up) by running a full marathon. **Andy** completed the event in just over 12 hours and **Mick** took 14 hours.

Mick, Andy and **Bob** would like to thank everyone who sponsored them and helped to raised over £1,100 for the appeal.

46 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj R. Szulakowski R Signals (V)**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Whittaker R Signals (V)**

EXERCISE GUNNER RAM

Ex Gunner Ram was a military training weekend put together by the Squadron's SPSI, **Ian Thorburn**, and his team. He had worked a miracle in getting first class instruction and demonstration from 21 SAS on their Comms methods; hands on instruction from the Royal Anglian Forward Recce Platoon; and a rare demonstration of Bayonet Drill from the Royal Anglians. The SSM, **WO2 Alan Whittaker**, gave an excellent impromptu demonstration on bayonet practice for the CO, taking out the enemy, two target boards and a barbed wire fence. He ran, screaming a deathly and terrible war cry, into the distance only to re-emerge thoroughly exhausted sometime later. He obviously failed to hear the order to halt, whispered at 300 metres by the OC.

Sgt 'Trickie Dickie' **Alton** showed the darker side of his multi-talented technician's role by building and demonstrating booby traps. **Sgt Pete Beedle** and his team manned the advance to contact stand where **Cpl Alsop** and **Cpl Coley** took delight in ambushing the Squadron in their various teams. **Sgt Revill** and the Leicester Tp got the better of them, however, with an ambush from behind.

The weekend was finished off with a target competition on Beckingham Ranges.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Remembrance Day at 46 Sig Sqn was a well attended parade. The city's military parade is of course the responsibility of the City of Derby Sqn. The Parade Commander, **Maj Roy Szulakowski**, was ably assisted in his duties by his 2IC, **Capt Kevin Flanagan**, who acted as Parade Adjutant, and the SSM, **Alan Whittaker**, who was Parade Sergeant Major.

The parade, which consisted of over 250 veterans and service men and women of all arms and services, marched flawlessly(ish) to the cenotaph, and the music provided by the Salvation Army added to the ceremony and solemnity of the occasion.

The address was given by the Mayor of Derby, followed by the Blessing given by the Provost. A swift march past in the unseasonably warm November air set the seal on a good day. The few hours of practice given by **WO2 Jim Batchelor** proved worthwhile as the parade swept by under the proud gaze of the Major and the citizens of Derby.

A small ceremony was then carried out at the TA Centre to honour the fallen and wreaths were laid by the Royal Signals Association. The parade was presided over by **Capt Thelma Ward**, her first official duty since her recent commissioning, and **Mrs Dot Williams**, the Derby Branch Chairman.

64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj S. J. Fitzgerald R Signals (V)**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) J. P. Mees R Signals (V)**

FUND RAISING FOR CHARITY

It has always been a key task of 64 Sig Sqn to raise funds annually for selected charities in and around the Sheffield area.

Sgt Gill Parker visited the Mill House Sanctuary and presented a gratefully received cheque for £148 to Miss Jill Brookes, the farm supervisor

It was eventually decided by popular consent that this year's recipients would be the Mill House Animal Sanctuary and, much nearer to home, a donation to the 'Vagus Nerve Stimulator Fund' in support of **Cheryl Mullin-Ingham**, the daughter of **WO2 (RQMS) Bob Ingham**, who suffers from an un-diagnosed neurological disorder. The nerve stimulator, which costs £5,000, and is not available on the National Health Service, is essential for her day-to-day well being.

The culmination of various individuals' efforts on the Regimental Walk and 3 Peaks Challenge resulted in the presentation of a cheque for £400 to **Mrs Sue Cowlishaw**, the appeal organiser, by the Squadron 2IC, **Capt Will Carr**, in the JRC at Manor TAC.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We bade farewell to **SSgt** 'Skull' **Marshall** and **Cpls Paul Burditt** and **Lee Cook**, who deployed on IFOR 3. We now await the return of our IFOR 1 stalwarts, **Capt Maria Hawksworth** and **Cpl Gary Helliwell** on completion of their 12 month stint and **SSgt** 'Mickey' **Rooney, Cpl Pete Jackson** and **Sig Mark Shaw** on conclusion of IFOR 2–welcome home.

Welcome also to **SSgt** 'Stan' **Kelly**, our new SPSI who replaces **SSgt Chris Brown** on departure for 'Civvy Street' and the golf course–he goes with our very best wishes.

87 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj T. McCappin R Signals (V)**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) N. Caldicott R Signals (V)**

LEADERSHIP SKILLS WEEKEND
by Sgt W. Ahmed

During the weekend of 11-13 October, 87 Sig Sqn held a Leadership Training Exercise on Leek Training Area. Organised by **Sgt** 'Beastings' **Vicky Hardy** and **Sgt** 'What Trailer' **Wasim Ahmed**, various tasks were set up for the blissfully unaware members of the Squadron. The Squadron eventually arrived after some dubious navigation and booked into the Hotel Fleet Green Farm. They then departed on a short night navigation exercise. Several hours later all were back less one team. This team, led by **LCpl** 'I know where we are' **Heather Blair**, eventually radioed in to say they had never progressed further than the farm gates!! **Sig Jason Crook** obviously had the map upside down. Saturday's activities included a water crossing, mountain biking, bridge building, tent erection blindfolded and a mental agility test paper. The best built 'raft' was that of **SSM** 'The 'A' Team' **Nigel Caldicott**. So intricate was the design that he probably should have received an award–however, it sank twice! Recruits **Dan Newby, Craig Floyde, Stuart Longcroft** and **Dawn Wilmer** all enjoyed themselves during the activities and wanted more–are they real? **Cpl** 'Too Tall' **Clive Doda** had problems with mountain biking; he found his knees were almost touching his ears. Both Sqn Comd **Maj Tom McCappin** and 2IC Sqn **Capt Andy Smith** were actively involved in all tasks. One team, led by **Cpl** 'Bodgit' **Kev Young**, mesmerised the Commanding Officer **Lt Col Roger Davenport** and the RSM **WO1 Mick Boyle** by building something akin to the Severn Bridge. **Cpl** 'Acrobat' **Alison Dinsdale** survived the mountain bike phase despite flying up over the handle bars.

Capt Andy Smith and his team on the river crossing

Saturday night ended with a quiz organised by **SSM** 'Quiz Master' **Caldicott**. After a well deserved and restful night's sleep, the teams were tasked onto the next phase. Highlights were when **Sig** 'Super Speed' **Jas Rawlings** and **Sig** 'What Speed Limit' **Jason Crook** overtook the safety vehicle, running and biking respectively. Sqn Comd **Maj Tom McCappin** gave an excellent display of the back stroke whilst swimming across a bottomless lake in near freezing conditions. After an exceptional dinner set up by **SSgt** 'I Can Make Anything from Rations' **Roger Huckerby**, the awards ceremony took place. These were:

Best All Round Individual: **Sig Jason Rawlings**, Best Water Crossing: **SSM Nigel Caldicott**, Best Team: 2IC Sqn's Team consisting of: **Capt Andy Smith, Cpl Kev Young, Cpl Ali Dinsdale, Sig Tim Lea, Sig Rawlings, Stuart Longcroft** (Watch Out for Next Year).

RECRUITING

The Squadron continues to actively recruit and welcomes the following newcomers to the Squadron: **Simon Ager, Carolyn Alvey, Richard Barry, Andrew Doran, Christopher Duffin, Craig Floyde, Stuart Longcroft, Daniel Newby, Darren Smith, Trevor Steele, Dawn Wilmer, Mark Wooley.**

Sadly we say goodbye to **Cpl Kev Young** who moves to 45 Sig Sqn (V) in Colchester–Good luck!!! Warm congratulations to the arrival of baby **Robyn**, daughter to **Sgt Carol Lee**. Also welcome to **Sig James Houghton** who joins us from Middlesbrough.

RANGE WEEKEND

The Squadron held a Range Weekend over 26-27 October organised by **SSgt** 'Phill' **Jones** with help from 16 Det of 4 Para. This was our first experience of the new APWT and was enjoyed by all involved. Most notable was **Sig Ibby Nevill**, who gained 'Best Shot', beating with his iron sight those using SUSATs. From this most exhilarating weekend we have formed a Squadron Shooting Team. Watch out HQ Sqn at Regt SAAM!!

71 Sig Regt (V)
Bexleyheath

EXERCISE FINAL FLING

The 18-20 October saw the last full (many said only) working weekend for the RSM **WO1 Mal Geer**. With this in mind the CO **Lt Col Ray Wilkinson** gave him free range to organise training for the Regt that weekend. He decided that this would be an ideal opportunity to hold a competition for the many military trophies the Regt holds. Teams were formed from each of the Regt's Tps with an additional team from HQ Sqn and LAD. The concept of the competition was that it be run as an exercise with the teams marked on all aspects of their performance throughout the exercise.

Regimental Ops Officer **Maj Gavin Miles** produced a good scenario involving a peacekeeping deployment to a divided country. This was particularly relevant as several members of the Regt have taken 'S' type engagements and been deployed to Bosnia, it also followed on nicely from the scene set out by a recent Brigade exercise. On the Saturday morning the teams had to setup a patrol harbour from which they were to operate, throughout the day they were given a variety of tasks. These varied from recovering a damaged landrover to a defensive shoot. During Saturday night Ops were setup and manned and patrols were sent out. The exercise culminated in a five-mile speed march followed by an exercise in refugee control. The Regt also had a visit on the Saturday from the Command Comms Land **Brig J. H. Griffin** who quite happily walked as far as some teams in order to see the activities.

After a clean up and lunch the CO **Lt Col Ray Wilkinson** presented the prizes. A special mention must go to the two teams from 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn led by **Lt Sarah Shelton** and **2Lt Penny Clements** as they won all but one of the prizes. The weekend was a big success and was enjoyed by both the competitors and the DS alike, the RSM went away happy knowing he had made everyone involved cold, wet and tired.

Prize winners were:

Speed March	887 Tp Bexleyheath
Shooting Runners Up	882 Tp Harlow
Shooting Winners	887 Tp Bexleyheath
Overall Runners Up	887 Tp Bexleyheath
Overall Winners	884 Tp Brighton

Lt Sarah Shelton receives the overall winners trophy from Lt Col Ray Wilkinson.

2Lt Penny Clements, WO1 RSM Mal Geer and Lt Sarah Shelton with the two very successful teams from 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn.

DINING OUT OF WO1 (RSM) GEER–23RD NOVEMBER 1996

The weekend of 23-24 November 1996 saw 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt at Longmoor Training Camp for trade and military training. It also provided an excellent opportunity to gather together the majority of mess members for the occasion of the dining out of **WO1 (RSM) Mal Geer** on his completion of 22 years of service.

The evening started with a meal which filled the Mess to capacity. The numbers were further swelled by the attendance of members of 57 Sig Sqn and numerous other guests.

Among the guests were **WO1** 'Scotty' **Sherrard** who, after having a head on collision only a short distance from the camp, still managed to arrive in good time after being cut out of his car by the Fire Service. Past members of the Regt and close friends combined to span the entire 22 years of service, which provided the material for general conversation and for the second part of the evening.

After retiring to the bar the RSM was then surprised by a This is Your Life event which was to bring out all of the hidden secrets from 22 years of service all over the world. He was also awarded chits in lieu for all the medals he should have received but didn't. Guests including **Col Hewitt, Lt Col Wilkinson** and **WO1** 'Scotty' **Sherrard** combined to provide a humorous account of the lighter side of the RSM's career. The evening was complete when the RSM was carried on a tour of the camp suspended from the crane of a Foden recovery vehicle, this gave the REME members the opportunity to test his airborne skills and also the hedge trimming capability of his legs.

The members of the Regt wish the RSM and his family the very best wishes and the best of luck on his transition from soldier to civvy.

WO1 RSM Mal Geer receives a presentation from WO2 Stan Gane while Sgt John Weighill master of ceremonies looks on.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207)
BFPO 30

Sqn Comd	**Maj Ian Cameron-Mowat**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Kev Fitzpatrick**

HELLOS AND GOOD-BYES

Recently the Squadron has said good-bye to a number of personalities and hello to some new ones. Prior to Ex Ulan Eagle new faces were arriving thick and fast, the one that springs to mind was **WO2 (YofS) Graham Pardew** who joined us to replace **WO2 (YofS) Paul Sexby** who left the Squadron following a nervous breakdown, we hope the rehabilitation centre at Blandford caters for your needs! Of course the new YofS was ever so grateful for being left with Ex Ulan Eagle something about it being 'No Problem'–Give him a week!! The Squadron also said goodbye to OC Bravo Tp who decided that Royal Signals Tp Commanding was too hard, and all the soldiers were just too intelligent, so left to take on the might of the Highlanders in Northern Ireland–We wish him all the best and hope the language barrier has been broken. We welcome **SSgt (FofS) Andy Garrett** who replaces **SSgt (FofS) Steve Davies** gone to join the YofS on rehab at 11 Sig Regt in Blandford.

SUPPORT TROOP–QM DEPARTMENT
HAILS AND FAREWELLS

This time around we have to say farewell to **Sig** 'Jacko' **Jackson** and his new wife **Nicky,** who leave on promotion for glorious Herford, we wish them well for the future. We also have to say farewell to **Sgt Martin Gear** who after 24 years in service is posted to 30 Sig Regt to serve his last six months in UK. To **Martin** and his wife **Heike** we wish all the best for civvy street. To replace **Sgt Gear** we welcome **Sgt Al English** and his wife **Baerbel.** Whilst we can only hope that their tour here is a pleasant and happy one, we can guarantee it will be different.

MT DEPARTMENT

We say goodbye to **SSgt** 'Grill Stop Shaun' **Croft** and family, and all the best in Cyprus. Hello and welcome to **SSgt Niel Roome** and family, **Cpl** 'Taff' **O'Conner** and family and **Sig Paul Ronald Pierrepont**.

Congratulations to **Sig** 'Badger' **Taylor** and **Sandra** on the birth of their baby boy.

ALPHA TROOP

We say farewell to **Cpl Steve Savery**, posted to 24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and to **Cpl Fred Gee**–pastures new in civvy street. The Troop hosts a very warm welcome to all our new arrivals, **Cpl Dave Langridge, Sig Dave Moore, Sig Des White** and last but not least **SSgt** 'Chest' **Smith**. The team is now complete and under the auspices of 'Treasure' **Smith** we have conquered Poland and are busy preparing for future deployments. We wish **Cpl** 'Taff' **Phillips** all the best on his Yeoman's course.

On return from Ex Ulan Eagle the Troop enjoyed a much needed day out at Heide Park. **Sig Connell, Sig Wooley** and **Sig Alston**–a point to note for the future–you're supposed to ride in the logs not under them. Thanks go to **LCpl Tharby** for organising such a good day.

BRAVO TROOP

We say goodbye to **Sgt Ian Kenny** who has left to join 7 Sig Regt and to **Cpl Jase Raybould**, a fond farewell, posted on promotion to 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, Lisburn. Hello to **Sgt Adam Yafai**–getting beat by a girl at orienteering is not a good start!! We also welcome **Cpl John Cordery, Cpl John Walmsley, Sig Ian Danter** and **Sig Mark Zimmerman**.

EXERCISE ULAN EAGLE

The Squadron's big exercise of the year was Ex Ulan Eagle, a Bde training exercise in the North of Poland. The Squadron was joined by 214 Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt who provided the Ptarmigan assets for the Bde.

Block leave ended with a bang as the Squadron threw itself into preparing for the exercise, long hours and lots of paperwork. The exercise was a success and now the Squadron is fighting fit for deployments anywhere in the world!

EXERCISE ULAN EAGLE–IN THE EYES OF A SYSTEMS OPERATOR

After what seemed like an age of preparations and pre-Poland exercises, Bravo Tp finally deployed to Drawsko Pormorski Training Area (DPTA) both by road and by rail on the 28th and 29th of August respectively. The Squadrons' role was to provide communications for the Brigade on inload, during various test phases, the FTX itself and during outload. Time was found to train and test the two Troops whilst supplying a full Headquarters.

HQ vehicle on Engineer Crossing

The Training area offered many advantages which included full cowboy style cross-country driving experience, which was complemented by the strange and before unheard obscenities which emanated from the REME's 434. The other training objective was to get man and rubber working in perfect harmony, like a well greased machine. I am of course referring to the all singing, all dancing brand new complex tent, affectionately named the B.F.T. Guttural language was again utilised by those who operate radios, much to the consternation and enjoyment to those of us who operate the Ptarmigan system and make a point of staying well hidden until such time as the smell likened to the starting grid at Brands Hatch has totally dissipated.

Another skill was pushed to the fore by the Polish Terrain, as Troop Comd **Capt** 'Matt' **Graham** found out. Navigating in unknown territory with maps that show where forests and tracks were four years ago assured you of two things. Getting totally lost and evading ambushes for up to three hours. Throughout the rest of the exercise morale was kept high with the promise of laundry and shower facilities which seemed to be an occurrence of 'tomorrow's' schedule.

After a hard exercise where most had been alone on shift for the best part of three weeks strange behavior became common place. All that time for soldiers to contemplate their lot and ask the ultimate questions, and find very deep answers.

Sig Smith stuck again–A Tp Comd pulls HQ Recce free once more

19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
Catterick

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Towers**
RSM **WO1 Dave Showell**

NEWS FROM CATTERICK

Whilst the rest of the Corps left for warmer parts 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn stayed to fly the Royal Signals flag in Catterick.

EXERCISE SATON FORCE
by Sig Stu Paton

Sunday, 12 men all good and true set out for Wathgill. Six returned, six remained, and staggered on. 18 hours later, and with our relief in sight, we happily changed in to our glad rags, and prepared to face our public (reps from various county Police Forces).

Ex Saton Force comes but twice a year and is an exercise to revalidate the UKs' Bomb Disposal teams. Our tasking for the week involved acting as targets for various bombers. A wide and varied assortment of characters tested the skills of the Squadron's best thespians. From paedophiles and unfaithful husbands to biker drug barons and cock fight organisers 'the sort of people who regularly are targeted by bombers'.

The Police would turn up at your house on the Whinny Hill FIBUA complex, and supposedly deal with the incident in the correct manner (but it seemed that they were more interested in having a brew and filling in claims). A period of time elapsed, they would then call for the assistance of the EOD teams to really sort out the mess. This action would then provoke the Police to take statements from the perverts and drug pushers.

The high point of this, like many other exercises, was on Friday. After six days of statements, explosions and inevitable guards 'Endex' was called. All who participated have definitely learnt that it is all too much trouble to become a child minder, or to pet cockerels.

TESEX 7–1/8 NOVEMBER 1996
by Cpl Shaun Fardy

As Friday morning arrived, the Squadron warriors, steeled by the bracing weather; not fazed at all by another weekend away, not caring a jot about Beautiful South tickets, sped away down the A1. The destination, why Salisbury Plain of course, where else. Whilst **Cpl Mallaney** worked on his transporter system, based on Startrek, the rest of us settled for a seven hour drive. Having got over a tearful farewell (poor old **Cpl Pearson**–he always seems to miss out on the trips to Salisbury instead volunteering for the occasional weekend in Cyprus) our excitement got the better of us as we prepared to conduct the TESEX with the Royal Irish Regt–what an honour. Not wishing to bore readers with the ins and outs of the complete exercise, below are my recollections of the salient events:

1. **Sig Armstrong** decides the A1 needs a wash and promptly empties half a water bowser over the tarmac.
2. **Cpl** 'Golden Child' **Chamberlain** deploys with no gene lead. Fortunately he did go complete with ace crewman **Sig Eddie Banks** who had the whole situation under control.
3. **Sig** 'Stretch' **Watts** is dragged away kicking and screaming for two days rugby. We were all devastated for him, Bath is such an eyesore of a town.
4. **Cpl Paul** 'Davo' **Davis** and **Sig** 'Slim Whitman' **Dickinson** deploy their rebro to the fell with no gas bottle adaptor. Alright for Dicko, he can survive on his internal layers, but poor **Paul**. But as usual he took it all in his peculiar happy go lucky manner, with absolutely no spanners being wrapped around his crewman.
5. **Lt Peden** continued to keep a very keen eye on the moral standing of his troops, constantly patrolling the imbibing emporiums of Salisbury, ensuring his innocent flock weren't tarnished. Aided as always by the Salvation Army's **Sgt Lenny** 'Oasis' **Martin**.
6. **Sgt Rob Clifford** and **Cpl Dale Wallace** crippled by the lack of tech faults had to resort to controlling the net without using the words Contact or Repeat. Well, only once or twice.
7. **Cpl Shaun Fardy**, ran a watertight shift, completely beyond reproach, pausing only to get trounced by the parlour game Queen, **Sig Mary** 'but harsh' **Anderson**.
8. Sadly the OC and YofS couldn't stay for the whole week. Distraught, they fought back the tears and had to go home. Sirs, we feel for you, but there'll be other exercises.

I hope this has given you, the avid reader, an essence of life in a Bde Sig unit.

EXERCISE BRIGADE LIGHTFIGHTER
by Sig Gaz Moore

Ex Brigade Lightfighter is the annual inter unit competition in which section strength teams compete in an infantry orientated miliary skills competition. Selection of the team was fierce but finally **Lt Grant Peden**, **SSgt Kev Simmons**, **Sgt Rob** 'I've got a dagger on my arm' **Enderby**, **Cpl John** 'Golden Child' **Chamberlain**, **Sigs Gaz Moore**, **Courtney** 'fire starter' **Watts**, **Pete Richardson**, **Chris Bonham** and **Craig Scott** were picked from a cast of nine, all happy willing volunteers.

The Brigade Lightfighter Team

The weather was against us and I'm not one to exaggerate but there must have been at least 20 ft of snow on them there hills! The first set of challenges came at the old 11 Sigs Leadership Command Tasks. With a great deal of previous knowledge the team 'Performed very well but an inopportune slip by **SSgt Kev Simmons** lost valuable points'. We did ourselves no favours on the kit inspection. Asked to show a spare pair of boots, we produced eight pairs of muddy, steaming boots whilst cunningly disguising our bare feet as bergens. Nice try, but no coconut.

A new meaning to 'walking the plank' on the 11 Sig Comd Tasks

Lt Peden showed us mere mortals why he had wings on his arm, by leading from the front on the high shuffle bars, part of the P Coy Confidence Cse, whereas we used the 'eyes open' technique, and eased across. **Sig Pete Richardson** showed no fear when he jumped into the safety net, instead of doing it the correct 'easy' way. Somebody's idea of a joke was to allow the river crossing to go ahead despite the fact that the ice had to be broken beforehand. Any 'Peeping Toms' around would have needed a mighty powerful pair of binoculars–that's all I'm going to say.

Catterick in Autumn–Sig Richardson leading the way

Cpl Chamberlain still smiling!

Deploying to stands on Catterick, Feldom and The Stang training areas the team encountered mixed success. Of special mention was the prize for 'who can write down Challenger and Chieftain the most' on the recognition stand. First works on a landrover at 3 o'clock in the morning was fun and as temperatures became ridiculously low we all but died at the NBC stand, frozen through.

After nearly 48 hours of tough physical and mental testing what better way to warm our hearts than with a march and shoot. We achieved one of the best march times and shot well to end on a high. Tenth place overall (behind the infantry but ahead of the Cavalry amongst others) was a good result and we all lived to see another Catterick day and get a well earned 'tick in the box'.

SPORT

The Squadron has recently achieved the following accolades in the field of human conflict:

Corps Badminton Championships held at 21 Sig Regt (AS)

Singles Runner Up	**Cpl Pearson**
Open Doubles Winners	**Cpl Pearson/Capt Inman** (11 Sig Regt)
Unit Doubles Winners	**Cpl Hinsley/Cpl Pearson**
Mixed Doubles Winners	**Cpl Pearson/LCpl Rigg** (14 Sig Regt)
Ladies Singles 5th	**Sig Petty**

RUGBY UNION

Sgt Sid 'Taff Jones, Evans, Edwards' **Davies** and **Sig** 'Jerome' **Watts** are regular members of the R Signals Rugby Union Team travelling wherever a match takes them. The Sqn 7's achieved a notable runners up place in the Bde Sports Day competition beating teams from 1 KORBR, 1 R Irish and 1 RRF on the way.

FOOTBALL

A strong Squadron team were runners up in the 2 Div six-a-side competition and qualified for the Army finals in Aldershot (the only R Signals minor unit to do so). Special mention to **WO2 (FofS) Mark Edwards** for jumping on the bandwagon to the finals and missing a penalty along the way. In preparation for the inevitable Xmas games the Radio Tp fought out a no holds barred, football match. Despite it's secret weapon **Cpl John** 'Vinny Jones' **Chamberlain**. B Tp courageously lost to A Tp–the score 5–4.

Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Dettol bottle' **Enderby** on passing his fascist Alan B'stard course (grade 3 referee to you and me). Commiserations to any team he officiates.

Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Woody' **Woodland** and **Shaz** on the birth of their daughter **Katie Louise**. Well done and bon voyage to **Sig** 'pinhead' **James** off to 1 ADSR on promotion and to **Cpl Steve** 'G'day mate' **Smit** who returns to Australia and his home on Ramsey Street. Hello to **Sgt Wilf Wilford** from the Fatherland and to **Cpl Phil Howes** who returns to the fold after a tour with the TA.

WHAT A YEAR THAT WAS–A QUARTMASTER'S REFLECTION

1996 the Bde stable training year, a period during which we expected to improve our individual and unit skills when not supporting other events, if only that were true. This lone Corps outpost continues to work extremely hard to uphold the good name and reputation of a Corps (that most believe has left Catterick) whilst continuing to support the Bde and provide it's normal service.

Sp Tp has during this hectic year provided the normal service associated with logistics and broken many new records. The Master Chef **Sgt** 'Dinga' **Bell** (nicknamed after the Tasmanian Devil) throws a tantrum at the mere mention of BBGT(S) and the feeding of 5000, in fact it was only 526 at it's height split between two locations some eight miles apart. However, I strongly suspect that this must still be a record for a non manpower intensive exercise.

The **RQMS John Gibson** is still having nightmares about the one million items of pyro and blank that was ordered by the Bde, delivered by 32 Sp Sqn, distributed by 5 AB Sig Sqn and ultimately accounted for by HIM.

The Bde military skills competition gave this unit the opportunity to test our motorbike riders in their role as despatch riders. Having started out in blizzard conditions on a new Harley Davison **LCpl Lee Taylor** (ex White Helmets) decided after closely inspecting the tarmac and denting his pride that the offer of a more serene but clearly safer mode of transport, a MINIBUS, was a more acceptable option.

The IBRSIT inspection provided an insight into the marriage of **Sgt Steve Holloway**. The main man of the workshop who recently married and became a father had great difficulty explaining to his wife that staying at work for 18 hours a day would not last forever, he would eventually resume a normal life but not in the foreseeable future.

The LAD continues to provide an excellent service and the Artificer **SSgt Tom Cambridge** had a rush of blood to the head when he organised a coast to coast walk that raised money for the Corps Museum Project amongst other charities, surely a first. The REME not known for it's love of physical activity completed the walk successfully, however I must offer my thanks to the many inns and public house tenants in which this tired and dirty bunch of soldiers quenched their thirsts and rested their weary limbs.

Whilst the above stories are amusing they did in fact occur during events and exercises that were major events for this Squadron. Couple the hectic training year with the inevitable RSIT, LSAI and Board of Officers the soldiers of Sp Tp have performed with enthusiasm and pride and have provided an OUTSTANDING service throughout the year. Sp Tp remains the unsung but necessary element of the Squadron. Without it's vehicles, POL, rations, equipment, replenishment system and continued enthusiasm the good skills and procedures practised by the Radio Tps comes to naught.

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210)
Colchester

Sqn Comd — **Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) G. C. Pocock**

SSgt Robinson, Sgt Price and SSgt Shelmardine received LS & GC medals from Brig Brims with Maj Watts and RSM Pocock standing at the sides

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt A. J. Parfitt**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt J. Alger**

The Troop has had a very busy period over the past two months, with a number of exercises. First and foremost was Ex Eagle's Flight, the Squadron annual battlecamp–or was it? The exercise started with a communications trial for Ex Cambrian Patrol, all worked into a UN scenario. The plans for the remainder of the week were covered in a great veil of secrecy, with the Sqn Ops Team refusing to confirm or deny rumours of escape and evasion. Within a day of deploying, the Squadron jungle drums had passed on what was to prove to be an accurate Main Events List for the remainder of the exercise. The only timing missing was that for the initial ambush, and everyone obligingly drove into it. The only bid for freedom was made by **Sig Jupp**, the slowest man in the Squadron being the only one who thought he could out-run a motor bike!

An uncomfortable night of interrogation followed, and a more successful bid for freedom was made. **LCpl Pond** managed to escape on his third attempt, but soon returned once he realised that it is no good if you don't know where you are, or where you have got to escape to! Three days of escaping and evading (and occasionally getting caught) followed, and the exercise reached its finale with a quick run over the assault course, the defence of a 'safe' house and a platoon attack. The enemy obligingly died and we all returned to Excon for some much needed food.

The following few weeks were particularly busy for the RRB crews. Two weeks on Ex Iron Resolve supporting 3 Div was followed by a fortnight in the now familiar surroundings of Sennybridge, providing the communications for Ex Cambrian Patrol. This was livened up by the onslaught of Hurricane Lily, which made a serious dent in the Troop G1098 account. **Cpl Watts** and **Sig Jupp** had the weather forecaster's chosen spot, sited on top of a very large, very bare hill. On crawling out of their tent to see why it had collapsed on top of them, they both covered their quickest 50m ever, without taking a step!

After a couple of weeks back in camp putting everything back together, the Troop finished off this busy period with a week long deployment on Ex Gryphon's Wing. The weather was freezing, and everyone thanked their ACIO for not persuading them to join the infantry.

The Troop has to say a number of hellos and goodbyes. Hello to **Sgt Thompson**, posted all the way from Supp Tp, and to **Sigs Burgess**, **Moran** and **Olejnik** straight from Blandford. Goodbye to **Cpl Chuchward**, posted to ATR Bassingbourn, and **Sig Skelly** off to make his fortune in Civ Div. Temporary goodbyes to **Cpl Samuelson**, on loan to ATR Bassingbourn, **LCpl Johnstone** who is trialling Bowman and **LCpl** 'Bog Stomper' **Robinson**, attached to the Royal Anglians in Northern Ireland. Finally congratulations to **Cpl Mechen** and **Sigs** (soon to be LCpls) **Haffenden** and 'Gunny' **Williams** on their promotions, and to **Sig Foster** on becoming a father. Now he will be volunteering to go on guard to get a good nights sleep!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt D. C. Worden**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt K. Shelmerdine**

Since we last wrote Troop notes a few months ago lots has been happening. Firstly 'Eagles Flight' (aka 'RQ's Revenge') as Squadron Battle Camp–a form of E&E conducted at Sennybridge, which consisted of getting very cold and being chased about the training area by lunatics on motorcycles (especially **Chief** 'Evil Kenevil' **McCulloch**). Still, we would get to know and love Wales later on.

Ex Iron Resolve was next, where we supported 3 Div Sig Regt by providing comms and a tuck shop for every man and his dog, learning what Ptarmigan was again, and allowing 3 Div HQ's to move around on Salisbury Plain. It was great fun doing '12 on–12 off' shifts for three weeks, though miraculously no-one really lost their teddies. Comms Support to Cambrian Patrol (Wales once again) had the Troop representatives marking BATCO in the EXCON ops room (especially the 'BATCO NODUF' from 30 Sig Regt), and resupplying all the rebros on the ground who were having fun holding their tents down every night in the gentle Welsh breezes. Gryphons Wing allowed the Troop to make more movement in 36hrs than the rest of the Squadron managed in 10 days, and let the Ptarmigan bods try and remember their trades and field skills after many months off!

Congratulations to **LCpl Walsh** and **Sig** 'Why am I still here?' **Carle** on retrading as Relay Ops, and to **Sig** 'Stretch' **Stevens** on returning to the great outdoors!!

All we have now to look forward to is the silly season and Christmas, with the Hodgkinson Trophy and the Cadman Cup filling up a 'quiet period' in the Squadron year.

The main effort for these notes is to catch up on well-dones, hello's and goodbyes. Firstly hello to **Cpl Steve Savery**, **LCpl Kev Kiff**, **LCpl** 'How long is my nametag' **Martin-Woodgate** (fresh from his class 1 course), and **Sigs Tony Richardson** and **Stu Tucker**, fresh faced from training. Welcome back to **Sigs Shane Cooley** and **Scott Chapman**, and **LCpl Steff Milner** who all return from successful tours in Bosnia, to new boy **Sig** 'Egg' **Evans** after his brief visit to NI. Also to **Sig** 'Roger-to-that' **Stevenson** on returning from his retrading to become a rad-op. We have said goodbye to **Sig Michelle Berkovitch** and **LCpl Tim Baldwin** who depart for civ div, and to **Sig Chris Vickers** to 19 Mech Bde (well done on selection for promotion!). Finally well-done to **Cpl Steve Griffiths** who is now **Sgt Griffiths** over in Ireland with the Green Jackets, having left on promotion. Good luck and best wishes to all who have left!!

SATISFIED SOLDIER SCHEME

- *Are you a satisfied soldier?*
- *Would you like to be attached to your home town ACIO for 5-10 days?*
- *Would you like to visit your old school and ACF to tell them about life in The Royal Signals?*
- *Would you like to help in recruiting soldiers into The Royal Signals?*

YES!!

Then contact your Troop Office for details of
THE SATISFIED SOLDIER SCHEME

PUBLISH IT IN THE WIRE

The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para)
Aldershot

CYPRUS WALKABOUT 8-9 OCTOBER 1996

This year's annual Cyprus Walkabout was held 8/9 October, with both Army and RAF teams represented, from both On and Off Island and having qualified earlier in the year HQ 5 AB Bde sent a team comprising of **Maj Herring** RLC (Bde HQ), **WO2 Rollins** RLC (Master Chef 216 Para Sig Sqn) and myself **SSgt Needham** R Sigs (A Tp SSgt 216 Para Sig Sqn) (Please note No Para Regt). To briefly describe the team **Maj Herring** seriously good Tri-athlete (Army Standard), **WO2 Rollins** seriously good Orienteer (Army Standard) and myself serious hanger-on (In the Army).

Teams from the UK were flown out as early as 30 September, giving valuable time for reconnaissance. Quoting a well known phrase 'Time spent on reconnaissance is seldom wasted', however, **Maj Herring** decided that time spent on the beach wasn't wasted either, mind you he was the team captain and no-one was complaining. Other units from the brigade were 7 Para Royal Horse Artillery (who entered three teams) and 23 Para Field Ambulance made good use of the time preceding the event. For those who don't know, the Cyprus Walkabout is an annual competition, and comprises of a two day long Orienteering event, the route being between Episkopi Garrison and Troodos Camp on day 1 and vice versa on day two. The route this year was chosen by SO3 G2 Episkopi Garrison, who just happens to be Parachute Regt (Oh dear lots of up-hill, no doubt), although this does not have anything to do with the final result.

Day 1 was an early start with the last team being away at 0715 hrs, two reasons for this, one less time spent in the heat is a bonus for everyone, second being more daylight hours should anyone get lost or strategically misplaced for those being politically minded. It was to be a hot one though, but with the administration being admirably handled by 1st Bn, The Royal Gloucester Berkshire and Worcester Regt water was plentiful at the checkpoints, of which there were five. Checkpoints 1 through to 4 were not so bad however, checkpoint 5, as all those who took part are aware, was a bit of a killer being only 2kms from the finish but nearly at the top of Mount Olympus, a climb of some 500 metres over a distance of 2.5kms, seriously steep. Results for the end of day 1 saw ourselves in the lead by some 4 mins over 7 RHA team 1, with 7 RHA team 2 not so far behind.

Day 2 was going to be a tad tougher as not only tired legs had to be taken into consideration but 4 mins could easily be swallowed up by one of the chasing teams. Day 2 starts in reverse order and there is also the facility for *ad hoc* teams to be made up from willing volunteers of teams who have withdrawn after day 1, a very notable achievement should they complete the route home. Tactics were going to take a major part for the route home as we had to cover the two closest chasing teams who could easily win the competition. A different route is set for the return journey, and any thorn bushes that the planner missed on day 1 he found today. Only one error was made by ourselves which was a simple route choice allowing 7 RHA team to take the lead by only 1 min, this was quickly recovered by checkpoint 3 after which there was only one route home, and the winning team would now only be chosen by the strength of the third man, me. Nice to have all the weight of the result on your shoulders after 2 days hard slog, however in typical Airborne style 'Head down a*** Up', HQ 5 AB Bde finally won through completing the course some 6 mins ahead of 7 RHA team 1.

Last but not least 23 PFA should also be commended on their efforts for day 2 producing a blistering pace, finishing day 2 in 4 hrs 50 mins completing the competition in eventual fifth place.

CBF presenting the Cyprus Walkabout Trophy to Maj Rob Herring with WO2 Rollins and SSgt Needham looking on

Final results read as follows:

Overall results

1st	5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2nd	7 RHA team 1
3rd	7 RHA team 2
Fastest Overseas Team	5 AB BDE HQ & Sig Sqn
First Novices	7 RHA team 1
First Veterans	7 RHA team 2

Note there were only three other prizes available, which unfortunately none of the Bde teams were eligible for these being: First On-Island Team, First Ladies Team & First Schools Team, all in all not a bad day's result.

AIRBORNE OFFICERS REUNION DINNER

Once again the Squadron hosted the annual Airborne Officers Reunion Dinner on 4 October. The SOinC very kindly found time from his busy schedule to join us. Presiding over the affair was **Maj Gen Dean-Drummond** ably assisted by Mr Vice, **2Lt Rich** 'Oh, am I supposed to say the grace now' **Quinsey**. The evening was excellent, fine food and copious wine flowed all night which only seemed to enhance the stories of daring do from the 'old boys'. There was of course the banter of 'In my day' . . . even the boss had a go! It was good to see such an event so well supported by the past and present members of Airborne Signals Officers. It of course degenerated into the inevitable who can last longest at the bar, all I can say is they have had 30 years more practice. Finally, a big thank you must go to **Capt Dave Wilson** who organised the whole debaucherous evening.

On Thursday 14 November the Squadron All Ranks Dinner was held. The evening began with everyone congregating for a glass of sherry. Shortly after dinner was served and the Squadron sat down to enjoy a three course meal, plenty of wine followed by port for the toasts and ending with coffee, cheese and biscuits. At the end the 2IC gave a small speech in the OC's absence due to Op Purposeful. Following this the annual presentations were made for various things. The Squadron then proceeded to the bar for further liquid refreshments and each Troop produced a skit. The most notable character portrayed by every troop was the RSM. **LCpl** 'Harry' **Henderson**, **Cpl** 'Brad' **Braddock** and **Sig** 'Gav' **Vanden** all performed excellent impersonations of the RSM. All in all an enjoyable evening was had by all and a big Thanks goes out to all involved in the organisation.

The prize winners were:

Forge Baker Trophy	- Best all round Squadron contribution **LCpl** 'Rob' **Howe**
Bancroft Cup	- Sportsman of the Year **WO2** 'Dave' **Rollins**
Bardies Cup	- Best course report **LCpl** 'Rob' **Howe**
Richards Statuette	- Squadron Footballer of the Year **LCpl** 'Steve' **Baigent**
Dennis Tankard	- Best Military Squadron contribution **Cpl** 'Dom' **Anderson**
Craig Trophy	- Best Tradesman **Cpl** 'Dave' **Maxwell**

LANYARD TROPHY NOTES

The Lanyard Trophy competition took place in October this year, later than its normal summer time allocation, this being due to 5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, having been deployed to the United States on Ex Purple Star.

It was situation normal for the allocation of training needed for this event having to fit in between exercise commitments, which have been very hectic. The training for the competition was in the Black Mountains with the squad staying at Crickhowell Camp. The weather during training was ideal especially considering the time of the year and the location. The squad consisted of. -

Capt	**Bennett**	**Cpls**	**Hayward**
SSgt	**Archer**		**Howl**
Sgt	**Paul**	**LCpls**	**Henderson**
Cpls	**Anderson**		**Setchfield**
	Goddard	**Sig**	**Barnes**

However, on the morning of the 3 October the weather was quite bad, continuous rain and driving winds on certain parts of the course added to the difficulty of the competition.

The Squadron team put in a superb effort and were narrowly beaten by 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn, 4 minutes and 58 seconds was all that separated the two teams over a distance of 40 miles the phrase 'A gnat's whiskers' may be suitably employed.

GERMAN JUMPS COURSE
by Cpl Thornton

This October the Squadron was lucky enough to be involved in an exchange with the German Airborne. (FALLSCHIRMJAGER). We left Aldershot for Stansted early Friday morning and arrived at Hannover Airport early afternoon. We then had a ten hour coach trip to the Luftland Schule Airborne School, which is situated south of Munich.

The weekend had been well planned by our hosts. The first day we were given a sightseeing trip of the Munich Olympic Stadium and tower. It gave us some impressive views and with these still in mind we proceeded to Munich City Centre. A good time was had by all although the views of Munich became a little blurred by the time the bus arrived to take us back to ALTENSTAT. On Sunday we went to a local tourist area and visited a local castle and adjoining tourist village. It was on Sunday when a new talent was discovered, this talent was displayed by **Sig** 'the swamp' **Tyrell** I/C Water Sports, he also seems to be a natural at routefinding? Well may be not 'Tiz', we eventually found the 28 year old in the town square.

The German Jumps exchange Team

Monday was taken up by ground training. We were met and briefed by our host **Capt Bhil**. The ground training was similar to ours, although they still use an outdoor trainer which was good news for all the crows amongst us. We are now aware of what the nickname Knacker Cracker is all about. The afternoon was taken up by more pain when we were introduced to a form of torture disguised as landing training. This was in the form of a pully system which released you from about 30 feet although we did notice that the Germans released their own people from a lot lower. After a couple of hours of pain we finished and were taken for a run of sorts by our host **Capt Bhil**, this was when we realised that we must take running a bit more seriously than the Germans.

Tuesday was what we had been waiting for, the first jump using the US TIO and reserve, We jumped from a C160, which is a two engined aircraft and looks like the four engined Hercules. Now fully versed in the German aircraft drills we stamped and shouted our way to the door and had a total of three descents that day. All went well in almost perfect conditions with **SSgt Weaver** and **Sig Vanden** having stand up landings. The DZ was soft and had only one hazard, a slight marsh, which **Lt Short** managed to find with ease.

The Wednesday was spent firstly on ground training for jumping with German containers, but after a great deal of waiting about and a even greater deal of Rain Dancing from **Cpl** 'Nosher' **Brown** the jump was called off, due to the weather. Thursday's weather was also too bad for the jump so our hosts had arranged a visit to the Borg, which is their HQ. It was also where the Parachutes were packed and repaired. Once there, we had a guided tour of the German Airborne museum. It covered from pre World War II to the present day. We then visited their Commando training lodge where soldiers and aircrew are taught military and survival training. We witnessed the conditions and the training area in which this takes place, We also saw the Germans going through their paces on the equivalent to our assault course.

On our return to the Luftland Schule, we were awarded our 'blooded' German wings, which was the end of a very enjoyable and illuminating visit to the German Airborne.

223 Sig Sqn (399 SU RAF)
RAF Digby

Sqn Comd	**Maj Alan McComb**
SRO	**Maj Jim Dodds BEM**
SRO(des)	**Capt Steve Palfryman**

The busy period the Squadron finds itself in, still continues. **Capt Steve Palfryman** has arrived as SRO(des) until **Maj Jim Dodds** leaves in the New Year. Squadron military training in the form of Ex Flying Hawk has been conducted which blew out a few cobwebs, and the customary sporting and social events have taken place.

DELTA FLIGHT
ARRIVALS

Lt	**Damian** 'Stock Car' **Smalley**
WO1	**Tony** 'Drac' **Harding**
WO2	**(Supvr R)** 'Balloon Head' **Randle**
SSgt	**(Supvr R)** 'Dodgy DJ' **Owens**
Cpl	**Dave** '5' **Clark**
LCpl	**Martin** 'How Much Is A' **Papworth**

In December, members of Delta Flt assisted the local Age Concern by taking the house bound elderly people Christmas shopping. In addition to this, they helped the Flt Sgts to get on Shift. Someone took **Flt Sgt Ellis**' teeth to the dentist for him and another took **SSgt Owens**' wig to the barbers for a trim.

FOOTBALL

December saw the traditional Old versus Bold Football Match. The teams kicked off, and the crowd were treated to some first rate Football. The Old Boys attack was spearheaded by **WO2 Dave** 'Fat Blerk' **Randle** and accompanied by **JT Jimmy Powell** who soon wreaked havoc among the struggling defence. The first breakthrough came in the seventh minute when 'Fat Blerk' turned **JT Andy Carter** inside, out and delivered a precision cross for **Sgt** 'Daz' **Hepburn** to rifle the ball into the net. **Sgt** 'Sav' **Phillips** added to the oppositions misery with a superbly guided header. 'Fat Blerk' converted a third after a fabulous 50 Yard waddle leaving the flailing **LCpl** 'Beef' **Kirton** for dead. **Sgt Jimmy Powell** made it 4-0 shortly before half time. The second half saw a first rate build up by the young pretenders starting with all guns blazing. **JT Phil Davies** started the move which also involved **JT Jasper Scarrett**, **Cpl Dave** '5' **Clark** culminating in **LCpl Ken Cross** slotting home past **JT Phil Baumber**. The youth team hit again shortly after kick off when **Phil Baumber** made a complete hash from a very tame shot by helping the ball into the Net. **JT Adam Nelson** soon helped the old gits regain their composure by side footing the ball neatly into the corner of the net to make the final score: Old Gits 5 and Slightly Younger Gits 2.

HOCKEY

Congratulations to **LCpl Claire Burden** who represented the Corps in the Inter-Corps hockey championships held at Aldershot. Unfortunately the R Signals came runners up for the third year in succession.

FISHING

SSgt (Supvr R) Denver 'Dodgy DJ' **Owens** represented Logistics Command in the RAF Inter-command angling championships. He would have caught a lot more fish if he hadn't eaten the bait.

UK/NZ LIAISON

Lt Damian 'Stock Car' **Smalley** represented the Army during a buffet hosted at the New Zealand embassy in London. The buffet was attended by the All Black Barbarian rugby team amongst other guests. He received his invitation during his last appointment and obviously felt it was too good to miss.

ALPHA FLIGHT

OC	**2Lt Ellie Goldsworthy**
DSO	**WO Baker**

The Flight would like to wish a warm welcome to our new OC, **2Lt Ellie Goldsworthy**. Farewells go out to **Lt Adam Hillary** (now Capt) as he leaves for sunny Bosnia. Also brief farewells to **Cpl Bren Matthews**, **LCpl Carla Gilligan**, **LCpl Stu Fenton** and **JT Neil Sutton**, all are away on Det.

EXERCISE FLYING HAWK

As the second phase of Ex Flying Hawk was about to begin, members of the 'A' Team began snooping for information from the first phase attendees. Beers were bought and favours called in for intel. Armed with precious knowledge of what was expected to happen, we all got on the bus for the journey to Proteus training camp. We arrived and the weather was fine and many of the usual training clichés were put into use. But the clear blue sky soon changed, to replace this picturesque scene with torrential rain which lasted for many hours. It is always interesting to see people who continue to tell everyone how good they are, suddenly not appear so wonderful after all when the conditions change for the worst.

The next morning came and everyone was well on course for the No Move Before time of 0800hrs. True to form, the DS turned up at 0740 enquiring as to why we weren't ready. After a swift run around the famous Army 'lone tree' we were soon back into the swing of things. That is everyone apart from **LCpl** 'Klinsman' **Long** who thought he would go for a penalty on the return leg, thrust his leg down a hole conveniently placed in the way of the stampede. As the hours passed more and more 'fighting machines' fell foul of these holes. Next was a spot of PT in the form of self-defence, morale was to reach an all time high at this point as we beat each other up for prolonged periods of time with the full blessing of the PT staff. **LCpl** 'Hawkeye' **Topple** gave everyone a good laugh with his special forces skills when he tripped over the comms cord, in the harbour location.

The final assault on the enemy location looked excellent (I was watching from the sidelines). There was so much smoke that nobody could see, but the voices of **Sgt Bri Hands** and **Sgt Dave Longmuir** could be heard from a great distance over the battlefield. All in all a great exercise which was enjoyable as well, Congratulations to **Cpl Bren Matthews** for winning the award for best all round soldier.

ORIENTEERING

After a quick brief in the gym two teams of bleary eyed 'A' Fit personnel headed off to attempt the 'Quick' course set by the resident mapman **Cpl Dave Marrs**. ' It should only take a wee while' was the cliché that was used for this event. **SSgt** 'Big Ron' **Worley** and **SSgt Pete Stockell** tagged along to make sure things ran smoothly and fairly. Things went according to plan with **LCpl Si Wilson** deciding to leave his pen behind very coolly having to complete all the questions from memory when he returned. After a particularly gruelling event we all retired to the sanctuary of the families club and argued black was white and vice versa with reference to the questions answers. Then we all tucked into some well deserved beer provided by our watch funds.

BOXING

The Station Boxing Team recently took part in the RAF Lord Wakefield's Novice Boxing Championships at RAF Cosford. The outcome was, a first class win in the Minor Units Division This was last won by the Station in 1928. **LCpls Green** and **Roscoe** were beaten in the semi-finals, both showed great talent and bags of courage. **Cpl Mullen** stopped his opponent in the finals displaying excellent boxing skills and great potential becoming the Lord Wakefield's Super Heavyweight Champion 1996/97.

(*L-R*): LCpl Roscoe, LCpl Green, Cpl Mullen, Air Cdre Gould (MA CBE), Cpl Chapple, (Asst RAF Coach), SSgt (Supvr R) Tretheway (Coach).

The station also hosted the RAF Select vs Eastern and Midland Counties tournament on 7 November. Over 300 spectators, sponsors, boxers and officials raised in excess of £600 of which 50% went to a charity for handicapped children. A very successful evening with Junior and Senior, Novice and International standard boxing. The event was well represented by the station team with **Cpl Chapple** out-pointing his opponent convincingly. **LCpl Green** again gave a very commendable and superb performance only withdrawing after a cut to the eye. **Amir Unsworth**, an Army dependant also represented the Station, losing his bout on a very close majority decision.

CHILDREN IN NEED/STATION YOUTH ACTIVITIES FUN WEEKEND 4-6 OCTOBER 1996
by Cpl Andy Robinson

One day in September an envelope dropped through my door, which was set to change my life for the next few days. My wife handed me the envelope, it was from Children in Need. Why don't you do something she challenged? Good idea I thought, little did I know how much work this was to involve. After jotting my thoughts down on paper, I set about the task of organising a committee to help run a fun weekend. Having coerced my boss into being the Officer in Charge I then organised a date for the first committee meeting. At this meeting initial plans were formulated with plenty of volunteers offering to run events. A date was set for the fun weekend to take place, this being 4-6 October 1996. Letters were sent to all sections on the Station so as to get as many teams as possible participating. The Youth Club offered to run a sponsored computer marathon, posters were produced and put up around the Station, slowly replies started to come back to me, this was a worrying time. Some sections could not participate but donated the entry fee anyway. To get as much sponsorship as possible I asked all sections to nominate a volunteer to take a sponsor form around that section only. I even requested that Tedder primary school hold a non uniform day, this they did willingly, as it had been done before.

We then held our second committee meeting. This took place just a fortnight before our planned weekend. At the meeting it appeared everything was going as planned, there was even an extra event planned. This was put forward by **Fg Off Nichols** (catering officer) a back to front dinner in the Officers Mess for Officers and SNCO's. By this stage the BBC had been in contact with **Flt Lt Haynes**, our Public Relations Officer regarding a video of the weekend to be used in the run up to Children in Need.

On Wednesday 2 October our last committee meeting took place to finalise everything. No problems, so it was all go, that evening the first event took place. The Youth Club sponsored computer marathon, with lots of enthusiasm the children played on the computers, with lots of good scores being achieved. The winner was **Matthew Riddell** but all participants received a certificate. Then along came Friday 4 October, a collection bucket was placed in the VCP, then it was off to the school, video camera in hand to film the children arriving for their non uniform day, about 90% of the children turned up minus uniforms each child paying 50p for this privilege. Then it was a quick dash to the new Navy Headquarters to drop off a collection bucket for their afternoon function.

Then an even quicker dash back to the school to film the assembly, the headmistress, **Mrs Barker** was not expecting this judging by her look of horror as I entered the assembly hall. My next port of call was to 399 SU where a cake raffle was been run by the US Det. It was based on a Halloween theme and was a great success. Money was collected and counted and the running total was £233.45. Unfortunately I cannot report on the back to front dinner as rumours, sorry actual reports of the event have not filtered back to me yet. Except that the event was a great success with £308.62 being raised on the night, so the running total was up to £542.07. This total had surpassed my initial target of raising £500. So my new target is now £1000.

Saturday was a rest day, good idea really as some die hard individuals were allegedly just finishing the back to front dinner. Sunday arrived this was the main day for events to take place. The first event was the Corsa Challenge, and our first problem. Course designer **Clare Fisher** had forgotten the plans, no problem up stepped my wife to design a course, (who said women aren't devious!).

The Corsa Challenge
The H Flight B Team in action

The first team to try was from H Flight, with special mention of their driver **Gary** 'I've done this in a tank' **Fisher**, their time was accurately timed on an hourglass, whoops! sorry a stopwatch. H Flight's B Team was next up for the challenge, their tactics were strange with **Clare Fisher** steering. This tactic paid off with the team taking first place. H Flight A Team were pushed into third by the Scouts. While the H Flight teams were busy with the Corsa Challenge, B Flight played the first game of Softball against the Scouts, narrowly beating them. The Scouts then faced up to the might of H Flight again losing narrowly, the Scouts then disappeared around the camp with collection bucket in hand, returning later with a substantial amount. H Flight and B Flight met in the next match with notable performances from **Mick** 'slugger' **Birchall** and **Tony** 'hands' **Harding** and **Clare** 'fastball' **Fisher**.

Kate Williams playing Softball

The final event of the day was the 'Its a Knockout' Challenge, the most notable performance coming from the Scouts, who eventually won. The day was rounded off with a disco in the NAAFI, where **Capt Kunz** presented trophies to winning teams. An impromptu raffle was held and buckets passed around.

In conclusion the weekend was a great success, so far the total raised is £932.57. This figure includes a very generous donation from the Station Commander of £50 with more money to come in.

Since going to press an update on the final amount has come in. The final amount raised was £1060.91. Many thanks to all those who participated and donated moneys. Special thanks to all the organisers of the events. Any ideas for next year????

249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))
Bulford Camp

EXERCISE LONG LOOK 96

Selected from a cast of thousands I was fortunate enough to attend Ex Long Look 96 in New Zealand. The journey started at Brize Norton on 16 July 1996 where we boarded the RAF Tristar destined for our first stop over in Kuala Lumpar, here the Long Look contingent got to know each other and found who was going where. I was destined for a place called Palmerston North on the North Island. After a night on the town in Kuala Lumpar we flew on to Sydney where we lost the Australian bound Long Lookers and met our opposite number from New Zealand contingent. This was the day the New Zealand All Blacks had just beaten South African Springboks in New Zealand so the Kiwis were well oiled. We spent the rest of the evening learning what we could about the unit we were being attached to and explaining the delights Bulford held for our visitors whilst taking in the night life of Sydney. The Kiwis left the following day on the Tristar bound for UK and we had another day in Australia nursing our hangovers before the New Zealand Air Force transported us to the land of the long white cloud.

When I eventually arrived at 2 Sigs I was met by **LCpl Cullen** who had furnished my bunk with a television and stereo. He went on to introduce me to the rest of the lads all of whom were easy to get along with and very sociable. I was introduced to the delights of Palmerston North the following evening where the conversation soon got around to rugby; I corrected my hosts over the fact that England doesn't wear a pufty flower on their chests but a blood red rose, they corrected me on my minor indiscretion of calling their silver Fern a white feather. Be advised future Long Lookers, if you are drinking tequila with these guys and they are sinking it like water, it probably is. It was not long before I was away on exercise and shown the New Zealand phenomena of Waiouru, a training area that is a cross between Sennybridge and Salisbury plain. Everyone was keen to help me see the country and where they were from. **LCpl Lisa Murray** started me off on the road trips steering me through the tourist traps of Tauranga, Rotorna, Napier and Hastings. **LCpl Andre Witehira** showed me Wanganni, Ohakune and Mt Ruapehu an active volcano that blew the day after we visited spraying ash all over the slopes much to the dislike of the ski bunnies.

It was the 75th anniversary of the Royal New Zealand Signals while I was there and I became caught up in the celebrations, it started off with a Corps sports weekend where I was fortunate to be selected to play in their Corps rugby team against the Engineers. Some of the lads were a bit dubious having a pom in the side but this was unfounded as we went on to win 16–10, something the Engineers have not been allowed to forget. The remainder of the anniversary celebrations were to be held in Auckland by 5 Sigs that culminated in a parade where the Kiwis were presented the Princess Anne Banner. After the anniversary celebrations I stayed in Auckland and looked around the top of the North Island hosted by **LCpl Jerry Karati**.

Most of the people I spoke to informed me that I would not have seen New Zealand until I had seen the South Island, I found the majority of people telling me this had not seen the south Island themselves. 3 Sigs are based at Burnham just outside Christchurch. There I was met by **LCpl B. J. King** who again furnished my bunk with a television and was a much valued guide to the South Island. My first week on the South Island I was sent on exercise to Queenstown, which although only a small village, is the tourist capital of the South Island. While there I had me some eggs cooked by **Bella, NJ, Dee** and **Jasmine** something that may be lost on interpretation unless you have watched 'once were warriors'. During the following weeks I was given a car and sent on my travels and I have to agree with my previous advisors, the South Island really is a beautiful place. I was advised Britain had one of the best Rugby League teams in the world and went to see the third test in Christchurch of the Lions versus the All Blacks. I was shrouded in a Union Jack and England top much to the delights of the colonials when we lost again. For my last few days on the South Island I was taken diving off Kiakora, **B. J. King**'s parents lived up that way so along with **NJ, Jason, Jasmine** and **BJ** we went diving for crayfish and swimming in the seal colony.

I went back to Palmerston North for my final week in the country and missed most of the lads including **Sig** 'Fitzy' **Fitzgerald, Roy** and **Brian Nicholson**, 'Cherry' **Cherrington** (mumble mumble mumble), **Sam** (nice haka) **Maniopoto, Sally** 'the blonde' **Boyt**, 'Babs' **Babbington** and 'Dallas' **Kincade Ratima** thank you for a very enjoyable tour. Just to advise **Karl Cummins** that **Danny** does not use Grecian it's special shampoo.

KIWI TROPHY 1-2 NOVEMBER 1996

The Kiwi Trophy is the Squadron's annual march and shoot competition. This years event was combined with the Squadron Reunion, which was held to mark the Squadron's 20th year in the AMF(L) role (and we still haven't deployed in anger anywhere!) To add a little difference and competition all past members were invited to partake in the event, an offer which strangely enough was accepted by some 30 ex members of the Squadron. Obviously they have either very short memories of the pain involved or they possess serious character flaws! Many more however took the far more sensible option and just came along for the more sociable evening function with the numbers swelling to around 300 as soon as the bar opened. It was good to see that so many ex members of the Squadron had come back to spend the day with us, one even travelled all the way from Australia.

The event itself, for the uninitiated is held over a distance of 22km on Salisbury Plain and incorporates the firing of 10 rounds from a distance of 200m, with a three minute time penalty added for each shot dropped. Due to the large scale of this years competition it was run over two days, with a lot of the Squadron planning team racing on the Friday 1 November. On day one the standard was set **Capt** 'the targets can't be registering my score' **Talbot**, who despite having one of the fastest running times only managed to score one out of 10 to gain himself a 27 minute penalty time. He was not alone however, many more on that lane including **WO2** 'deadeye' **Dickson** and **Cpl** 'I'm a Skill At Arms Instructor now' **Chambers** both joined him in the 27 minutes.

Even though the official Reunion was not till the night of the 2 November there were a few unofficial reunions on the 1 November. To that end **LCpl Shawcross** was that keen to be at the start on time he decided to stay up all night, then fell asleep in the morning and missed his start time. Don't worry though some special arrangements where made for him to be able to reap the full benefit from the day!!! As for the rest they all made it to the start and a well contested event resulted, the unoffical event being for who had the best blisters and backache. An excellent effort was seen, especially from all the guest runners, no fewer than six ex Squadron commanders ran, walked or crawled around the course. The most committed being **Lt Col (Retd) Fisher** came with the sole intention of 'breaking in the youth of today' by continually passing them much to their annoyance.

When the competition was over the Squadron formed up for **Mr John Collinge** the New Zealand High Commissioner to present the prizes.

The results were as follows:

1st	**Cpl Wilson**	in 02:23:04
2nd	**Cpl Pay**	in 02:25:07
3rd	**Sgt Ward**	in 02:23:21
Outside units:		
1st	**WO1 Benson**	30 Sig Regt
2nd	**SSgt Johnston**	14 Sig Regt
3rd	**SSgt Johnston J.**	RSS
Veterans:		
1st	**Col Cook**	PB11
2nd	**Lt Col Fisher**	Retd
3rd	**Lt Col Oldfield**	CO 30 Sig Regt

Then Commander Communications (LAND), **Brig Griffin**, was invited to present NATO medals to members of the Squadron who recently deployed to Bosnia as part of IFOR. Also **WO2 (FofS)** 'I am the Minor Units 100m Champion you know' **Steele** was presented with his LS & GC.

With all the formalities completed the band of 34 Sig Regt (V) performed an excellent Beating of the Retreat to round off the day. Then it was time for the night festivities, a quick change and off to the Reunion bar for a few sociable drinks with the many past members of the Squadron who were able to make it back for the weekend. We are not saying it was predictable but the saying of the evening must have been, 'It was a lot harder in my day'. Although this was closely followed by, 'The Kiwi was much whiter, further, painful, heavier in my day'.

All in all it was a highly successful and eventful weekend. And one that will be remembered by all for many years to come, but especially by **Brig (Retd) Patrick Webb** who was the Officer Commanding the Squadron in Malay in 1962. It was his first visit back to the Squadron since then and he was overjoyed to see that Squadron spirit and standards remain the same today as they were then.

Commodore Peddie, NZ CDS and Capt Foulkes, OC 249 Sig Sqn accompanied by 2Lt Healey, WO2 (SSM) Barnes at Tidworth Military Cemetery

SOinC Brig Wood presents LCpl Scarrot with his promotion to full Cpl

Comd Comms, Brig Griffin presents Cpl Green with his NATO Medal

The New Zealand High Commissioner presents the Kiwi Trophy to the winner, Cpl Wilson

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EXERCISE DRYSHOD–NOVEMBER 1996

After many hours of careful preparation, the time finally arrived for the Sqn 'Crap-Belts' to attend the dreaded Dryshod, the pre-Hardfall training exercise designed to give us a 'heads-up' before the actual Norway deployment and the demanding Arctic Ski and Survival Course.

After a long but very comfortable coach journey, we found ourselves standing in the very scenic Brecon Beacons, many of the new boys in shock because there was actually snow under foot. Without time to 'thank-your-mother' we began straight away with the various lesson packages, there was no turning back now, death by powerpoint had begun, and could only be quickly interrupted for the odd military cliché thanks to **Cpl** 'Chaz' (it pays to be a winner) **Chambers**. After various lessons which included cold weather injuries, avalanches and Arctic safety we moved a stage further in our Arctic training . . . the notorious peak stove taught expertly by **Cpl** 'my hands are on fire' **Wilson**.

When all of the lessons were completed (and after a few socials–of course) the next hurdle which faced us was the final exercise, designed to give us the opportunity to practise tent group routine, appropriately called 'Ex Gilbert Gutbuster'. After receiving stores and orders and using another night for essential preparation we left camp in fine spirits and headed for the magnificent hills of Wales. During the day we were to complete a navigational task which tested our basic (some very basic indeed) map reading skills. After a very pleasant day of being 'geographically-misplaced' and soaking in the great outdoors, we arrived at the pre-designated bivi site and quickly went into the drills for the erection and operation of a five man ridge tent. Finally, to end a very long and exhausting day we settled down to enjoy the culinary delights of the tasty Arctic-ration pack.

The following day, we awoke bright and early, eager to continue in the search for complete Arctic knowledge and the famous Squadron belt. Our hopes were dashed when after 'Pulling Pole' and the normal kit inspection the AWI's thought it would be better if we set up camp again because we needed a little more practice. Finally convinced that we were well on the way to being Arctic warriors, they allowed us to return to camp to take a final exam on the theoretical side of things. Most of us passed, however the AWO was heard to be slightly concerned about some of the answers, especially **Sig Rudge**'s stock answer 'wrap up and keep warm!'

Joking aside, everyone who attended Ex Dryshod learnt a considerable amount, worked hard and had a lot of fun. We are now looking forward to the main deployment which begins in January and the beautiful experience which is ASSC.

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259 Sig Sqn
BFPO 53

Sqn Comd — **Maj Kevan Thornber**
Sqn Comd (Des) — **Maj Steve Turnbull**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hardwidge**

HODGSON SHIELD

The Inter Troop football competition, part of the Hodgson Shield sports, took place in Happy Valley on 29 November 1996. As usual there was much banter and merriment before the games began, particularly from the much favoured Epi Tp. Once underway the banter gave way to hard work and 'committed tackling', there were no holds barred. Last year's winners, the old men of HQ Tp were wheeled out and dispatched Dhekalia and Airfield Tps in two incident packed matches, **Tam** 'the cat' **Tulloch** performing wonders in the HQ Tp goal. Ep Tp won both their games, scoring more goals, but also conceding and showing weakness at the back. The stage was set for a dramatic decider. It was early in the first half when **SSgt (YofS) Nige** 'Crazy Legs' **Donohue** burst into the Epi Tp box and was flattened by **Sig Lee** 'Psycho' **Bearfield**. The ref had no hesitation in giving a penalty and **Mike** 'Let me take it' **Toner** duly converted. Obviously rattled Epi Tp took some time to compose themselves and HQ kept their lead into half time. After the break HQ continued to look dangerous and it wasn't long before **Capt Tim** 'nice trumpet' **Wood** put in HQ's second with a blistering run and awesome left foot shot which the Epi keeper just couldn't hold. Only now did Epi begin to play to their full potential as the old men began to tire. Again it was **Tam** the cat who saved the day after a long run from **Cpl Tony** 'talks a good game' **Lythgoe**. There is a rumour going around that **Tam** taught **Neville Southall** everything he knows, except how to retire. But **Tam** couldn't keep out **Sgt** 'Woody' **Wood** who scored Epi's only goal of the game, but it wasn't enough. An inspired bit of catering by **Sgt** 'Fudge' **MaCphee** meant that there was plenty of humble pie available in the Jimmy Club for the presentation. Thanks to **LCpl** 'Mouse' **Lane** for organising the competition.

EXERCISE BRAVE DEFENDER–BATTLECAMP 96

Battlecamp began on a sunny Sunday morning in the middle of October. By this stage the sick chits had been and gone and there were still a significant number of 'players' to take part in the exercise. It was a long and bumpy journey to the Akamas for a week of work-up training and live firing. All was well until the third night when the heavens opened. Unfortunately the rain dominated the thoughts of many, particularly those who thought they wouldn't need their waterproofs for a two week exercise in Cyprus. Apart from the lessons learned about 'watermanship', where and how to build a basha, and personal hygiene there was a wide variety of other mil skills in the first week. The live firing was outstanding, working up from IBSR through to Section Attacks including grenade throwing, thanks to **SSgt Mick Senior**. There was also a memorable bayonet lesson with interesting input from the TOT, and a well received survival lesson from **Maj Phil Osment** who had been dragged from his office in HQ BFC. Week two was a move closer to home to take on the defence of a key point. It was a tough week, but valuable none-the-less. There were plenty of talking points, not least of which were **Sig** 'Knuckles' **Shepherd** letting in the enemy because he thought they were passing cadets, and **Sgt** 'Blenky' **Blenkinsop**'s rally driving skills. Many thanks from the players to **Capt Mark Finneran** for organising the exercise and resisting the temptation to reenact Napolean's retreat from Moscow as in 1995.

SHQ/OPS CELL

All is quiet in the SHQ. A little bird told me that the TOT told a clean and funny joke recently.

Goodbye again to **WO2 (FofS) Scotty Steven** who has finally gone to NI, good luck. Goodbye also to the OC, **Maj Kevan Thornber**, who is posted to the HQ at 1 Armd Div. The best wishes of the Squadron go with you and your family, hope the Herford weather isn't too nippy.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Phil Newton**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt** 'Fudge' **MacPhee**
Tp FofS — **SSgt (FofS) Stu Meldrum**

HELLO AND GOODBYE

For a welcome change there have been a few postings in to counter the flow of departures. Farewell to **Sgt Martin** 'Woody' **Wood** and **Linda** who depart for Civvy Street. **Cpl** 'Dime Bar' **Edwards** is off up the mountain, this is allegedly due to his ability to speak Batco fluently. Welcomes go to **LCpls Liddle** and **Williams**, **Sigs** 'Knuckles' **Shepherd**, 'One Arm' **Shepherd**, 'No Gat' **Davis**, 'One Ball' **Davies** and 'Cadfael' **Bearfield**. We hope they carry on as they are as we certainly struck lucky on the entertainment factor with this intake. We also welcome their families to Cyprus and hope that they have an enjoyable stay on the island.

Other news from the Troop includes the return from Battlecamp, barely had we had time to remove our cam cream than there was a knock at the door. 'Hello, who are you' we said, 'We are the Tels/PRE team' they said, 'Damn' we said. Needless to say it has been a busy period. To make things just a bit more interesting we were also involved with the CBF's Annual Formal Inspection. With courses, overseas exercises, walking wounded and embarkation leave we seem to be coping quite well. Tune in next issue for another read from Epi Tp!

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Mark Finneran**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt** 'Yogi' **Caudwell**
Tp FofS — **SSgt (FofS) Mick Sheppard**

Back to the Troop lines after an arduous Battlecamp where the blistering heat and the torrential rains took their toll. The work load continues, enough to keep everyone nice and busy. The recent Troop photo was well received. It seems that the only member of the Troop looking at the camera was the boss' cat! Congratulations to **Cpl Sally Webster** on her well deserved third place in the recent Army Karate Championships.

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Unfortunately the Troop is saying goodbye to three well respected members. The first is **Sgt** 'beer monster' **Lewis**, good luck on your trek to Civvy Street, hope that everything goes well for you, your social skills will be missed dearly. **Sgt Rick Hannah** leaves the Troop on promotion and is heading off to sunny 7 Sigs, good luck **Rick**. Last but not least is **Sig Kev Powe** who take our best wishes to 220 Sig Sqn with him.

Welcome back to **Cpl Jim Wainwright** who has just completed another tour in the Falklands Islands and is on course for his entry in the Guinness Book of Records. Welcome to **LCpl Tony D'Or** on his recent arrival from NI.

DHEKALIA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Cath Waudby/**
WO1 (YofS) Pete Martin
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Mick Senior**
Tp FofS — **SSgt (FofS) Marc Findon**

A very busy period with Battlecamp and support to the Overseas Exercises with the Resident Infantry Battalions, and on island exercises. The latter proved a strong test of the telemechs and their powers of professional improvisation.

HELLO AND GOODBYE AND CONGRATULATIONS

The Troop has had more than its fair share of movement recently. Welcome to **SSgt (FofS) Marc Findon**, **Cpl Meir**, **Sigs Dalgreen**, **Gordon, Watt, Hogg, Fendyke, Bowen, Ball** and **Brazier**. Farewell and best wishes to **SSgt (FofS) Ray Edge, Sgt Cunningham, Cpl** (now Sgt) **Paul Coates**, and **LCpl Elvis Hemstead** who also goes on promotion. Hello and goodbye to **WO1 (YofS) Pete Martin** for standing in as Troop Commander while **Capt Cath Waudby** was off sick with poorly feet. Congratulations to **SSgt Mick Senior** and **Mel** on the birth of twins **Thomas Jack** and **Grace Elizabeth**. Congratulations on selection for promotion to **LCpls Elvis Hemstead** and **Al Hayhurst**.

Wire
PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in *The Wire*, to be returned, unless they are irreplaceable.

Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing a photograph that cannot be replaced.

1 (Royal Buckinghamshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn
(Special Communications)

Sqn Comd — **Maj Gordon Duncan**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Pete Charles**

ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY PARADE

On Sunday 20 October the Squadron celebrated the granting of the honorary title of the Royal Buckinghamshire Yeomanry with a parade outside the Manor House at Bletchley Park. The salute was taken by **Lord Cottesloe**, the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire with a speech by **Sir Lawrence Verney** the last CO of the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry. The event was attended by over a 150 guests including the SOinC and Commander Comms.

Sir Lawrence Verney presented the Squadron with the RBY standard on behalf of the RBY Association. He then gave a short speech the text of which is below.

'The moment when a dream comes true is a very special one. For many present today this is such a moment. The old members of the Royal Buckinghamshire Yeomanry enthusiastically welcome the new members of the Royal Buckinghamshire Yeomanry and rejoice that a long tradition of service to County and Country is thus preserved.

I have been asked to say a few words about the past. The history of the Yeomanry begins in 1794, when Parliament authorised the formation of volunteer units in each county; in May of that year Buckinghamshire responded wholeheartedly.

In three wars the Regiment served Sovereign and Country with distinction. In South Africa in 1900 in the Imperial Yeomanry. In the Great War in three roles–infantry at Gallipoli in 1915; cavalry under Allenby in Palestine in 1917 and the Regt's charge at El Mughar in November 1917 was the last great cavalry engagement of the British Arrny; finally as a machine gun battalion in France in 1918.

Horses could not survive and there was a conversion to Field Artillery in the early 1920s. In that capacity the Regt served in India, Arakan, Kohima and Burma in 1942-45. It is a proud record for, what were throughout, volunteers.

Between 1947 and 1967 we continued to train with 25 pounders but in 1967 as the last Commanding Officer I led the parade before the Lord Lieutenant when we were disbanded. My family crest is the phoenix, the mythical bird which arose fully grown from the ashes of it's predecessor. I have always hoped that this was an omen for the Yeomanry, a period of gestation of 29 years is without precedent even for that fabulous creature.

In the interim the Royal Bucks Hussars Association has kept us together and it arranged a remarkable parade to celebrate our bicentenary at Buckingham in 1994. On that occasion the Royal Signals were represented and it was my honour to command that parade.

Now there is a new and distinguished role for the Yeomanry, still based in Buckinghamshire. It is an exciting prospect. It is also, I believe, a role of great value. Only last Monday I heard the present Chief of the General Staff speak in glowing terms of the invaluable part played by the Territorial Army, a part which is integral to all military planning. It was announced last week that he is to be the next Chief of the Defence Staff. Never before has the senior serving officer in HM Forces given a clearer endorsement to the importance of the TA in the service of the Country. What we have long maintained, is at last the official view. How splendidly the new RBY will enhance that certainty.'

EXERCISE BALMY LYNX

Ex Balmy Lynx took place in November and was one of the Squadron's most ambitious exercises yet. The Squadron deployed by Hercules to Bermuda with field dets located in Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua and the British Virgin Isles (BVI). A new record for the Squadron (and possibly the Corps?) was set during the Exercise as combined with other commitments the Squadron had over 40 soldiers deployed to 10 different countries! A typical detachment?

The Jamaica detachment, made up of **Lt Angus Evers**, **Cpl Martin Gilbert** and **Cpl Sylvester Hack**, spent two weeks hosted by the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF). The first location was a coastguard station built at Port Royal on the site of a former British Naval base where Lord Nelson was once Station Commander. The det established comms quickly with Bermuda and BVI, impressing the JDF who insisted that it could not be done with only 20W power and three men.

After a week the det moved to the JDF Training Depot at Newcastle in the Blue Mountains for two days. At 6000ft the climate was a pleasant change from the humidity and mosquito bites of the coast. The badges of the British and Canadian Regiments who had served at Newcastle prior to Jamaica's independence in 1962 surrounded the parade ground, serving as a reminder to the det of their forbears' exploits. The weather also reminded the det of home, as torrential rains hit the island, providing an interesting drive back to Port Royal through floods and landslides.

The det also carried out some comms training for the JDF, who impressed the det with their proficiency. Could this have anything to do with the fact that many of the JDF Officers and SNCOs have attended courses at Blandford?

'So this is what the weather's like in the Carribean then.'

Bermuda was a similar story as regards the weather. A little sun but for much of the time the island was under a severe weather warning. This was no bad thing as it made **WO2 (RQMS) Willie Ironside** and **WO2 (YofS) Paul Willimont** feel much more at home watching the World Rugby Classics taking place in Bermuda during the exercise. A few questions were asked–what did they have to do to get free tickets to matches including the final and how was it the they were always off shift at match time?! Others including **LCpl Ian** 'I've started so I will finish' **McKerrow**, **Sgt Tony Smith**, **LCpl Sue Willmott**, **LCpl Carlton Holmes-Smith** and **SSgt Dean Poole** decided, having conquered the yard of ale, to try the local speciality a gallon of black rum.

LCpl Ian McKerrow, SSgt Dean Poole, LCpl Sue Willmott and LCpl Carlton Holmes-Smith after 'The Gallon of Rum'

LCpl Ian McKerrow catching lunch

Sgt Mark Bentley and **LCpl Sean Avis** had a wonderful time in Antigua and Barbuda. Training the Antiguan Defence Force was one of their challenges but the biggest problem was a mixture of the rain and sandflies on Barbuda. As we understand the flies bite and get everywhere!

The Barbados detachment of **Sgt Roberts** and **Cpl Shane Moy**, Royal Australian Signals, have so far managed to keep quiet about their exploits. It is rumoured that they will tell all just as soon as *The Wire* notes go to print. As for the comms on the exercise–GREAT!

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS

604 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Richard Spencer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Phil Lord**

604 Sig Tp have now been formed for just over two years and this is our second appearance in *The Wire*. 604 Sig Tp supports HQ CSSG (UK) providing communication and admin support for this brigade sized 3rd line logistic HQ. To give people an insight into the Troop here are a few things we have done in the last few months.

LANYARD TROPHY–31 OCTOBER 1996

Sig Hadley, Cpl Ruddin, LCpl Fiddler and LCpl Owen

All thanks from the lads to **Capt Rich Spencer** for our rigorous two day training programme in preparation for the Lanyard Trophy. The team set off in mixed spirits not knowing what lay ahead. Despite a number of setbacks, for example **LCpl Mick Roberts** not knowing the difference between toilet paper and stinging nettles, the team progressed well. Within the first 10 miles a few started to fade but **LCpl** 'Johnny boy' **Whitworth** made a miraculous recovery after a pie and doughnut stop.

For the duration of the event **Capt Spencer** and **SSM Phil Lord** continuously relied upon their famous quote, 'Only one more hill to go lads', which kept them going as much as anything else. The remainder of the team consisted of **Cpl Bri Ruddin**, **LCpl Fiddler**, **LCpl Sid Owen**, **Sig Tony Willis**, **Sig** 'Chris the boy lard' **Howell** and **Sig Nathan Hadley**. The team managed to finish with all members, the only team who achieved this, in a time of 14 hrs 46 mins.

The team would like to thank **LCpl** 'H' **Harrison** and **Sig** 'Rose' **Merry** for the much appreciated admin support.

EXERCISE SNOWDON SHUFFLE–SUMMER CAMP
7-11 OCTOBER 1996

Ex Leader — **Maj Blong RLC**

At the start of October we embarked on a summer camp in Wales. On arriving at Capel Curig Camp we were briefed and then shown to our luxurious accommodation at the bottom of the Camp, where a few tents were looking suspiciously like our homes for the next few days. The Troop was given three activities: canoeing, rock climbing and three hill climbing routes (all of which included a very large feature). Now faced with the fun challenges ahead most people opted to go down into Betsy-Coed for a last bit of socialising before getting their teeth into the following day's activities.

Bright and early the next morning the activities commenced, first to leave were the three hill walking groups who had Snowdon, Tryfan and the Glydders in their sights all of which were a bit of a challenge considering the night before. **Cpl Si Link** donned his stickys for the first time in years to help out **Capt Paul Edwards** RLC with the rock climbing, and showed every one that you can't judge a man by his size. **Cpl Steve Brooks** took the canoeing group out on the nearby lake where after a morning of basic tuition they went for a gentle paddle down stream. Unfortunately due to the dry weather the water level was quite low so this exercise ended up with the whole group becoming grounded every twenty yards or so. After a great deal of effort the group finally made it to a deep part of the river where upon **Cpl Mark Broomfield** and **Sig Nathan Hadley** proceeded to jump off a bridge spanning the river.

On the last day the option to go deep sea fishing was presented which was met with a great deal of enthusiasm. On the boat most people regretted their action's of the previous night mainly **LCpl Davis**, **LCpl Fiddler** and **Sig** 'Shaggy' **Watkins**. Once people had recovered a great day was had by all. On returning to camp they were given a wide berth due to the strange aroma of the group. On behalf of the Troop I would like to thank all those involved in the organisation and especially all the instructors.

EXERCISE QUANTUM STRIDE–TROOP BATTLECAMP
23-30 NOVEMBER 1996

On a typically snowy Catterick day 604 started their Battle camp at Wathgill Camp. On the Sunday orders were given to the two section Comds **Cpl Broomfield** and **Cpl Brooks**. The orders stated that the two sections were to OP & CTR two different locations in order to gain information for a platoon minus attack.

That afternoon stores where collected and preparations were made. The following day both sections deployed into the field at last light. At this point Catterick showed its true colours and the heavens opened. Both sections arrived at their respective DOP's and proceeded to tab to their possible harbour areas. On arriving at their harbour areas intact, apart from 2 Section who had to medevac **LCpl** 'the bells, the bells' **Rogers**, who put his back out which was due to a 'very heavy bergan', the OPs commenced. That night only 2 Section's OP succeeded as 1 Section were bumped by **Sgt Pete** 'the Tp dad' **Mullen**. Over the next few days the intelligence was gathered and on the Wednesday **Cpl Broomfield** was informed he was to complete a Platoon minus attack on his objective. **LCpl John** 'I've got an 'O' level in art' **Whitworth** was given the task of producing a map of the area, so went about creating a masterpiece of 3D map making on a grand scale (4m by 2m). The orders were given that night, around the great masterpiece which took four poncho's to cover. The attack went in at first light and was successfully completed but no wonder with the gun group giving 1100 rounds of 7.62 support, the enemy couldn't help but keep their heads down. After a fun few days out in the field we all adjourned to nearest refreshment centre and celebrated another successful 604 Battlecamp.

Thanks goes out to all persons involved in the organisation and a especially big thank you for the weather.

MINOR UNITS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The unit has recently entered the 4 Div West League in which their first encounter with the RMP Trg Centre was a happy and successful one. We are pleased to say we ran out at a comfortable 5–0 victory with goals from **Cpl Ruddin**, **LCpl Fiddler**, **Sig Hadley** and **Sig Willis**.

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

OC — **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**
YofS — **SSgt (YofS) Pete van den Broek**

Under its new name, the third in one year, the team is continuing its on going mission to monitor the nets for strange new nets and illegal codes (which is, at times an extremely boring job and at other times an extremely boring job). However, the team has been able to fathom out the intricate mysteries of our new equipment and can now operate it with a fair degree of competence, and the last few glitches in the system (hopefully, all fingers crossed) are being ironed out.

Recent deployments have included a trip to Sennelager training area to monitor a recent Green Star exercise and a deployment to our 'Second Home', no, not the bar, to range WI on Bergen training area to monitor Ex Rats Hackle. We spend so much time there we're thinking of moving there, or at least upgrading the toilet facilities and earthing properties of the site (many litres of H^2O have been poured in to the sandy ground via earth spikes!)

Now we are getting to the twilight of the year, not the twilight zone as we've been there all year. We seem to have hit a bit of an 'exercise drought' but we have kept ourselves amused and busy, otherwise we would go mad. Firstly by going through the troop garages like a dose of salts and getting rid of as much junk as we can find, and there was lots, and making sure that the vehicles we have got have been turned around to within inches of their lives. Secondly by organising presentations, by members of the team, on various subjects. So far we have had a presentation, by **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy**, on the concentration camp of Belsen, which is just down the road from us, complete with a visit to the camp and a look around the museum. But by far the highlight has got to have been a glorious whole week spent sailing around the Baltic on a yacht. The yacht in question was a pre-World War Two vintage racing yacht taken by the British at the end of the war. She has been sailed on by none other than Adolf Hitler, as well as the boys of CACT, and is called the *Flamingo*. She was definitely the best looking craft in the water, as well as being crewed by the best looking, lean, mean, sailing machines ever to put out to sea, so you can keep your modern plastic sheds. Well that's our opinion anyway!

Dinghy Drills
LCpls Andy Johnstone, Bri Butters and Aus Gambles

Turning up on the 8 October we were shown our new home. To say that we were excited was an understatement in most cases, although **Sig Scott Yuill** was not overly impressed to be on board. He proceeded to lash himself to the mast and was not seen for the entire week (except for the night ashore where he tapped off with Miss Denmark) without being strapped on and having at least ten points of contact with the boat. Others such as **LCpl Bri Butters** and **Sig Vic Vernon** were quite happy until the boat started leaning to one side at angles of around 50 degrees. Especially when **SSgt (YofS) Pete van den Broek** starts commenting on how good it will be to get water over the gunwales (that's the sides for all you landlubbers), someone get that man off the tiller!

Back Seat Drivers
OC, Cpl Murphy (at the back),
LCpls Aus Gambles and Bri Butters and Sig Scott Yuill

Other sources of amusement included an encounter with a rather flash looking yacht who we had a bit of a competition with. He was trying to get past and we were trying to stop him, when for some inexplicable reason they began to throw bananas at us! Perhaps it was **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** standing on the pulpit (that's the front) attempting communication. We would have returned fire but, alas, we had no suitable ammunition (YES! we have no bananas!). **LCpl Andy Johnstone** set himself up a rather comfy seat at the back of the boat (the pushpit) and wiled away the week with his tin of baccy, rizlas and lighter. The OC, **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle** and **SSgt (YofS) Pete van den Broek** managed to guide the vessel through fog thicker than pea soup, with nothing more than distance and bearing to plot our position and still managed to pass buoys within two metres. **Sig Vic Vernon** was able to steer in a straight line more efficiently when he couldn't see than when he could! Returning to Kiel, after a comprehensive tour of Danish coastal nightlife, the entire team passed their competent crew award–see, miracles do happen, and our skipper for the week went for counselling.

The team was also able to field two teams of two for Ex Mini Magnum, an intensive driving/navigation competition. Neither of the teams had ever entered a competition like this before and with a fair mix of good and bad driving and navigation both teams were able, not only to complete the course, but also to score enough points to come about half way up the score board. The two teams were **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** (navigating) and **Sig Scott Yuill** (driving) and **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** (navigating) and **Sig Vic Vernon** (driving). Despite getting 'geographically confused' once or twice, driving down bendy lanes in the dark, over some truly horrific off road sections, not to mention through a track in a wood at night in what were probably the only standard army issue landrovers, yes, no fancy headlights here! The first team came 29th and the second came 31st out of an overall 60 teams, not bad for a first attempt.

We welcome **LCpl** 'Titch' **Meakin** as he returns from an attachment to 207 Sig Sqn, and a good bye almost immediately as he is posted back to 207 Sig Sqn boxing team. We wish him all the best and rest secure that our first aid kits will not run down so quickly. Hello, also to **Sig Powell** fresh from the factory we say a warm 'Get the brews on sprog!'. We hope you enjoy your tour with the Team.

Congratulations to **SSgt (YofS) Pete Van den Broek** and **Anita** on the birth of their daughter **Laura**. Congratulations also to the OC's wife **Julie** on finally passing her driving test on the tenth attempt.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS (ULOTC)
EXPLAINING THE 'MYTH' OF AN OTC
by Capt A. J. Clewlow

The ULOTC is one of 19 OTCs around the country. However, the ULOTC establishment is uniquely 2.5 times larger than the 16 'standard' (minor unit) UOTCs and over one third larger than the 2 other 'non-standard' UOTCs at Oxford and Cambridge. However, London is able to set itself aside for another very good reason because it is the only OTC with an established Regular Adjutant. The Unit has been reorganised by the present CO into the same shape as an Infantry Battalion albeit, a TA training battalion. As the second largest British Army unit holding potential officers (RMAS is of course the largest) and being of major unit strength, the ULOTC can justifiably support this change of organisation.

The ULOTC is established for 385 all ranks, however with permission to overbear officer cadets, and with the addition of TA Gp B Officers, TA Potential Officers, Cadetship Officers and Bursars, the figure is routinely closer to 500 requiring weekly, if not daily, attention. All this with only 6 staff. Whoever said that the Adjutant of an OTC had it easy should look for a posting here!

The days of 'drill nights', 'drill halls' and 'contingents' have been replaced with more up-to-date terminology in line with current military thinking. For example, the ULOTC mission statement is:

> 'To develop–through broad Army training and experience–leadership, knowledge and skills in order to prepare individuals for positions of responsibility in the Regular Army, Territorial Army or elsewhere'

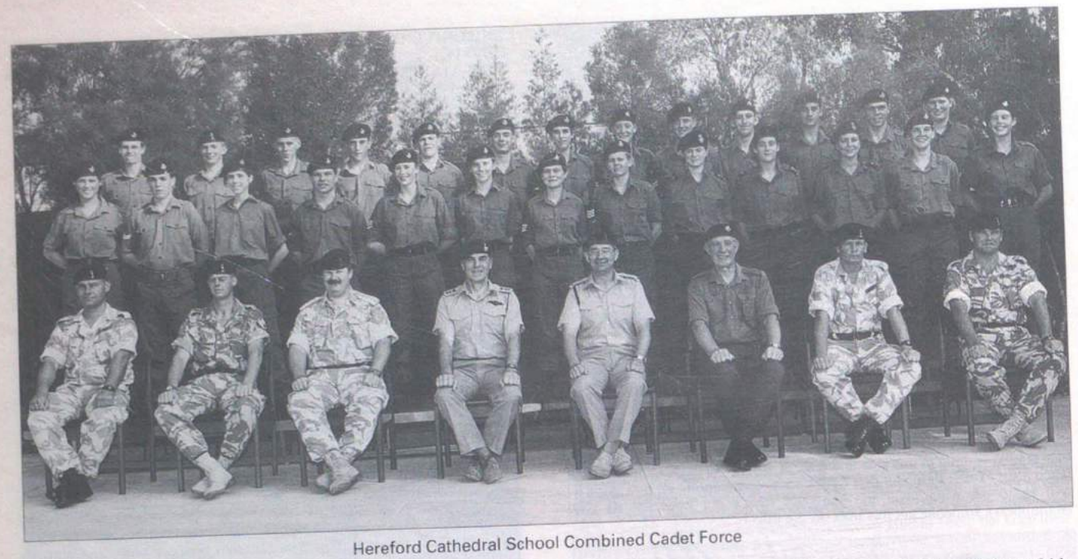
The 'drinking club' mentality that so many people have associated with OTCs has changed, and the balance altered between work and play at London. The era of professional training is now well established at the ULOTC, supported by six first class all-arms PSIs, and the benefits for officer cadets at London are ever increasing. This is supported by some simple statistics. Last September was the largest single input to the Commissioning Course at RMAS ever. In August 96 the Sword of Honour winner was an ex-ULOTC cadet (for the second year in succession) and the winner of Top Cadet on one of the RMAS TA Commissioning Courses this summer is now a Platoon Commander in the ULOTC, where he had been an officer cadet for the previous two years.

Work aside, there are opportunities in London that are rarely seen elsewhere. For example, in September after a last minute visit by Eric Morley (of Miss World fame), the training hall was filled for a whole day by the 20 Miss UK contestants (and 12 Mr UK contestants!) rehearsing before the event at the Hilton Hotel that weekend (sorry, no photograph was taken!). I could not let the opportunity pass, and attended the finals with my wife as guests of Mr Morley. We also provide a ceremonial squad for various events in the London calendar, one of which is a Guard of Honour for Foundation Day at the University of London. The Chancellor is the ULOTC Royal Honorary Colonel, and having spent ten years missing all visits by our Colonel in Chief within the Corps, this seemed an opportunity not to be missed. In the photograph you can see HRH giving me the low down on recruiting targets for the Royal Signals from within the ULOTC

HRH, The Princess Royal chatting to Capt Ade Clewlow and his wife with the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London looking on.

In summary, the Adjutant of the ULOTC is a demanding yet fascinating job within the TA. As service outside the Regular Army becomes inevitable for most officers, I feel privileged to have been given this opportunity to see the TA from a different perspective to that of my contemporaries in Sig Regts (V) around the country.

I hope this short article has now explained the 'myth' of an OTC.



Hereford Cathedral School Combined Cadet Force

From the 17th July to the 1st August 1996 an element of the Hereford Cathedral School Combined Cadet Force were hosted by 9th Signal Regiment (Radio) in Cyprus. **Lt Col Tim Inshaw** (Commanding Officer) very kindly agreed to sanction the visit, despite his Regiment being currently fully operational and heavily committed elsewhere.

On arrival in Cyprus the party were met by **Capt Gordon Anderson** (Officer Commanding Training Wing), who had been nominated as our liaison officer. In true military fashion we were quickly watered, fed and briefed. Once this had been done we left to recover from our 'jet lag' and acclimatise to our new environment. Acclimatise of course being the operative word, we'd left the UK in 26°C and were warned that Cyprus was currently in the grip of a heat wave with afternoon temperatures hitting 40°C. Needless to say, the first hours at Ayios Nikolaos were spent either lying on a camp bed covered in sweat, or shuffling about in shorts and flip flops leaving pools of water wherever one went! Ayios Nikolaos as we all quickly found out was one of the hottest places on the island, this is mainly due to it's location on the tip of the central plain. A two or three year tour in this location is certainly not for the faint hearted either.

The main programme for our cadets began on the 19 July with the CO welcoming the party to his Regiment. This was quickly followed by a group photograph, which was less a couple of the HCS staff (Flying Officer **Chris Spencer** and SSI **Mike Moffatt**), who had left earlier that morning to carry out the final recce for Expedition Akamas Amble, which was to take place from the 21 July to the 28 July in the Akamas and Troodos range of mountains. During the CO's briefing the million dollar question that was on the lips of everyone assembled was, what does 9 Sigs actually do? However, no one actually dared ask the big question in the end. To do so would mean being whipped away by the Unit Security heavies and grilled like halloumi cheese (a local delicacy), or so the SSI said anyway! **Capt Gordon Anderson** and his 'A Team' from the Training Wing had devised a varied and very interesting programme over the next few days. This was suitably backed up by **SSIPT** 'Fooey' **Witcombes** PT (Physical Torment) sessions!

On the 21 July at 0200hrs and after a hearty breakfast, the group were coached out to the expedition area at Ayio Yeoryios on the edge of the Akamas training area for the start of Exercise Akamas Amble. This expedition was the brain child of both the SSIs and Flying Officer **Chris Spencer** who had walked over much of the route a year earlier during the summer half-term break, or so they had everyone believe. It was to be both a Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Assessment Walk and a self-reliance test. The D of E groups were supervised by the OC CCF (**Lt Col Andrew Eames RM**) and Flying Officer **Chris Spencer**, with the main group coming under the command of **Maj Tom Matthews**, Pilot Officer **Kate Morris** and the SSI. Due to the extremely high temperatures during the daytime it was decided to have reveille at 0430hrs each day and walk the groups between 0500hrs and 1100hrs only, which proved to be a very beneficial way to move about in the end. 9 Sigs had very kindly provided the group with two safety vehicles fitted with mobile telephones which proved to be a 'God send' on a number of occasions. The two Nissan 4x4 vehicles performed superbly and were extremely economical and reliable throughout the whole expedition period.

A major concern whilst we were in the Akamas area was the snakes. Two in particular we were told were not so friendly, the Blunt Nosed Viper and the Montpellier. Despite possessing an abject fear of human beings it was not unknown for them to sink their fangs into human flesh occasionally, especially if surprised. The cadets had been well briefed prior to the expedition not to tamper with any snakes or spiders if they came across them. However, during the course of the expedition there were a number of snake sightings reported, these tended to be either fairly early in the morning or late in the afternoon when the snakes are fairly active. Fortunately, the biggest medical emergency that the SSI had to deal with during the expedition phase was **Grizel Cloustons** friction blisters!

During the course of expedition the following areas and villages were visited by both groups, the Baths of Aphrodite, Pyrgos Tis Reinas, Cape Arnauti, Khrysokhou, Prodhromi, Invicta Camp, Akamas Forest, Dhrousia, Androlikou, Neokhoria, Pano Arodes, Phasli, Ayios Minas, Mavri Shinia, Lara Bay, Fontana Amorosa, Vouni, Omodhos, Perapedhi, Platres, Troodos and Mount Olympus.

No matter where we travelled we found the villagers and the headmen extremely helpful and very accommodating. A very enjoyable evening was spent at the Afames Taverna in Vouni where everyone experienced true Cypriot hospitality. We were hosted by **Angela Varnasidou**, who practically single handedly fed thirty of us in one go! A meal in Vouni comes fully recommended to all those visiting the island, no matter where one is on route to. Angela speaks excellent English, and until a few years ago lived and worked in London.

The expedition phase finished on the 27 July, once that is, all the groups had made Troodos Camp, which stands a shade under 6000 feet above sea level. RQMS **Ken Whalley** kindly permitted the people taking part in the expedition to shower and clean up in the Camp and use the much needed NAAFI facilities. The rest of the afternoon was spent enjoying the spectacular views and taking in great lungs full of the cool crisp rarefied air. It was a great relief from the oppressive heat and humidity that lay at the bottom of the mountain.

Our return to Ayios Nikoloas late on the 27 July saw the party less two key players. Both the OC CCF and Flying Officer **Chris Spencer** unfortunately had to return to the UK early due to other commitments elsewhere. Nevertheless, in their short stay they had managed to get their knees brown and pick up their Duty Free allowances! From the 28-31 July we had a very full and action packed programme which included, Go-Karting on the Ay Nik race track by kind courtesy of **SSgt Rick Morris** and his band of helpers. This was followed by some Clay Pigeon shooting and one or two bruised shoulders. We managed to spend a day in the Northern part of Cyprus, and whilst here the group visited St Hilarion (Crusader Castle) which stands 2200 ft above Kyrenia. The view from St Hilarion is quite spectacular, and it's not difficult to see why the Crusaders built a fortress on this particular point. After the visit to St Hilarion the group spent the afternoon shopping in Kyrenia and sampling the Northern Cyprus cuisine.

Over the next day or so the group visited Larnaca and Ayia Napa for swimming, sightseeing and souvenir shopping. On the penultimate evening an informal barbecue was held at Ay Nik. This gave the group the ideal opportunity to thank everyone who had been directly or indirectly involved with the visit. The SSI gave a special thanks to **Lt Col Tim Inshaw** for permitting the visit to go ahead, with **Maj Phil Daisey** (Comd HQ Sqn) and **SSgt Mark Browitt** also being thanked for their wonderful support. In his absence on a course in the UK, **Capt Gordon Anderson** was also mentioned and thanked. An added extra to the programme was the display given by the Ay Nik Dog Section. **Pte Andy Potter** very kindly co-ordinated this through his OC Section towards the end of our stay. Our Contingent **WO Russell Atherton** very bravely volunteered his body for savaging during the demonstration. What a good officer he'll make if he always leads from the front!

It was a truly terrific two weeks with the HCS cadets gaining much from the experience of operating in Cyprus. Every single one of us had a brilliant time and are sincerely grateful to the CO and his staff for the time and effort spent on our behalf.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col D. J. Lowe**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt S. Glover**
Secretaries:	
General	**Lt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2145
Dinghy & Dayboats	**SSgt Bungay** Blandford Mil 2409
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	Vacant
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster**
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** Bulford Mil 2837
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney**

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club: If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

WINDSURFING NEWS

Firstly you should all know the new season starts next month in March, and now on with the News. The rescheduled R Signals Corps–Wide Windsurfing Championships were held on a sharp and breezy November morning, once again in Portland harbour. This prestigious event drew competitors from a wide area, including teams from Northern Ireland and York, individuals from the Gurkha Signals, the TA and also guest competitors from the APTC and REME. It was great to see such enthusiasm from the novices during the event and particularly pleasing to see so many newcomers–a very warm welcome to you all. After a closely fought contest the Rear Commodore windsurfing, **Lt Col Jo Fletcher** (2 Sig Regt), sailed brilliantly to emerge as overall champion. In the team event, 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt once again finished as Major Unit Winners, with 2 Sig Regt runners up. ATR Bassingbourn finished as the Minor Unit Winners. We are grateful to **Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE,** who once again showed his support by coming to the event and conducting the prize-giving ceremony. The remainder of the results are given below:

Novice Lightweight Fleet:
- 1st: **LCpl Jason Wells**–63 (SAS) Sig Sqn (V)
- 2nd: **Sig Malcolm Connop**–2 Sig Regt
- 3rd: **LCpl Man Pun**–2 Sig Regt

Novice Heavyweight Fleet:
- 1st: **LCpl Kev Waring**–3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
- 2nd: **SSgt Chris Lloyd**–3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
- 3rd: **Sig Bob Hansford**–2 Sig Regt

Open Lightweight Fleet:
- 1st: **Capt Johnathan Coleman**–ATR Bassingbourn
- 2nd: **Maj Peter Bowles**–Royal School of Signals
- 3rd: **Sgt Ian Blair**–3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt

Open Heavyweight Fleet:
- 1st: **Maj Bill White**–ATR Bassingbourn
- 2nd: **WO2 (YofS) Tony Rathmell**–32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V)
- 3rd: **SSgt Burt Curtin**–225 Sig Sqn, 15 Sig Regt

Best Superheavy: **Cpl Adrian Varney**–3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Best Guest: **SSgt Mark Lewis** (APTC)–ATR Bassingbourn
Best Veteran: (2nd Overall): **Maj Dave Gilchrist**–238 (London) Sig Sqn

A newsletter will be published soon, giving dates and details of how to lease a Corps board, all forthcoming competitions and training sessions, ideas for the future and, if you fancy giving windsurfing a go, details on how to learn to windsurf. If you have not previously filled in a 'known windsurfers proforma' and would like to receive the newsletter, simply ring or write to the secretary (**Capt J. P. Coleman**, Delta Sqn, ATR Bassingbourn) who will be more than happy to send you a copy. Finally, if there are any windsurfers out there who have any suggestions as to what you would like to see happening in our sport or personal ideas about the way forward with Corps windsurfing, please let the secretary know. Likewise, if there are any qualified instructors (even if you are not interested in racing) who would like to help teach, or run events, please get in touch.

SPORT

BADMINTON

ROYAL SIGNALS BADMINTON

The R Sigs Badminton Tournament 1996 took place during the period 18-20 September 1996 at Azimghur Bks, Colerne. The attendance at this year's tournament was poor, with only 5 Units represented, due to 'Operational Commitments'.

Those individuals that attended the tournament thoroughly enjoyed the highly competitive spirit that was evident throughout the various competitions. Although 21 Sig Regt (AS) were the favourites, (on paper), to win the Unit Competition, the results were as follows:

1st	11th Sig Regt
2nd	21st Sig Regt (AS)
3rd	9 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
4th	14th Sig Regt (EW)
5th	9th Sig Regt (Radio)

Other Competition results were as follows:

Mens Singles Plate	Winner	LCpl Pearson	21 Sig Regt
	Runner-Up	Cpl Wyatt	21 Sig Regt
Mens Singles	Winner	Cpl Merchant	14 Sig Regt
	Runner-Up	Cpl Pearson	19 Mech Bde
Ladies Singles	Winner	Sig McIntosh	21 Sig Regt
	Runner-Up	LCpl Rigg	14 Sig Regt
Mens Unit Doubles	Winners	Cpl Pearson	19 Mech Bde
		Cpl Hinsley	19 Mech Bde
	Runner-Up	Capt Inman	11 Sig Regt
		Sig McBain	11 Sig Regt
Ladies Unit Doubles	Winners	Sig McIntosh	21 Sig Regt
		Mrs Hari Gurung	21 Sig Regt
	Runners-Up	L/Cpl Rigg	14 Sig Regt
		Sig Musson	14 Sig Regt
Mens Open Doubles	Winners	Capt Inman	11 Sig Regt
		Cpl Pearson	19 Mech Bde
	Runners-Up	SSgt Shirley	1 (UK)Div
		Sig McBain	11 Sig Regt
Mixed Doubles	Winners	LCpl Rigg	14 Sig Regt
		Cpl Pearson	19 Mech Bde
	Runners-Up	Sig McIntosh	21 Sig Regt
		Cpl Wyatt	21 Sig Regt
Veterans Doubles	Winners	Mr Ted Heasman	Civilian Guest
		Mrs Hari Gurung	Civilian Guest
	Runners-Up	Capt Inman	11 Sig Regt
		SSgt Shirley	1 (UK)Div

The Corps Tournament was used to select the Corps Squad for the Inter-Corps Tournament which was held at Wilton Park, Beaconsfield during the period 15/16 November 1996. The Corps probably has the strongest

team on paper and having not won this competition for many years, this was to be the year for us. However, once again, due to other commitments and unexpected injuries, the Corps was not at full strength for this competition. After narrowly avoiding the embarrassing position of having to borrow a player from another Corps, the team managed to perform reasonably well on the first day, only just losing to the REME, (the eventual winners of the tournament), and to the AGC.

On the second day, two more players were released from training to boost the squad's chances of a revival. The team won both matches convincingly against the RLC and RE. Unfortunately, the best the team could hope for was third place, maybe next year. The match results were as follows:

R.Sigs 4	REME	5	Lost
R.Sigs 3	AGC	6	Lost
R.Sigs 8	RLC	1	Won
R.Sigs 9	RE	0	Won

The overall results were as follows:

1st	REME
2nd	AGC
3rd	R Sigs
4th	RE
5th	RLC

GOLF

RSS/11 SIGNAL REGIMENT WIN
ARMY INTER-UNIT GOLF CUP

The final stages of the Army Inter-Unit Golf Cup took place at Tidworth on 10 and 11 October. Eight teams competed as their respective Divisional Champions for the Army Challenge Cup which was first played for in 1904.

RSS/11 Signal Regiment had reached the final stages after their recent win over the previous Army Champions (RSA/14 Regiment RA) in the 3 Div final. Thus, during the run up to the final stages, the Regiment were regarded as firm favourites to win the Cup. That was until their loss through injury of **Capt Steve Watson,** one of the best players in the side. Bearing in mind that this is a scratch competition, the loss of such a low handicap player, at such short notice, was a bitter blow to the Team's chances. However, his place was taken by **Lt Col Alan Browne** who stepped into the breach, used all his experience and played some excellent golf during what turned out to be a tough two days for the 3 Div Champions.

On the first morning, the Regiment met 1 Bn, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in the Quarter-final. This very spirited team lacked the firepower to hold onto the Signals quartet who were all playing well and the Regiment ran out comfortable winners by 19 holes. The afternoon Semi-Final was a different story as the Regiment came up against 22 Regiment RA; the new tournament favourites.

The match started badly for the Regiment with **Lt Col Willy Brewin** playing some indifferent golf against the Gunner number one and **Maj Ian Waller** struggling for form against another good quality golfer at number

two. Things were looking black after the ninth as the Gunners reached the turn leading by 11 holes, a very substantial lead at this level of golf. There was, however, a glimmer of good news at the back of the field where **Cpl Dave Rogers** had kept up his morning form and was leading by a few holes. As news of **Dave Rogers'** success filtered forward to the leading flights it seemed to lift some of the other players. Particularly **Lt Col Alan Browne** who, despite having the Team reserve (**Lt Col Dave Palmer**) as his caddie, was three down at the turn. He then started to play really well. So well that he won seven out of the last nine holes of his match to finish two up! An outstanding performance. Another player who turned his match around was **Maj Ian Waller** who suddenly found his form and, in typical **Waller** fashion, overwhelmed his less experienced, but very able opponent and converted a five hole deficit into a one hole win. A remarkable feat and vitally important to the Teams' eventual success.

In the meantime, **Lt Col Willy Brewin** was still struggling and was in damage limitation mode. Having been three down at the turn and still not playing well he hung on to finish five down at the front of the field. At this stage the match was very much in the balance and the CO of the Gunner Regiment and their teams' supporters were rushing around the last four holes at Tidworth like expectant fathers. It was very tense and the Team members did extremely well to keep their heads under such pressure. The balance slowly turned in favour of the Signals and finally the Gunners' resistance crumbled as **Cpl Dave Rogers** continued to win holes at the back to finish a magnificent six up. This produced an overall win to the Regiment by four holes. The top seeds were out and the Regiment were into the final where they were to meet 8 R Irish who were seeded second in the Tournament.

On Friday morning and in good playing conditions the Team lined up against a confident and good quality Irish side. The final turned out to be a much more clean cut affair without the tension and turnaround of the previous day. Nonetheless, it was always close and all the Team members had to cope with the pressures of playing in an Army final. The golf, under the circumstances, was of a high standard. This time the inspiration came from the front with **Lt Col Willy Brewin** playing some of his best golf to establish a solid and early lead in his match. **Maj Ian Waller**, faced with a very gritty opponent, played well enough to keep his match fairly even, as did **Cpl Dave Rogers**. The experience and consistency of **Lt Col Alan Browne** continued and throughout the morning the balance of the match favoured the Regiment. By the time the match had reached the 15th tee the Regiment looked safe, barring any disasters. And so it proved; with **Willy Brewin** finishing seven up, **Ian Waller** and **Dave Rogers** were both all-square and **Alan Browne** finished two up to give the Regiment the win and become the 1996 Champions.

It was a solid, all-round team performance from a well balanced Team and they are looking forward to defending their title in 1997. All except **Lt Col Alan Browne** who retires from the Army later this year. However, he takes with him his Winners' Medal, the Team Captains' nomination as our Player of the Finals and our best wishes for his future.

RUGBY LEAGUE

THE ROYAL SIGNALS RUGBY LEAGUE ASSOCIATION

Personalities:

Chairman	**Capt R. King**
Secretary	**WO2 (Supvr R) Prowse**
Coach/Asst Secretary	**SSgt (Supvr R) Humphries**
Captain	**Cpl Braddock**
Vice Captain	**Cpl Jones**

Result of Fixture on 9 October 1996
Royal Engineers 35 pts–Royal Signals 30 pts
The above fixture was Played at Chatham on 9 October 1996, with the kick-off at 1400hrs.

This was a hard fought contest in the inter Corps Championship, which saw last years' champions take on last years' bottom placed team in a hard fought contest. The Signals were keen to avenge last years' mauling, which saw the Engineers win by 76 pts to 4.

The game started in the worst possible way for the travelling Signallers when after only four minutes, the Engineers went over for a try in the corner. This they duly converted to lead by 6-0. The Signals Coach **SSgt (Supvr R) Humphries** must have thought a repeat of last years' fixture was on the cards, but it was not to be. Within four minutes the forwards had moved down the park to within five yards of the Engineers try line. **Cpl** 'Taff' **Jones** drove the ball in, then slipped a pass to the captain, **Cpl** 'Brad' **Braddock** who dived over for the try. **Sig Steve Fox** then converted the try to put the scores level at six all, and the worried look disappeared from the Coach's face.

The Corps side then piled on the pressure to go close a few times, only to see the Engineers defensive line hold out, then the Engineers who had been encamped in their own half for a good ten minutes broke away to score an unconverted try leaving the score at 10 pts to 6 in the Engineers favour. Having had so much of the play, with nothing much to show, the Signallers dug in and carried on taking the game to the RE. This payed off and saw **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge** go over to level the scores at 10 all. **Sig Fox** strode up and once again converted, to give the Corps side the lead for the first time at 10 pts to12.

The Signals team then continued to apply the pressure, and could not believe it when **LCpl Keith Wade** crossed the line, only to see the try disallowed for an alleged forward pass. The decision worked against the Corps side and a bit of indiscipline crept in, this allowed the Engineers to take full advantage, scoring twice in quick succession and converting both of the tries, to lead at half time by 20 pts to 12.

We then started the second half as determined as the first, to try to overcome this eight point deficit. A good set of drives and quick release of the ball saw **LCpl Andy Conoley** go over in the corner, **Sig Fox** again converted to narrow the scores to 20 pts to 18. The Engineers keen to hold onto their lead then applied pressure. Some missed tackles by the Signals in the centre of the park saw the Engineers break through to score, and extend their lead to 24-18. Again the Signals did not give in, and some good forward work saw the Signals Skipper **Cpl Braddock** go over for his second try, **Sig Fox** duly obliged with the conversion and the scores now stood at 28-24 in the Engineers' favour. There then followed what could have been the turning point of the match, when the Signals were again disallowed a try for another alleged forward pass. This decision seemed to rile some members of the team and again indiscipline set in. Once again the Engineers took full advantage and scored a quick try which they also converted to lead by the largest margin of the game so far, 34-24.

After some enterprising runs particularly by the Signals hooker, **Sig Clowes**, and aggressive tackling by the forwards, (particularly **Sgt Bry Hands**), the Corps side settled down, and with the minutes ticking away, started to control the game and attempt to overcome the 10 point deficit. The hard work payed off when **Sgt Cartledge** again went over, and yet again **Sig Fox** converted to leave the score at 34-30.

The next five minutes saw the Signals camped in the Engineers 25, but unfortunately for us the Engineers line held and the final whistle went after **Cpl Braddock** was held one yard short of the line. The final result of 34-30 against us was a disappointment, but in hindsight a much better result compared to the 76-4 mauling we received last year. Man of the match went to **Sgt Hands** for his non stop tenacious tackling.

Don't be disappointed!

Matter for April edition must reach the Editor by 15 February–latest!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig C. T. Garton Area 1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3; Brig K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans Area 5; Brig G. J. Curl CBE DL Wales; Maj R. Samson CBE Scotland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.

All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION NEWS

BRANCH NEWS

Harry Ferguson, secretary of the Manchester Branch, has changed address to No 2, Furness Grove, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 2AU. We welcome **Ernie Cowan** as the newly elected secretary of the Spennymoor Branch. Ernie's address is; 8 Glastonbury Close, Woodside, Spennymoor, Co Durham DL16 6XP. Congratulations to **Ivana Hamilton**, secretary of the Glasgow Branch, who is looking for a cake to take 40 candles this month!

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

Around 30 members attended the opening of the Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance on 7 November. **Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander** (Rep Col Comdt) and **Maj (Retd) Bill Barnes** (Chairman Catterick Branch) fronted the Corps plot and met the Queen Mother, who opened the Field. Members then enjoyed refreshments in the mess at 83 Sig Sqn (V) in Chelsea. It was good to see **Gordon Schofield** erstwhile Asst Secretary there looking well in his retirement. Amongst those also present were **Jack Judge** from The Royal Hospital Chelsea, **Tom Seddon** from Liverpool, plus members of the Indian Signals Assn, 3 Div Signals, 56 Div Signals, and the Aldershot, Dorset, Reading and West London Branches.

THE 1997 ANNUAL REUNION

This year's reunion will be held at Blandford Camp on 28/29 June. Starting at 1400 hrs on the Saturday and ending at midday on the Sunday. Anyone wishing to be put on the mailing list for details (car passes, meals etc) should contact RHQ. There is ample space and good facilities for caravans in Blandford Camp. A timely reminder that the reunions are for members of The Association–any former signaller wishing to attend, who is not a member, is asked to take action to join The Association.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1997

The 1997 AGM will be combined with the Branch Representatives Meeting to be held in Donnington, Shropshire, on the morning of Saturday 19th April. All Life Members are welcome to attend and full details may be obtained from branch secretaries or RHQ. Items for the agenda should be forwarded to RHQ, through branch secretaries if possible, before 1 March 1997.

LOST CONTACT WITH YOUR OLD SERVICE PAL?

The editor of *The Wire* is more than happy to include appeals for contact with former pals. Just write a short note or give me a quick call, with as much information as possible and I'll do the rest. Just a reminder that addresses cannot be divulged from Association records. Whilst on the subject, have you noticed that 'Service Pals' on Channel 4 Teletext has changed to page 682 and that there is currently a three month backlog for entries?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

When you change address, don't forget to let your branch or RHQ know, so that your membership record card can be updated.

ADVERTISING FOR NEW MEMBERS

The advert in the December issue of the SAGA magazine brought a good response. Any (inexpensive) suggestions for getting the Association to a wider audience are appreciated.

CHEQUES TO RHQ

The Corps Accountant has advised that wef 1 January 1997, any cheques to RHQ should be made payable to 'ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND' and not 'The Royal Signals Association' as in the past.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new Life Members, who have joined The Association since the last issue of *The Wire*. We hope that those of 'RHQ Branch' will find time to contact their local branch secretary.

Former Rank	*Name*	*Branch*	*Served*
Sgt	A. J. Smith	Dorset	1971-93
Cpl	M. D. Marsden	RHQ	1981-96
Sig	F. A. Bax	Bournemouth	1952-55
LCpl	R. Dickie	Bedford	1965-78
Cpl	N. J. Basford	RHQ	1983-96
WO2	M. J. Bayliss	Catterick	1948-73
Cpl	W. L. Smith	Chester	1960-
Sig	M. J. Ellis	RHQ	1991-96
Cpl	J. E. Cummings	Shropshire	1938-48
LCpl	S. Thomassen	RHQ	1989-96
Lt Col	B. A. Driskell	RHQ	1952-85
Sig	P. J. Rush	RHQ	1992-96
WO1	W. Watts	RHQ	1974-96
WO1	M. G. McInnes	RHQ	1958-96
Sig	M. J. Hawkins	RHQ	1985-96
Sig	P. E. Provost	East London	1942-47
LCpl	P. M. Smith	Leeds	1976-86
LCpl	P. B. Utley	RHQ	1991-95
WO1	D. L. Parry	RHQ(Australia)	1972-96
Cpl	R. A. Gregory	East London	1961-96
Sgt	A. E. Freeman	Dorset	1966-93
Sig	L. S. Guppy	Dorset	1965-71
Sgt	N. Chatterton	RHQ	1974-96
Sig	S. A. Grierson	RHQ	1990-96
Capt	A. F. Seymour	RHQ	1951-67
LCpl	D. Sharpe	RHQ	1984-96
WO2	K. G. Coombes	In-Pensioner	1939-61
Cpl	M. G. Nicholson	Norfolk	1960-62
Sgt	M. T. Thompson	RHQ	1974-96
Sig	A. W. Willis	RHQ	1945-48
WO2	H. Garlick	Sheffield	1960-76
Sig	A. J. Davis	RHQ	1984-96
Sig	D. Pigott	RHQ	1989-96
Sgt	G. P. Smart	RHQ	1979-96
WO1	J. H. Wise	North London	1952-75
Sig	T. E. Tritton	West London	1954-56
Sgt	E. G. Jones	RHQ	1955-57
WCpl	J. W. Cameron	RHQ	1992-96
Cpl	M. R. Eggbeer	RHQ	1990-96
Sgt	S. Middleton	RHQ	1945-
Sig	K. J. Lockley	S Staffs	1959-61
Sgt	G. W. Brace	Darlington	1952-76
Sig	A. I. Richards	Shropshire	1942-45
Cpl	M. J. Stone	Peterborough	1964-78
Cpl	J. B. Neill	Langeleben OCA	1955-58
LCpl	R. N. Sheldrake	RHQ	1991-96
Cpl	S. G. Ely	Poole	1950-52
LCpl	N. A. Starns	RHQ	1945-48
Sig	J. M. Maclean	RHQ	1946-48
Sig	A. J. Hulse	Southampton	1957-59
Sig	G. C. Pagan	RHQ	1950-55
Sgt(ATS)	K. J. Jones	RHQ	1939-49

EAST KENT BRANCH

by Roy Andrews

The Branch had it's second trip on Le-Shuttle on Sunday 13 October. It was a good job it was not Friday the 13th or we might have had more jinxes.

We had a full 53 seater coach, a large contingent from **Maj Tom Bewsey** sub-Branch of this Branch. The weather was glorious as we set off for the tunnel. The first jinx was a small detour to collect tickets and after successfully negotiating the duty free shop, we were pulled over for a security check which, while time consuming, was quite interesting.

The bus pulled over a grille with a powerful suction system which drew dust from the coach and it's contents. The dust was fed to a machine which atomised it and could then search for any one of 15 chemicals associated with explosives. Our Hon Sec **Maj Gen John Badcock** (courier) was chatting to the supervisor and discovered that he had been in the Royal Signals TA–another new member. The next jinx was the door of the carriage through which we should have entered had jammed and we were diverted to another train. Twenty minutes later we arrived in Calais.

We motored in glorious weather along the coast road to Bolougne via the Dover Patrol memorial. Our driver was a mine of information on the countryside and it's history, but it fell to the Hon Sec to relay this to the back of the coach in the absence of a microphone.

One and a half hours was spent in Bolougne to walk the quays have a drink or a meal before returning. A show of hands was then taken in the bus (three recounts) to determine whether there should be a visit to Le-City Europe, or the French duty free shop before returning to the shuttle. The duty free shop won and the bus groaned away under the weight of purchases stowed in the under floor lockers.

The Hon Sec waved adieu to the last of the cars leaving the car park at 1945hrs, with the hope that everyone enjoyed their day despite the jinxes of the 13th day of the month.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Despite some horrendous rainstorms right up to the start, 18 members of the Branch formed up at the long port 'Canterbury' to march down to the cathedral where they were joined by wives and other members making a total of 50 entering the cathedral for a very moving service. The Standard was carried by **Keith Chambers** with **Charles Skingle** and **Bob Mitchell** as escorts. Clearly the turnout and marching of the Branch detachment behind the Standard was pretty good for the on looking crowd were kind enough to applaud as we marched past.

As most readers will know, any military committee from the Army Board down can spend hours debating 'dress' and the Branch meeting the previous Tuesday had been no exception. The weighty matter under discussion was what headress was to be worn by the Chairman. This was extended to what the rest of the marchers should wear. It was all too difficult and the agreed solution was left to each person's discretion. It was this which generated the **Donald Crisp** cartoon.

GLASGOW BRANCH

On 10 August members and friends travelled by coach to a hotel in the outskirts of Edinburgh, where we were joined by the Hon President **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson CB** and **Mrs Anderson** for a meal before proceeding to the Edinburgh Tattoo. Two members had cancelled, but our enterprising treasurer, **Eric McWater**, managed to sell the tickets to a Spanish couple staying at the hotel, who had been unable to obtain tickets. They were offered a lift in our coach to and from the Tattoo and were delighted to join in the party.

At the August monthly meeting the Branch welcomed a visit from **Maj Gen A. Yeoman CB** and **Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**. The Maj Gen explained the latest position at Blandford at that time, including the cost of putting on the annual reunion, and how the RSA relies on the goodwill of the Training Regiment, if and when the Troops are available. Due to the difficulty of accommodation under the system of Troops paying rent, HQ are looking for alternatives and welcome feasible suggestions from the branch.

At the invitation of the CO of 32 Sig Regt **Lt Col I. O. Robertson**, 14 members visited the Regt at their annual camp in Warcop on 17/19 September. The members were well looked after by **WO1 RSM Reith** and his colleagues. Our many thanks to all ranks for their help in making this a very pleasant visit. Prior to seeing the troops during the exercise, **Brig R. M. Wilde** gave an informal talk in the officers mess to the members on the object of the exercise. He and the officer's then met the members individually over coffee for a chat. After, visiting units in the field, a clay pigeon shooting competition between the Regt and RSA members took place. The winners were 'THE HOT SHOT RSA'S'. The members also enjoyed the hospitality of both messes with the entertainment provided.

Twenty-eight members attended the Armistice Service in George Square, Glasgow. The Branch standard was paraded by **Ian Wood**. The wreath was laid by **Bob Gilchrist**. The members marched past the saluting base with the Lord Lieutenant of Glasgow taking the salute. Members then marched into barracks behind 32 Sig Regt, where a meal prepared by **SSgt J. Wren** and **Cpls Carruthers** and **McCormack** was awaiting. The members wish to record their appreciation of the support of the Regt on this solemn occasion.

RHQ asked the branch if a member could represent the RSA, at the funeral of **ex-Sgt John Evans BEM** a life member of RSA, at the Sunnyside Cemetery in Alloa. Members **Robert Hodge** and **Ewing Duthie** attended, extending the Branch's sympathy to the family.

The annual St. Andrew's Dinner/Dance was held on Saturday 30 November. 116 members and friends attended. **Maj Gen Yeoman CB** and **Mrs Yeoman** were guests of honour. Hon President **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson CB** presided. The new CO of 32 Sig Regt, **Lt Col A. C. C. Lapsley TD** and **Mrs Lapsley** with Branch Chairman **Bill Taylor** and his wife **Betty** completed the top table. **WO1 RSM G. Reith** and **Mrs Reith** attended as did **Maj R. Samson**.

The company were piped in to dinner by 'Piper' **Cook**. **Bill McNamara** gave the Loyal Toast and the toast to the Colonel-in-Chief The Princess Royal. **RSM Reith** gave the toast to the RSA Glasgow Branch. He also mentioned that he had been pleased to have been associated with the Branch and would look forward to the day when he would be posted back to Glasgow in a commissioned rank, to resume that association. The Hon. President then invited 'Piper' **Cook** to take a dram of Whisky from the Quaich, which he downed in one, as is the custom, with applause from the company. The Hon President invited **Maj Gen Yeoman** to speak. The General thanked the members for inviting him and **Mrs Yeoman** to the Dinner/Dance. He had enjoyed the dinner, and had been able to meet many members individually. He informed the company of the latest position regarding the 1997 Blandford reunion, and the possibility of the RSA AGM being held in the Midlands. He also gave an update of the position of the serving members of the Corps. His speech was very well received, and, he got more than a titter with his asides, on mentioning it rained whenever he visits Glasgow, and the name of a certain Glasgow football club. **Lt Col Lapsley** was then invited to address the company. He spoke of the commitments of the Regt in Bosnia in particular, and various other locations. Also the new equipment requiring extra training in operations. He said that having just taken over as CO of the Regt he was pleased to be associated with the Branch, and thanked the members for inviting him and **Mrs Lapsley** to the function. He was willing wherever possible, to ensure that the support of the Regt continues to help the Branch maintain it's success in the future. The Hon President then thanked **Lt Col Lapsley** and the members of the Regt, on behalf of the Glasgow Branch, for their help and the use of the facilities for functions and the regular monthly meetings. It is very much appreciated by the members. The company was then piped out to complete the evening with a cabaret and dance.

A note had been sent to all the local papers in the West of Scotland, seeking new members. The result, 22 enquiries for the cost of a few stamps. A memo was also passed to the Royal Signals Manning and Records Office in Glasgow, informing the Corps members and civilian staff of the existence of the Branch. A further note has also been sent to Channel 4 Teletext.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

The Blandford Reunion is well past and those who attended have just about recovered. It would appear to have been a most enjoyable occasion. Already our Treasurer has opened the Monthly Savings account for the next Reunion.

Spring must indeed be in the air, certainly for some of our more agile Members. Our Joint Secretaries **Ian** and **Debbie Wolfe**, already the proud parents of a lovely little girl have now added twin girls to the family. New parents are **Rab** and **Kim Greer** and also **Mark Harrison**. Congratulations to each of them.

We have had to say goodbye to three Regular Army friends of the Branch. We dined out **Lt Col R. W. Batho**, CO 40 Sig Regt (V) in Helens Bay Golf Club a short time ago. He has been most supportive and helpful to us during his tour with the Regt. The last issue of *The Wire* showed **Lt Col A. H. Johnston**, CO 15 Sig Regt as being posted. On contacting the Regt we found he had already gone. Our President **Maj Bill Douglas** has written to him but if he reads this, we are sorry we missed him and wish him well. **WO1 Bill Ogden**, RSM of 40 Sig Regt is also leaving. He is the first RSM of the Regt, to my knowledge, to join the Branch as a full member and to take an active part in it's affairs. Our appreciation was shown by a presentation to him at a Branch social evening. To each of them, thank you for your interest and help to the Branch and success in your new posting. We look forward to meeting **Lt Col Beacom** the new CO of 40 Sig Regt (V).

At the time of writing both our Chairman **Tom Maguire** and Vice Chairman **Fred Holmes** are indisposed. We hope that by the time this appears in *The Wire* they will be fully recovered. We have just heard that one of our old comrades, **Eric Tucker** of Craigavad has passed away. We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife and family.

Don't forget, we need you, Regular, TAVR or ex-Service on the third Wednesday of each month.

SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT BRANCH

The Branch has continued to take part in local affairs, relating to ex-service events including the various Remembrance Day Services.

Our traditional Autumn Social on the 25 October was again a 'sell out'. The doorman/bouncer was as ever our Padre Rev. **John Roberts**!!, and the Branch is most grateful to **Mrs Dooley** who is in the catering trade and wife of member **Peter Dooley** for providing the excellent buffet. We were very pleased to have comrades from the Chester and Liverpool Branches join us for the evening and also members of the Polish Combatants Association. Their support is gratefully appreciated.

Following on from our relationship with the P.C.A. the Branch Secretary **Roger Stanforth** was invited to the Polish Embassy in London on the 12 November to attend the awards presentation day. The Deputy Military Attache, **Lt Col Andrzej Jedrzejewski** was introduced being a Signals Officer and needless to say he and the Branch Secretary had a number of signals matters to discuss over the champagne.

Embassy of the Republic of Poland, 12 November 1996
Deputy Military attache Lt Col Andrzej Jedrzejewski and the secretary of the Southport Branch, Roger Stanforth

The Branch now has it's first lady member **Miss Heather Alty** who was a Teleprinter Operator at Catterick and Singapore. During the week **Heather** is resident in a local nursing home, returning to her parents for the weekends. The Branch has provided a framed tapestry of 'Jimmy' for her room and arranged a subscription to *The Wire* so that she feels in touch with the Branch and the Corps.

As may be expected our Branch Chairman and Welfare Officer **John Reaney** keeps in touch on a regular basis with the 'sick parade'. We are all pleased to see our oldest member **Eddy Anor** who has had a cataract operation and Treasurer **Bernard Moorcroft** who sustained a cracked skull in an accident, both recovered and back on 'works parades'.

SWINDON BRANCH

Members of the Branch took part in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service. Members have always attended as individuals but this time we attended as a Branch. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch by the Branch President, **Lt Col (Retd) D. W. Gent.**

Plans are in hand for a Social Evening in January and the local Branch of the R.E.'s Association have been invited to a Branch 'At Home' also in January.

The Chairman's wife **Mrs Howells** and friends held a Table Top Sale in aid of Branch Funds and raised over £48. Many thanks Ladies.

Our Newsletters are produced by **Robin Sheppard**. They are very much appreciated in the Branch and very useful for keeping member's in touch with what is happening.

Many thanks to the Association HQ Staff for their assistance and advice SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL

REUNIONS

SEVENTH 254 EXERCISE BOYS REUNION–25/26/27 OCTOBER 1996

Once more, and sadly for the last time, one hundred and fifty 254's including wives, assembled at The Brandon Hall for their annual get together. Next year we are off to a larger hotel, near Stafford, to enable us to accommodate more under one roof.

The Friday as usual saw 254's arriving from Australia (**Bob Shaw** and **Terry Beare**), from Scotland (**Nan** and **Jim Stear**), from the offshore Isle of Wight (**Maggie** and **Jim Blake**), from Wales (**Sandra** and **Dennis Burge**) and from Bristol and further West (**Betty** and **Den Bowden**, and **Danny Daniels**). All the others came from various parts of the country too numerous to mention. From the lunch time on Friday until everyone went to bed, it was the usual round of meeting people, catching up on the past year and talking about events of more than 50 years ago.

Saturday saw two full coach loads departing for a trip to Cadbury World where a great time was had by one and all. The coaches were provided from the legacy left to the club by the late **George Grainger**. Those who stayed at Brandon took part in the Annual 254 Golf Tournament. The organiser, **Peter Dixon**, was soon issuing the players with their ammunition, (plastic lightweight golf balls), various instructions and rules, when 'Deadly' **Baker** appeared from the depths of the hotel with his kit under his arm, hoping to play. He offered a very nice framed print of silhouetted golfers with an engraved plaque, to be presented to the one who tries hardest but fails to succeed. The 'bribe' was accepted and he was included in the starting line up.

The competition was thoroughly enjoyed by all, who had been fairly accurately handicapped on their past performances. Prize winners were as follows (with nett SCORES)

Ladies Prize	- **Mavis Graham** (52)
Gentlemen Winner	- **Ken Brown** (47)
Runner up	- 'Titch' **Curtis** (49)
Third	- **Jack Allison** (50)
Fourth	- **Nat Preece** (51)
Most improved players	- 'Deadly' **Baker** (55) and **Cliff Wood** (55)
Tried Hardest and Failed to Succeed	- **Dave Ross** (78)
Scores of the others taking part	- **Pip Clarke** (53), **Gerry Brewer** (54), **Bill Graham** (55), **Dave Greenbrook** (55), **Pat Fox-Roberts** (55), **George Severs** (56), **Bill Gibson** (60), **Peter Dixon** (61), **Geoff Oakley** (62), **Dai Rees** (63)

Onto Saturday evening and the semi-formal dinner where, as usual, the toast to the 74 members on the 'in memoriam list' was given by **Peter McNaughton** who also proposed a vote of thanks to **George Severs** and to **Janet** and **Dave Ross** who organised and ran the raffle so efficiently. After dinner the usual dancing, drinking and nattering took place well into the wee small hours. The majority departed shortly after breakfast on Sunday but at least fifty members stayed on for the extra night at the most excellent Brandon Hall Hotel.

Finally a list of those attending but not mentioned above:

Tony Taylor	**Roy Hunter**	**Colin Williams**
Lou Munday	**Fred Lock**	**Ken Lloyd**
Deri Smith	**Wally Brown**	**Paddy Stringer**
Dick Burt	**Nick Neame**	**Eddie Brewer**
Don Herring	**Reg Brewin**	**Doug Bower**
John Dove	**John Walke**	**Ted Crampton**
Toby Seymour	**Chas Timson**	**Tony Watling**
David Hughes	**Jim Braid**	**Frank Pedley**
Alan Searle	**Bill Leach**	**Frank Lumbard**
Busty Slade	**Gordon Schofield**	**Roy Smithard**
Harry Hawke	**Brian Fisher**	**Terry Reeves**
Bob Jarratt	**Brian Huxley Duggan**	**Geoff Fletcher**
Keith Hopwood	**John Cairns**	**Ken Wood**
Jim Crow	**Mal Johnson**	**Jack Fenner**
Clive Thompson	**Geoff Pickering**	**Jim Jenkins**
Jess Weir	**John Cotton**	**John Venning**
Bill Ramsay	**John Radford**	**Alf Mercer**
John Bass	**Pat Soward**	**Ron Pearsall**
Jim Ireland	**John Emerson**	

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON (TRIPOLITANIA) O.C.A.

In September, Members of 219 Sig Sqn (Tripolitania) met at Lutterworth for their Third Annual Dinner. This was arranged again by our Chairman **Roy Andrews**, ably assisted by his wife **Pat**.

Terry Hearldon (Sec.) will be taking over this duty next year and expresses the wish to be almost as successful as Roy. As usual it was a brilliant weekend with great inroads made into the bar stocks.

Bespectacled Secretary Terry Hearldon makes a better waiter than a Tg Op

Chairman Roy Andrews takes the order

Chairman Roy Andrews presented with an embroidered plaque by Mrs Ethel Leslie

SOME MOTHERS DO 'AVE 'EM

'You know' mused the young barman to Muriel, our Sec's wife, 'You all seem a bit old for a Singles Club, and you all seem to be in couples.' **Muriel** fixed him with a frosty glare, and replied in a vinegar sweet voice. 'No, we are Signals'.

'Oh well', quoth the lad, not chastised by his narrow escape. 'I don't know what they are either, I don't live round here'.

5TH (LONDON) CORPS SIGNALS OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

The 5th (London) Corps Signals Old Comrades Association held it's 51st Reunion meeting and Dinner on 19 October 1996 at the Duke of York's HQ Club in Chelsea. The number attending was less than at the very special 50th Reunion in 1995 but over 60 members and their guests enjoyed an 'Italian Evening'.

The occasion was marked by an excellent exhibition mounted by the Secretary, **Sid Prior**. On several screens, maps, communications diagrams, photographs and other mementoes of the Italian Campaign traced the unit's course from the heel of Italy to Austria. The menu was Italian, and as the Chairman, 'Bob' **Roberts**, remarked 'you can't eat spaghetti and look dignified as well'. There were two special visitors, **Maj (Retd) J. W. Cocke** who served in our first line unit 2 Corps Signals which went to France in 1939 and **Jane Knight**, Secretary of the Aldershot Branch. Jane served in Italy and recognised the 5th (London) Corps Signals Old Comrades Association ties with the 'Viking Ship' which both the Chairman and Secretary were wearing at a function at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. So she was invited to our Reunion.

The Reunion was also privileged to receive a message of fraternal greeting from the Royal Signals Association number 1 Branch. This was delivered by our oldest member **P. L. A. Robins** (Robbie) who joined Royal Signals in 1920! An Old Comrade member said 'I hope that I shall be able to rise to my feet at a Dinner and speak like that when I am over 90'.

At the Annual General Meeting after the Dinner members agreed to raise funds to provide a tree dedicated to the unit in the National Memorial Arboretum. Funds are being raised and in the absence of a Royal Signals regimental plot the plan agreed with the Director of the Arboretum is to site 'our' tree in the area of the lst and 5th Army plots once the detailed layout of these plots has been settled. The Old Comrades Association also hopes to provide an inscribed seat in an adjacent path.

238 Sig Sqn again provided facilities for music (Italian of course) and for amplification at the Annual General Meeting. The Old Comrades are most grateful for the support of **Maj Howes** and his people.

79 ARMD DIV SIGNAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REUNION 1996
by Maj Gen (Retd) J. M. W. Badcock

Always looking for a different environment in which to spend our annual reunion, this gallant body of 'old timers' over the weekend of September 27/29 embarked on a Narrow Boat journey down the Llangollen Canal. Whilst prepared for the rigours of this outdoor pursuit during the daytime, we sought the comfort overnight of a delightful little family run hotel just outside Bridgenorth, whose proprietor also owned the boat.

Our numbers were somewhat reduced this year, **David Lloyd Davis** having passed on in the summer whilst **Chris Denard** was recovering from a cataract operation and **Denis Strange** was helping his wife convalesce from an operation. We therefore became five men in a boat.

We acknowledged the considerable skill required in navigating the 71 ft boat along a canal only 10 ft wide passing through two dank tunnels and two viaducts, one of which was a 180 ft sheer drop either side to the River Dee below. All of this in magnificent scenery off the beaten track and in surprisingly good weather.

79 Armd Div Signals Officers embark on a 71 ft Narrow Boat (*L-R*): Jenny our navigator, Jimmy Humble, Cliff Heap, Les Wardell, Robin Jennings and John Badcock

YOUR COPY OF *THE WIRE*, ARE YOU GETTING IT?

LANGELEBEN BRANCH REUNION

The Langeleben Branch of the RSA is holding it's Annual Reunion on June 20/23 1997, in the town of Konigslutter, Germany, and will coincide with the local Schutzenfeste, which takes place that weekend. Anyone interested should contact **Mr Frank Mitchell** on :
Tel/Fax: 01422 376915

Calling all members of 6 Sqn, 7 Sig Regt 1967/74, please contact **Harry Bishop** either by telephone or letter about a reunion next year. Especially the crew of Recce 7, **Ken King**, **Bob Alkit**, 'Snowy' **White** and **George Johnson**. Contact Harry at: 27 Dent View, Egremont, Cumbria CA22 2ET. Tel: 01946 822839.

Mrs Kathleen Jones (*nee* **Knott**) is seeking to make contact with any of her former ATS colleagues from 1943-45, when she worked on the switchboard in GHQ in Cairo.

Kathleen's address is: 2 Dashwood House, Middle Barton, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 7DX.

Mrs Margaret de Veuve is trying to trace her former friend, **Nancy Selkirk**, who was married to the former **WO1 Brian Selkirk**. **Nancy** and **Brian** were in Cyprus in the 1970s. Anyone who can help **Margaret**, please drop her a line at 134 Chaldon Way, Coulsdon, Surrey CRS 1DE or give her a call on 01737-551442

Mr J. F. F. Baxter is trying to re-establish contact with his former pal **Sig Lou Crisp**, with whom he served in 1942 in 2 STC at Prestatyn. Anyone who can help is asked to telephone **Mr Baxter** on: 01453 882741.

Ron Rudduck would like to contact any of his former pals from 7 Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, Verden 1950-52, when he was MT Cpl in B Tp, 2 Sqn, looking after ACVs and LCVs. Please contact **Ron** at: 16 Lynton Road, London, W3 9HP.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT 1982
REUNION LUNCH
BLANDFORD 14 JUNE 1997

A Reunion of all ranks who served in 30 Sig Regt during 1982, is to be held in Blandford on Saturday 14th June 1997. The Reunion will mark the 15th Anniversary of the end of the Falklands War and is also open to wives/girlfriends, (not both).

For further details write/fax to:
Capt (Retd) Mick Nevill
Headquarters Royal School of Signals
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 8RH
Fax: 01258 482687 Tel: 01258 482827

Other Point of Contact:
Capt (Retd) Tony Reynolds Tel: 01258 482132 Fax: 2147

Mrs Tyler is seeking information on a former service friend **Andrew** 'Johno' **Creighton-Johnstone**.
Mrs Tyler is on 01204 415366

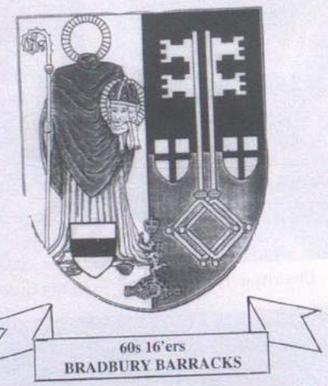
Mr Len Shanley, (Liverpool Branch) is seeking contact with the former **WO1 J. Preece**, who served with **Len** in 13 Corps Signals, Alley, Beruit in 1941. Len last saw **Mr Preece** in the Sgts Mess at the 1995 Catterick Reunion and would be pleased for a call on : 01744 21681.

ROYAL SIGNALS
WHITE HELMETS DISPLAY TEAM
70th ANNIVERSARY REUNION
BLANDFORD 28 JUNE 1997

A reunion of all serving/ex members of
THE WHITE HELMETS
is to be held at Blandford on Saturday 28th June 1997

The reunion will mark the 70th Anniversary of the team and will be open to wives/girlfriends.

For further details write/fax:
Officer Commanding White Helmets
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 8RH
Fax: 01258 482770 Tel: 01258 482365
Mil:Blandford Mil 2770 Blandford Mil 2365



Did you serve with **16 Sig Regt**, in **Krefeld** during the **60s** and would like to meet/contact old friends?
Send SAE to Chris Bartlett, 45 Whitehouse Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 5SR

Information is requested from ex-members of
Ships Signals Sections, Royal Signals, Combined Operations
of the activities of these Sections
ie: training and areas of action/combat.
Date unit was formed. The Section number 1, 2, 3, 4.
Names and types of ship served on.

Replies to: **Jim Prentice**
7 Hilton Court
Hilton Road
BISHOPBRIGGS G64 3EA
Tel No: 0141 772 1742

Fred Dykes would be delighted to hear from any of his former pals from Line Tp, BETFOR in Trieste in 1948/49.
Please contact him on: Hereford (01981) 250174.

Terry Healdon is trying to make contact with **Capt C. E. Hesketh**, regarding a reunion of former 219 Sig Sqn members. Anyone who can help, please call **Terry** on: 01925 481024. Thank You.

From: William G. Irving
Dear Sir
Re: **4 Air Formation Sig Regt RAF Habbania Iraq–RAF Nicosia Cyprus 1956-1957**

Through your correspondence column I would like if possible to contact other members of a Royal Signals Tp from the above Regt who were sent from Iraq to Cyprus in 1956.

The Troop were in tents at the transit camp RAF Nicosia for a period of time. We were used for various security duties, curfew patrols (called Whirlwind patrols) in the old city checking and searching for EOKA suspects. We also undertook duty on the barrier which at curfew time closed the old city completely.

One week in May 1956 the Troop was erecting a barbwire fence around RAF Nicosia which included the civilian airport. Because we were working within the perimeter of the camp only two of the Troop carried arms. One day we reached a position opposite a small hut used by the RAF when suddenly one of the RAF personnel was shot dead by one of three Cypriot youths who had asked for a drink of water. Following a chase by Troop members the youths were caught and apprehended. All three youths were eventually found guilty and convicted of the murder of the RAF Corporal.

The Troop was informed that one of us would be awarded 'Mentioned in Despatches'. I wonder if this ever happened? Due to the passage of time names are a problem but if any of your readers remember/recognise the incidents I have quoted, were members of that Troop and would like to contact me and perhaps arrange to have a reunion. I would be delighted to hear from them.

Yours sincerely
William (Bill) G Irving

15 Lime Grove
Exmouth
EX8 5NN
Tel No: 01395 267666

BRITISH KOREAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

During the Remembrance Sunday march past of ex-service men and women at the Cenotaph in London, a television commentator described one group taking part in the parade as 'veterans of a forgotten war'. He was referring to those who served during the Korean conflict of 1950-53, the first war fought in the name of the United Nations.

More than 65,000 members of the British armed forces served in the Korean War, and 1,078 gave their lives. For the past 15 years the aim of the British Korean Veterans Association has been to promote the interests of all those who served during this conflict.

The year 2000 marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War, when many special commemorative events will take place here, in Korea itself and in the other 21 countries around the world which volunteered contingents in support of the UN.

In the run-up to this occasion the BKVA is undertaking a number of projects. One is to establish a permanent memorial to each one of the 1,078 British war dead. Another is a National Survey of surviving veterans of the war.

'We wish to discover how many of these 'lost soldiers of the forgotten war' are still alive, who they are, where they are, and how they are getting along,'

says BKVA National Chairman, **Col George Gadd**. Thirdly, in order to provide opportunities for more veterans to re-visit Korea, the Association has introduced a programme of two-week pilgrimages starting next year.

To assist the National Survey, anyone who served in the Korean War 1950-53, or in the subsequent Peacekeeping Force, or who is a widow of someone who served in the conflict, is invited to write to BKVA National Vice-Chairman **Sam Mercer MBE**, 99 Heybridge Avenue, Streatham Common, London, SW16 3DS. Information about pilgrimages to Korea can be obtained by writing to **Tony Leah**, Rayner House, 23 Higher Fellgate, Stockport, Cheshire, SKI 3ER or by telephoning 0161 477 4521. When writing, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Tim Ward
Dear Sir,

I read with great interest of the promotion of **Lt Dougie Wright**. I first met **Dougie** in the newly formed Junior Signals Wing at Albemarle Barracks, near Newcastle in 1975. After training we went our separate ways. Even then the Army was his life and when our paths crossed again, in 1981 it still was. This time we met in Northern Ireland, and he borrowed my motorbike to pass his test.

Once again we went our separate ways and I left the Army in 1983. The last I heard of **Dougie** was in 1993 when I was making a delivery in Northern Ireland and I met **WO1 Chris Mountain** (congratulations on your promotion). He informed me then that **Dougie** was RSM at 8 Inf Bde. It wasn't until the December 1996 issue of *The Wire* that I heard anymore of him.

Congratulations on your promotion **Dougie** and I wish **Lt Dougie Wright**, his wife **Norma** and the family all the best for the future and many more years of service in the Royal Signals.

From: Mr. G. Wilson
Dear Sir,

I enclose a reply to **Mr. T. A. Jackson**, whose letter on page 514 of the December issue of *The Wire* was entitled 'Calling Ship's Signallers'.

What I have written is almost a potted history of the short life of the 68 HAA Regt RA, Royal Signals Section. To complete its history: after arrival in Egypt and assembly of the whole Regiment, we first of all were on anti aircraft duty at Abu Kir aerodrome outside Alexandria. Then after a short time, in 1941, we went up the Western Desert (predecessors of the 8th Army) reaching Benghazi by New Year's Eve. When Rommel mounted his attack we pulled back to take on the defense, by AA, of Tobruk. After a while three of our wireless trucks were sent out of Tobruk on assignments (mine was one of them). Then in June 1942 Tobruk was taken by the Germans and the whole Regiment was taken as PoWs, including all the Signal Section except the three wireless trucks with just six of us signallers.

A lot of my friends were on the Italian ship S.S. *Scillin* taking them to Italy which was sunk by a British submarine, the story of which appeared in the press earlier this year. I know of this from some survivors, who were on a different ship but in the same convoy, that I met again after the war. This was the end of 68 HAA Regt.

Yours faithfully
G. Wilson

Dear Mr Jackson,

I am replying to your letter in the December issue of *The Wire*, 'Calling Ship Signallers'. I may not be precisely the 'Ship Signaller' you have in mind, as judged by your record, but you may be interested nonetheless–I hope so.

I was called up in June 1940, into the R Signals and reported to the 2nd Trg Depot at Prestatyn. Qualifying as an OWL B3 in all the operators skills of W/T, R/T and Morse signalling by flag and lamp. I was then posted to Colwyn Bay where we made up a Section of about 60 personnel of all trades, Electricians Signals, Operators, Linemen and Drivers to be the Signal Section for 68 HAA Regt RA. We embarked on a troopship at Liverpool the first week in February 1941, bound for the Middle East.

It turned out that our ship was the convoy Commodore's and he had an RN Yeoman of Signals and two naval signals ratings to look after communications. Our voyage took us westwards to within one day's sail of the USA before turning South and then Eastwards to our first port of call which was to be Freetown, Sierra Leone. After this length of time I am somewhat hazy as to exactly when it happened but our OC had us on parade to say that it had been agreed that we operators take over the lamp signaling under the 'care' of the Yeoman. There were about 12-14 of us operators and the signalling 'station' was above the bridge. The first lamp we had to contend with was the naval fixed position shutter lamp with two carbon rods which needed constant adjustment. After our usual wireless morse key on which we had trained we found this lamp key just a touch difficult to operate. Even so the navy boys were able to read us alright. Of course we only worked during daylight hours, for safety reasons, and mostly handled instructions emanating from the Commodore about convoy 'Zig Zag' orders. After a few days the Yeoman produced an Aldis hand held trigger lamp which we found to be more satisfactory. We were in Freetown for several days and the inlet there is several miles wide so we kept up our lamp communications with shore establishments etc.

Leaving Freetown, on route for South Africa, and after about two days sailing, when we had reached somewhere about the Equator, there was a clanking from our engine room and the ship came to a gradual halt. There was frenzied activity to get the Commodore off and on to a naval vessel and it was most disconcerting for us to see the convoy sweep past, on either side, leaving us in the middle of all that water with a small corvette to keep us company. The engines were patched up and we returned at a greatly reduced speed to Freetown. On occasion the corvette would dash off to the horizon to investigate sightings and we were more than relieved to get a message, 'OK, it's friendly.'

Back at Freetown, we were kept onboard for a month, except for the odd route march ashore waiting for the next convoy to arrive from the UK. However, we kept on duty receiving and sending messages to shore establishments etc. There was one fine day when the Officer of the watch asked us to signal to a ship astern of us telling it to reposition as it was dragging it's anchor and drifting towards us. Getting no reply we sent this message several times and eventually were surprised to see a response by semaphore. Now this was one skill not taught to us at Prestatyn and none of the three of us on duty had been in the Boy Scouts. Fortunately the officer on watch knew semaphore, so was able to say that our message had got home and had been understood.

Being transshipped when the next convoy arrived and continuing our journey via Capetown. Arriving in Egypt a month later than had been originally planned meant that the Regt was late becoming operational. This meant that we did not go to Greece as originally intended.

I am sorry **Mr Jackson** that I seem to have gone on. I don't know whether this is of use to you. If, by chance, you think there may be anything else which may be of help, or I may know, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

From: Mr. G. Wilson
Dear Sir

I see from the December issue of *The Wire* that the SOinC, in his Christmas greetings, says that he hopes that he can develop closer links with South Africa next year.

This brings to my mind several happy months when, with my crew and wireless set, we were attached to the S. African Signals during the 1939/45 war.

After traveling from Abu Kir, Alexandria to Tunis, about 2,000 miles I suppose, as a part of the 8 Army Sigs, we returned to Mena, Cairo, for a re-fit. There we were equipped with American 299 Sets in Studebaker vans.

Each set, of which there were six, had its own mobile generator. The reconstituted Section was known as 504 Heavy Wireless Section. We then travelled back over another 2,000 miles of familiar landscape to Bizerta, Tunis, to embark on an American ship and be taken to Taranto. There we joined up with the S. African Signals.

My set was working directly back to the S. African Signals base in Cairo, who in turn were in direct communication with the Cape. Thus, any message I sent, if needed, could be in the Cape within minutes of it leaving Italy. I can remember one day receiving a message for onward transmission through Cairo which was two foolscap pages long and written in plain language entitled something like, 'In the field with the South Africans'. Not only was it in plain language but it contained the names of S. African ex-PoWs who had escaped and been brought into camp. As all my experience had been with coded messages I was concerned about sending this and obtained the S. African CO's authority before sending it.

A second memory is of some time later, further North in Italy, when my set featured in a film which was filmed, I suppose, by a S. African film unit. The short excerpt I was in was of my OC, **Lt Neil D. B. Scoular** walking towards my set, followed by a cameraman, handing me a message for transmission, ostentatiously to the Cape. Although we never saw the film we did hear from S. African friends that it had been shown in S. Africa.

I am sure that the SOinC will be able to make easy and successful links with S. Africa as judged by our happy experience.

Yours faithfully

G. Wilson

JOTTINGS FROM A FADING MEMORY–VIC PREES

Over the years I, amongst many others, have derived tremendous pleasure in reading some fascinating articles in the *Journal/Wire*. Although it's pages have presented a mind bending succession of technical tours de force, it's always been the little gems such as Operations on the NW frontier, Communications on D-Day, plus one on the trials and tribulations of a communicators life in the trenches that have held my attention. Having recently retired and taken on a small business, and several more inches around the middle, I thought it might amuse one or two people if I attempted to retrace a few memories from the 50s and 60s. The world was quite a different place in those days. An aspiring young OWL with brand new battle dress, complete with a good conduct stripe, faced a bewildering variety of possibilities when it came to postings. Places that have long since disappeared from barrack room chat. Who remembers BTA (great excitement because KD was issued for this posting), Trieste, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore, a never ending list of names that were just words from an atlas.

Postings appeared on the Coy HQ notice board, 1 ASSU, what was it? Where was it? No one seemed to know much about this unit. The next milestone was arrival at the Depot, at that time it was at Newton Abbot. The comings and goings were numerous. Time was spent in the NAAFI trying to obtain information from suntanned veterans (mostly National Servicemen) awaiting discharge. The tall tales can be imagined. Needless to say as beginners we were very impressed. It was whilst scrubbing the drying room floor on my hands and knees that I discovered, from a beribboned World War II veteran, what 1ASSU was and where it was stationed. So it was with tales of massive Typhoon and Tempest strikes, and carpet bombing by Lancasters ringing in my ears that I finally arrived at Lemgo early in 1955. It came as a severe blow to the ego to be told that our BIII 13.5 words per minute, were not up to the unit operating standard. All 'new boys' were dispatched to the training room in the attic and handed over to the resident morse fanatic 'Taff' **Curen**. It was a measure of the extremely high standards and the thoroughly professional approach to the job that no one was accepted into a crew, until they had been taught all the ASSU codes and brought their speeds up to at least 18wpm. At last you were accepted by your crew commander, grudgingly at first. It was made painfully obvious from day one that only the best was good enough, especially in Tentacle Troop. This was the crew that went out to Div and Bde HQs to accept the target requests. These were then vetted and allocated at JOC (Joint Operations Centre) and then dispatched over the Tentacle Troop net to the airfield that had been nominated to mount the strike. Naturally Tentacle Troop saw themselves as the elite, none more so than Tentacle 1 commanded by **Cpl Colin Stevens** (later Major (QM)). This was the life. The inside of the white scout car was an operator's dream. The much loved and often abused 52 Set, the 62 for shorter range work and the venerable 76 Set as a TSB. It was a school of hard knocks, if you didn't do the job, and do it well, you didn't last very long. Morale was never less than sky high and the mix of Regular and National Servicemen blended into an excellent team. Within a relatively short space of time came the first stripe and, horror of horrors, transferred to TentacleTroop as a crew commander. No time for self pity, the work rate was high, there were many more exercises in those days. One didn't have to be quite so considerate over the feelings of the local farmers and landowners. In case of animosity a few packets of cigarettes or the occasional misplaced jerri can of petrol worked wonders. It also ensured a supply of fresh eggs, chickens etc. Compo had yet to attain it's present day standard of excellence. There is a limit to how much M & V the human body can stand.

In the summer of 1956 came the chance to embark on a long planned climbing holiday in Skye. Leave in those days was epic, involving various trains that converged on the Hook of Holland. The sea journey was undertaken in luxurious style on such well known ships as the *The Empire of Vienna* and *The Empire Parkeston*. Comfort consisted of being issued with a pillow slip on embarkation! The climbing holiday started well but the weather soon closed in and other activities were undertaken, including borrowing the Post Master's boat from the Glen Brittle Post Office and attempting to commune with the dolphins. It was during one such expedition that I was hailed from the shore and rowed in to be handed a telegram recalling me to Lemgo. Even today Skye is not the easiest of places to get to but in the 50s it was considered to be really remote. The return journey was facilitated by simply showing my telegram to the nearest policeman who promptly flagged down the next passing lorry and put me aboard. Passing through Carlisle I had an indication of what was happening, when I saw a sand coloured Austin K9 with a large white H on the canopy. The return journey only took two days and to my horror, when I arrived in Lemgo they had gone. Panic stricken in case I should be left behind I set off for Aldershot where 1 ASSU was re-equipping, finally saying goodbye to the old wartime Morris Gin Palace and being issued with the infamous Austin K9 version. By this time my vehicle and crew had been taken over by another NCO and it began to look as though whatever was going to happen was going to happen without me. Then, suddenly, I was in front of the OC, **Maj Dougie Bould**, being told to collect a complete set of ASRRX & ETA codes, climb on a plane and set up Air Support Communications for 40 Commando in Malta. In those days the Royal Marine Commandos were not the sophisticated fighting machine thay are today. Their communications extended as far as Brigade but they had no Integral Air Support Comms. In addition their Anti-Tank weapons had not yet passed the 3.5 RL level so to mount any large operation they had to depend on considerable support from the Pongos. On arrival in Malta I was delivered to St Andrews Barracks and reported to the Brigade Signal Officer, **Capt** 'Kipper' **Read**. As yet I was on my own, my newly acquired Tentacle complete with 52 Set and a new coat of sand coloured paint was on it's way by sea. Looking back on it now the whole thing was carried out at an extremely leisurely pace.

The vehicle and crew arrived eventually and we began to train in earnest with 40 Commando. It immediately became obvious that the vehicle was going no further. This meant that my beloved 52 Set was redundant and we had to rely on the 62, for our ship to shore comms. In addition the BE201, which was our VHF ground to air set, also had to be made into a one man load. This set had been designed to be vehicle mounted and the prospect of turning it into a manpack station was daunting to say the least. There was also a shortage of the small 12V 22AH batteries, so we ended up with 12V 75AH batteries with the 62 Set mounted on top. Fully kitted up with ammo and rations etc each of us was carrying almost 100lbs. The Marines introduced us into the highly specialised artform of water proofing radios, for seaborne assault landings, and also generously provided us with handcarts after I had explained that we were physically incapable of man packing the sets and the 300.... charging engines, not to mention the 6V 170AH batteries!! The training was hard and included landings in Millhea Bay and St Pauls Bay and also on one memorable occasion on Kalafrana Bay, where having got ashore we set up our VHF comms on the roof of the WRNS quarters. This caused considerable consternation and eventually we had to retreat in disorder supervised by a very irate 1st Officer WRNS who plainly just didn't believe our story!!

We were now spending a lot of time 'vittled aboard' ships of the Amphibious Warfare Squadron. These ships were elderly and dignified veterans of World War II. The HQ ship HMS *Meon* being a converted river class frigate. The LSTs had evocative names like *Salerno, Reggio, Anzio* etc. and the LCTs, slightly smaller and less roomy were dignified with names like *Rampart, Bastion, Puncher* etc. These small ships were always crowded, especially Meon, and sleeping space was at a premium. Fortunately the Med, at that time of year, is a pleasant enough place to be so you could get away with a camp-bed on the upper deck, avoiding the quarter deck of course.

There were compensations, in particular a memorable run ashore in Catania in Sicily. It was there I had an introduction to the matelots' sense of humour, when early one morning a large lorry laden with crates of milk arrived on the quayside and two large Sicilians commenced to unload gallons of milk at the foot of the *Meon*'s gangplank. The Officer of the Watch maintained the usual air of detached disinterest, reserved for such occasions by the Senior Service. When the vehicle had been emptied one of the large gentleman attempted to deliver and obtain payment of his bill. I will draw a veil over the next half hour. Suffice it to say Jack, probably after his seventh or eighth beer had ordered the milk to be delivered to the ship, no doubt with good intent! This particular trip also ended on a bizzare note. As soon as we had come alongside, the Catania tugboat men had gone on strike. The buzz on the mess decks was that we would be stuck in Catania for at least a week. It was reckoned to be a fairly good run ashore due to the ready availability of the two things closest to a matelot's heart, beer (cheap but execrable) and women (expensive and unwholesome in the exteme). However, the Senior Service was not to be thwarted by a few communist shop stewards. Engines were started, orders shouted from the bridge. In the best traditions of the John Mills, Jack Hawkins movies, seven of us poor pongos were dispatched onto the quay with the longest balk of timber I have ever seen, before or since. This we placed on the bow and proceded to push the sharp end clear of the tug, which had been purposely moored there. I cannot remember what *Meon*'s displacement was, somewhere in the region of 1200 tons, but it actually worked. When the bridge rang 'half ahead both' we had to drop the timber and run like mad, hurling ourselves over the stern before the ship got under way. We may not have had much money but nobody could say life was without interest!

To be continued . . .

DONATIONS

Reading Branch RSA. In memoriam of
Maj (Retd) N. T. Warren MBE TD £10.00
Mr and **Mrs R. Scott**. In memoriam of **Sgt D. Woods** £30.00
Maj (Retd) David Chapell. In memoriam of **Mrs P. Johnson** £25.00
Jay Watkins. In memoriam of **Mrs G. Farmer** £15.00
3 Div Sig Reunion Club. In memoriam of **Mr J. Hindle** £10.00
Mr James Cumming £10.00
East Kent Branch RSA £50.00
Glossop & District Branch RSA £25.00
Dorset Branch RSA £168.00
Mr S. G. Ely £40.00
Maj (Retd) J. Gatehouse £20.00
Certo Cito Lodge £20.00
SSgt D. Richardson £225.00
The Middlesex Imperial Yeomanry Lodge £76.70
Mrs **Joan Greenstreet** £20.00
East Kent Branch RSA £100.00
Mr and **Mrs Underwood.** In memoriam of **A. C. Wells** £20.00
Belated entry from April 1996 from: 56 Div Sigs DR OCA £170.00

LAST POST

Adams	**–Cpl V. Adams**	Served 1963/81	Died 07/11/96
Ayley	**–Sig R. Ayley**	Served 1993/45	Died 21/11/96
Banks	**–Lt Col G. W. Banks MBE**		Died 31/10/96
Bryant	**–Dvr C. D. Bryant**	Served 1939/46	Died 20/12/96
Bumpstead	**–Mr F. Bumpstead**		Died 10/96
Callan	**–Cpl T. L. Callan**	Served 1956/58	Died 16/11/96
Clwyd-Jones	**–WO2 R. Clwyd-Jones**	Served 1949/76	Died 23/10/96
Dibley	**–Maj G. Dibley**	Served 1936/63	Died 12/01/97
Dyche	**–Sig Dyche**	Served 1992/96	Died 96
Elford	**–Cpl W. H. Elford**	Served 1948/53	Died 22/09/96
Fletcher	**–WO2 R. J. Fletcher**	Served 1940/67	Died 05/11/96
Hindle	**–Mr J. Hindle**		Died 10/96
Holland	**–SSgt E. H. Holland**	Served 1941/70	Died 21/01/96
Golden	**–Maj C. H. Golden**	Served 1937/58	Died 21/12/95
Graham	**–SSgt F. G. Graham**	Served 1962/87	Died 22/11/96
Jamieson	**–Cpl R. A. Jamieson**	Served 1943/66	Died 15/10/96
Jermy	**–LCpl A. Jermy**		Died 10/96
Jowala	**–Mr Jowala Coffee** ex-Singapore Dist Sig Regt		Died 14/12/96
Joyner	**–Maj J. W. Joyner**	Served 1940/74	Died 18/11/96
Latham	**–Maj W. D. Latham MA MEd**		Died 05/11/96
Maguire	**–Mr B. Maguire**		Died 10/96
Mandy	**–Sgt M. R. Mandy**	Served 1959/74	Died 18/10/96
Mayne	**–Maj E. A. Mayne**	Served 1934/63	Died 23/10/96
Perkins	**–Lt Col J. Perkins MBE, TD**	Served 1929/49	Died 23/10/96
Pounds	**–Lt Col D. L. Pounds**	Served 1939/73	Died 30/12/96
Pressland	**–Sig K. O. Pressland**	Served 1942/46	Died 17/12/96
Proctor	**–Sgt D. A. Proctor**	Served 1949/57	Died 96
Robertson	**–Cpl H. J. C. Robertson**	Served 1949/51	Died 03/12/96
Stubbings	**–Capt (Retd) G. C. Stubbings**	Served 1959/92	Died 05/11/96
Tanner	**–Lt Col J. L. Tanner MBE**	Served 1920/50	Died 25/11/96
Warren	**–Maj N. T. Warren OBE, TD**	Served 1939/59	Died 30/11/96
Whitehead	**–Mr J. E. Whitehead**	Served 1942/47	Died 22/08/96
Whitworth	**–SSgt T. L. Whitworth**	Served 1950/64	Died 04/11/96
Woods	**–Sgt D. Woods**	Served 1931/43	Died 14/11/96

Woods–Sgt D. Woods enlisted in 1931 and served in the UK, Malaya (during World War II) and in Malta. He completed 22 years service in 1953, after which he served as caretaker and Mess Steward for the TA in Darlington. He is sadly missed by his many friends and his daughter and her family.

Banks–Lt Col G.W. Banks MBE, died on 31 October 1996, suddenly but peacefully at Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor, and of Bryn Ceirios, Celyn, Benllech, Anglesey, aged 88 years.

Robertson–Cpl Joseph Canifton Robertson–It is with the greatest sadness, that I inform the Corps of the sudden death of my father aged 65 years, on 3 December 1996, at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. My father joined the Corps in 1949 as a National Serviceman, and served in France and Germany before Discharge in 1951. He rejoined the Corps in 1954 until his retirement in 1978, having served in UK, Cyprus, Malta, Libya and Germany. His last two postings with the Corps, were with 22 Sig Regt in Lippstadt and 10 Sig Regt at Hounslow. After leaving the Army, he joined the Prison Service, serving at Pentonville and Full Sutton HMP Establishments.

My father **Joe**, leaves behind his wife **Ina** after 42 years marriage, two daughters, four sons and 12 grandchildren, who will all miss him.

Chris (George) Stubbings enlisted as a Junior Sig on 4 September 1959 and joined the Junior Leaders Regt on 14 September 1959. After training as a Telegraph Operator A3 at 24 Sig Regt, he was posted to 14 Sig Regt in February 1963. He then served with 602 Sig Tp (Special Communications) where he qualified as a parachutist, 18 Sig Regt where he served with 22 SAS on active operations in Borneo, 15 Sig Regt, 633 Sig Tp, School of Signals, 20 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 2 Div Sig Regt, 40 Sig Regt (V), HAC RA, 277 Sig Sqn and Cambridge University OTC.

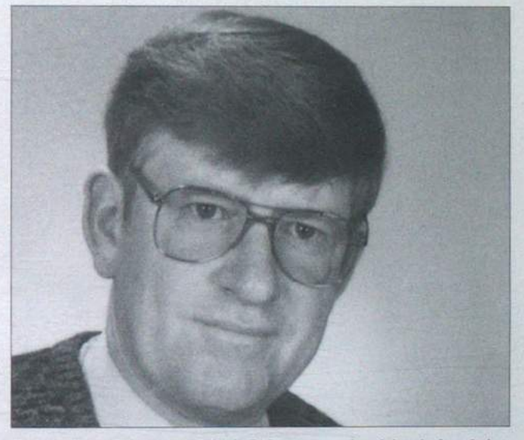
He was commissioned from WO1(YofS) on the 2 April 1985 and posted to 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt as Asst Ops Officer. In March 1987 he became OC 30 Cadet Training Team. He was promoted to Captain on 2 April 1987 and from Wrexham went to 13 Sig Regt as a Sqn 2IC in July 1989. In August 1991 he took up the appointment of Training Adjutant 11 Sig Regt and retired on 30 September 1992 to fill the NRPS PSAO post with 81 Sig Sqn (V) of 21 Sig Regt (AS) on 11 January 1993. After over 2½ years as PSAO of this specialist Squadron he resigned on 11 September 1995. He was fundamental in ensuring the move of the Squadron to Colerne was extremely successful and he built a solid foundation for the future.

George was a superb sportsman and athlete, representing the Corps at Basketball for many years and playing for many of his units at various sporting activities. His other favourite pastime was Coarse Fishing and he represented BAOR on many occasions. A big man with a ready wit and excellent sense of humour, he always gave his best in whatever he did; he will be sorely missed by his family and all who knew him.

He died suddenly on 5 November 1996. He leaves behind his devoted wife **Gilly**, and children, **Justin**, **Jason**, **Fiona** and **Georgina**.

Graham–SSgt F. G. Graham (Retd) who died suddenly at his home in Herford, Germany on the 22 November 1996. **Gus** served in the Corps for over 24 years and saw service in Germany, Cyprus, Aden and the UK. **Gus** was always a popular member of the Corps who enjoyed life to the full. He always made time to look after his troops and earned their respect and gratitude. Many members of the Corps, both serving and retired, will remember the good times they had in his company.

Our thoughts and condolences go to his wife **Else** and children **Michael**, **David** and **Anita** at this sad time.



Robert John Fletcher 1916/96. **Bob** was an electrician before being called up for war service with the Corps in 1940. He re-enlisted in Manchester in 1946, qualified as a lineman and had reached the rank of WO2 by the time of his discharge in 1967. He was well respected for his experience on the technical stores side and as an instructor. A keen sportsman, **Bob** served in Germany, Japan, Korea and the UK. He was awarded his LS & GC medal, the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation medal and the GSM with clasp Malaya.

Grateful thanks go to the Chester Branch RSA for providing the much appreciated Corps presence at **Bob**'s funeral in November.

Bob leaves a widow **Amy** and sons **Roger** and **Neil**, both of whom served in the Corps Band.

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THE Wire

April 1997

The Royal Corps of Signals

How do you feel about leaving the Army?

As you're well aware, serving in the Forces isn't just a job. It's a way of life. So, it's no surprise, that after leaving, many people feel as though they're high and dry, like a fish out of water.

But there's no need for you to feel this way. It's perfectly possible for you to keep up with old friends, make use of the unique skills you've acquired, *and* make a vital contribution to the nation's defence into the bargain.

How? Simply by becoming a member of the Volunteer Forces, which make up a third of our Army and represent a significant part of our commitment to peace.

There are two options open to you.

Firstly, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those leaving Infantry or Cavalry regiments.

Secondly, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

You can contribute as much time as you want in any one year. The minimum that we ask is that as a member of the Independent TA you complete 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and two weekends.

In return you will receive payment equivalent to the rates paid to Regular Army soldiers plus an annual tax-free bonus.

If you would like more information about how you can stay in the swim of things, write to the address below, giving details of which option you are interested in, your current age and address, your intended county of residence, and of the regiment you have left or are leaving.

The Territorial Army, Freepost, 4335 (Ref: 9000), Bristol BS1 3YX.

The Royal Signals Magazine

April 1997 Vol. 51 No: 2

The Wire

All correspondence and matter for publication in **The Wire** should be addressed to **The Head of Publications, The Wire**, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, DT11 8RH Dorset. Tel No: Blandford mil 2079 STD 01258 48 2079

Matter for publication must be received by the 15th of February, April, June, August, October and 10th December for publication six weeks later.

All enquiries regarding subscriptions/despatch should be made to ext: 2087

Subscription rates 1997 (Bi-monthly) (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec). Individual: Yearly **£9.00**; Bi-monthly **£1.50**.

Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder
Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

The Wire is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers

FROM THE EDITOR . . .

PLANS FOR FUTURE PUBLICATIONS:

The Wire and *The Journal* of the Royal Signals Institution, the in-house magazines of the Royal Signals are to be combined.

Of the six copies of *The Wire* produced each year, two will include *The Journal* material. These two copies will carry the title:

THE WIRE
incorporating
THE JOURNAL
of The Royal Signals Institution

The target structure of the magazine will then be: Six copies in each year (February, April, June, August, October, December)

A standard *Wire* will have 80 pages; the two Wires including The Journal 96 pages; an exceptionally sized *Wire* 104 pages

Each year we will aim to produce: 1 Standard *Wire* (February); 2 Combined *Wire/Journal* (June/October); 3 *Wires* including colour (April/August/December).

These may vary depending upon material available from subscribers and special Corps activities.

NEW MUSEUM PROJECT

Work to create the new displays in the museum is proceeding rapidly. The museum staff are cleaning and refurbishing the items that will be displayed, are composing the vast number of storylines and captions that will be required and are looking out for new photographs to illustrate those storylines.

The museum designer, meantime, has finished erecting screens and partitions and the electricians are running the multitude of cables needed for the lighting and audio-visual effects.

The museum will be formally opened on: Wednesday 28th May by **General Sir Michael Rose, KCB CBE DSO QMG ADC Gen** as one of his last duties before he relinquishes his post as Adjt Gen.

It will reopen to the general public on Monday, 2nd June 1997.

Front Cover: Sig Mike 'Dickie' Dyer of Rebro Tp, 212 Sig Sqn, 1ASDR, the son of the late **Maj 'Dickie' Dyer MBE**, of the Corps, somewhere in Bosnia.

Back Cover: Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, The Colonel in Chief of Queen's Gurkha Signals pictured with the Tri-Service and Tri-National contingent during her last visit to Queen's Gurkha Signals in Hong Kong.

THE MUSEUM SHOP

Since the closure of the PRI Shop, the Museum Shop now stocks the following items:

Stable Belts
Badges of Rank Slides
Embroidered Beret Badges

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THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION 1997

The outline for this year's Reunion Weekend at Blandford is as follows:

Friday 27th June:

pm - Reception opens

Saturday 28th June:

am - Reception opens
Museum opens
Static Displays

pm - Arena Displays
Corps Band
Pipes & Drums 32 Sig Regt (V)
Band 34 Sig Regt (V)
White Helmets
Vintage Military Vehicles/Cars
Playing of Retreat

evening - Messes/JRC

Sunday 29th June:

am - Reception opens
Museum open
Static Displays
Morning Service
Re-dedication - Corps Memorial
All Ranks Lunch

pm - Disperse

FORECAST OF EVENTS 1997

13 May	Corps Dinner - London
28 May	Opening of the New Museum
21 June	Corps Luncheon - Blandford
28/29 June	Association Reunion Weekend
7 September	Corps Luncheon - Catterick
*31 October	Scottish Dinner
*13 November	Institution London Lecture
*18 December	Corps Carol Service

*Please note these NEW DATES

CHARITY COMMISSION

Charity: The Royal Signals Benevolent Fund
Scheme for regulating the Charity
Reference: CVA/284923-24438/SC

The Charity Commissioners have made a Scheme for this charity. A copy can be seen for the next month at Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals, or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to: The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference.

NB: The proposal of this same scheme was published in the December 1996 edition of *The Wire*. Publication on this occasion completes the legal requirement.

MASTER OF SIGNALS

Major General I. O. J. Sprackling OBE,
is to be appointed Master of Signals with effect from 30 June 1997, in succession to
Major General A. C. Birtwistle CB, CBE, DL

ROYAL SIGNALS THE WHITE HELMETS PROVISIONAL BOOKINGS FOR 1997

APRIL	
25	SOinC's Opening Show - Blandford
MAY	
1 - 6 inc	Reindhalen Show - BFG
9	Royal Star & Garter Military Spectacular - Yeovil
10	35 Sig Regt (V) - Birmingham
11	Dorking Show
15,16,17	Devon County Show
25	Lord Mayor's Show - Birmingham
26	Melton Mowbray Show
28	Opening Corps Museum - Blandford
JUNE	
7	GEC Alstom Show - Rugby
8	Yorkshire Truck Fest Spectacular
14	Severn Trent Water Ltd - Family Day - Wolverhampton
15	Essex Show
16,17	President's Sporting Club - Harlow/Luton
21	Sherborne Castle Military Spectacular
26	Corps Cocktail Party - Blandford
27	Master of Signals Dining Out - Blandford
28	Royal Signals Association - Blandford
28	White Helmets Reunion - Bassingbourn
30	Army Exhibition for Schools - Bassingbourn
JULY	
1 - 4 inc	Army Exhibition for Schools - Bassingbourn
5	RMA Sandhurst
6	30 Sig Regt - Bramcote
10,11,12	Kent County Show
13	Spelthorne Show - Middlesex
18	Northampton Show
19	Cumberland Show - Carlisle
20	Cheshire Yeomanry Bi-Centenary
24	Llandudno Show
26	Kohima Day 2 Sig Regt - York
27	Manchester Police Day
30	Nantwich Show - Crewe
AUGUST	
2,3	Classic Car & County Show - Loseley Park
9	St Peter & St John Hospice - Lewes
15,16	Shrewsbury Flower Show
17	Bolton Show
19,20,21	Pembrokeshire Show
23	Egham Show
24,25	Eye Show - Suffolk
27	Melplash Show - Dorset
SEPTEMBER	
6	Norfolk Breckland Tattoo
14	Military Survey - Hermitage
21	Classic Car - Bovington

BAND OF THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS ENGAGEMENTS 1997

March	
6	Corps Guest Night, HQ Mess, Blandford
April	
9	Child Okeford Church Concert, Nr Blandford
11	RSA Dinner, Crown Hotel, Blandford
18	QM Convention Dinner, HQ Mess, Blandford
25	RSDT Opening Show, Blandford
May	
5	Blandford Georgian Day
13	London Dinner, Cafe Royale
16	Lions Club Church Concert, Blandford
23	Opening of New Museum, Blandford
26	USA Tour
June	
1	USA Tour
21	Corps Lunch, HQ Mess, Blandford
28-29	RSA Weekend, Blandford
July	
6	CAGE Dinner, HQ Mess, Blandford
9	Ferndown Rotary Club, Concert
15	Royal British Legion Event, Pembrook Castle
29-30	Kneller Hall Concert, Twickenham
October	
10	Hereford Cathedral Concert
11-12	Band Reunion Weekend, Blandford
November	
6	Royal British Legion Event, Tenby
9	Remembrance Sunday, Blandford
20	Samaritans Fund, Grand Temple, London, Concert
December	
13	Malcolm Sargent Carol Concert, Royal Festival Hall

OLD WELBEXIAN ASSOCIATION
PRESIDENT'S DINNER - 14th June 1997

The next President's Dinner will be held at Welbeck College on Saturday the 14th June 1997.
The AGM will take place on the following Sunday morning.
Dress is Mess Kit for serving officers and Black Tie for retired officers. The cost will be £14.00. Timings are 1930 for 2000 hours. Limited accomodation is available on request.
Applications, including a contact address and telephone number, should be sent to:

The Adjutant
Welbeck College
WORKSOP
Notts S80 3LN
Tel: 01909 476326
Fax: 01909 530447

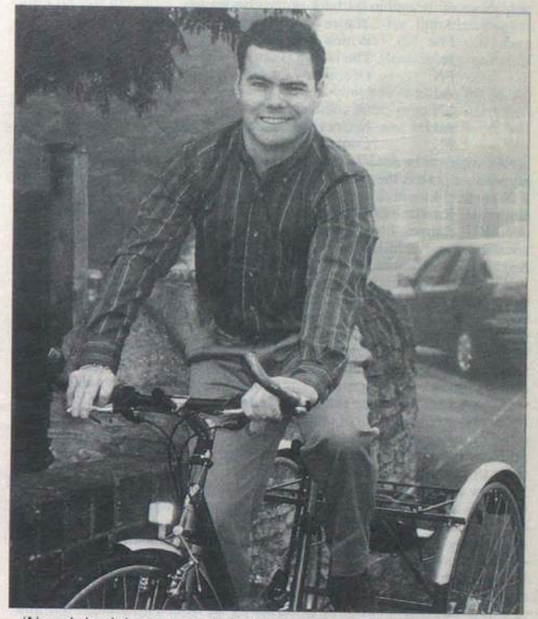
Applications should arrive at least three weeks prior to the Dinner.

HEREFORD SURVIVOR GETS ON HIS BIKE TO INDEPENDENCE

Former soldier **Dylan Arnold**, who faced a future in a wheelchair after a horrific abseiling accident, is mobile again–thanks to his own courage and determination and with a little help from the Herefordshire branch of SSAFA Forces Help.

Dylan, aged 24, from Redhill, Hereford, has just taken delivery of a specially-made tricycle costing £800–paid for with contributions from his old Corps, the Royal Signals, and the Army Benevolent Fund after approaches from SSAFA Forces Help city caseworker **Peter Harding**.

For **Dylan**, who can no longer ride a two-wheel bicycle because of the effect of his injuries, the 12 geared three-wheeler means freedom.



'Now I don't have to wait for lifts or buses,' he said. 'It means independence, and that's great.'

It was back in April 1992 that **Dylan**, educated at St Mary's High School, Lugwardine, suffered the fall that changed his life–and nearly ended it. At 18 he was training as a radio telegraphist at the Army Apprentice College at Harrogate, already a junior sergeant and tipped for possible future officer training at Sandhurst.

On leave in Dorset, he was abseiling with a friend on cliffs at Swanage when disaster struck. The boulder to which he was roped rolled over the edge of the cliff and hit him–fracturing his skull and jaw and sending him plunging nearly 100 feet into the sea below. He suffered further injuries on impact and finished up floating face down and unconscious.

Incredibly, a lifeboat returning from a routine exercise was passing and rescued him within 10 minutes. But so severe were his injuries that his mother, **Mrs Gail Hanson**, was warned that he was unlikely to survive the night. Somehow he did survive. After five weeks in a coma and on a ventilator, fed by tube, **Dylan** returned to consciousness, six and a half stone lighter and completely unaware of what had happened. When he had recovered sufficiently he was moved to an Army rehabilitation centre at Epsom, where he was to spend the next year. There, through the care of the medical staff, his own determination and the inspiration of other patients, he fought his way slowly back to health despite all the odds and the loss of the use of his legs.

'I had four goals then,' **Dylan** recalled. 'To stand up; to touch my right foot; to walk my sister down the aisle at her wedding; and to climb Pen-y-fan.'

All four aims have been achieved–the climb to the Brecon Beacons' highest point being tackled successfully two years ago. Since then he has completed an information technology course at Herefordshire College of Technology and he is now doing a GNVQ art and design course at Herefordshire College of Art and Design, which he hopes will lead to a new career.

The future is very much brighter than it was back in 1992, and **Dylan Arnold**–survivor extraordinary is looking forward with cheerful optimism. A spokesman for SSAFA Forces Help Herefordshire said this week: 'It's a remarkable story, and **Dylan** is a very courageous, strong-minded young man. We are delighted to have been able to help him achieve greater independence with his new tricycle.'

SSAFA Forces Help contact in Herefordshire is **Col Bill Foster**, who can be reached on 01981 550367. SSAFA Forces Help is the new amalgamation of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association and the Forces Help Society.

FROM MOCKBA WITH LOVE

by Capt Fred Nilsson

BEGINNINGS

The signal was passed across the desk; volunteers required for UNMO course mid October to end November to be held in Russia, reply to the Adjt. Well you know how it is, you put your name down but never expect to be picked as the Army is quite a large and very busy organisation and usually the list of names on the queue are long, illustrious and *senior*. The Army must have been having a quiet couple of weeks as I eventually received a telephone call from the Adjt, **Neil Makepeace**.

As I happened to be on exercise at the time in sunny Scotland and **Neil** had been called back to Sheffield. I was totally unprepared and some what suspicious of the call in the back of the Ops wagon:

Adjt: 'You're on the course.'
FN: 'Which course?'
Adjt: 'The UNMO course.'
FN: '*Of course I am Neil.*'
Adjt: 'No, you are.'
FN: 'Of course I am Neil.'
Adjt: 'No, *really* you are.'
FN: 'Cool.'

(As some of the readers may have realised certain expletives have been removed to protect the guilty.)

Well that was it, I was actually going to the former USSR to study alongside Russian Officers on a United Nations Military Observer (UNMO) course. I was looking forward to increasing my Russian vocabulary as the little Russian I knew would not have exactly furthered Anglo-Soviet relations in a positive way.

All the usual administrative red tape had to be gone through, with rather more bureaucracy from the Russian side–which was to be expected. Then down to MoD London for final briefing and a few days later I found myself relaxing in the Royal Trafalgar Hotel, London. With time on my hands I decided to recce my route for the next morning. I soon realised I should have booked into a Heathrow Airport hotel; the reason for this was the tube service on a Saturday was about two hours later than during the week. My flight was due out on the Saturday morning at 0925 hrs and I was to book in two hours before the flight which meant that with the 45 minute tube journey, I had to leave Piccadilly Circus by 0640 hrs. The only problem was that the tube station did not open until 0630 hrs and the first train to Terminal Four was the 0705 hrs. If I had been travelling to Moscow alone I would not have been too concerned, but the head of our team was a Lt Col who would be expecting me on time. I began to get the feeling that things were not going to get off to a good start. After apologising and explaining my lateness, we all booked in. Things were definitely not getting off to a good start when the Col had to pay for excess baggage weight, (we had all been limited to 30 kilos; naturally we were all overweight), and the rest of us did not.

The good point about being jetted out by the British Embassy is that you do get to travel in relative comfort and sitting in the departure lounge drinking tea made the previous hours blur into a distant memory. I duly noted the call to board the flight and just settled down in the plane to read the newspaper when the flight captain announced we had to deplane due to a security problem. This was definitely not turning out to be a good day! After about 40 minutes the situation had been dealt with and we enplaned, only to be told that due to the incident our take off slot had been missed and the next available one was not until 1200hrs. By this time I was sincerely hoping that this was not an omen of things to come.

RUSSIA

We eventually landed at Moscow Airport 1800hrs local, where we were greeted by the Assistant Military Attaché and taken to the transport. To say that the AMA had miscalculated the luggage we would all be carrying would be unkind, but true. The Volvo estate was definitely bulging at the sides, middle and end, as three Capts and overflowing luggage were literally squeezed into the rear seats by the Col and the AMA pushing against the side door to close it! The Colonel of course had no problem getting into the front seat.

Thankfully, when we arrived at the hotel it was dark because the scene outside was reminiscent of a bad night at a night-club. Once the car doors had been opened we tumbled out onto the pavement and with the cramped conditions, the blood supply had been cut off to various limbs resulting in a 'dead' leg or foot and also cramp. So my two companions were doing extremely good impressions of being paralytic by trying to stand normally and, of course, collapsing or weaving depending on how much weight was put on a limb. Eventually we managed to get booked in and as we had the rest of the night to ourselves decided to have a shave, shower and siesta before exploring the city.

'NIGHTLIFE'

We walked down the old Arbat, a unique pedestrian street with houses from the 19th and 20th centuries, in the empire and modern styles. There were many antique, jewellery and souvenir shops and art galleries. (During the daytime there were street artists.) However, we eventually turned the corner to see a MacDonalds, which we visited and enjoyed.

Curiosity urged us on and we visited a few clubs and pubs before bumping into an American working in Moscow called **Charlie**. He decided we should accompany him to a 'good' club he knew, which we did. This turned out to be a bad mistake. As I and my colleague got out of the taxi to go into the club, a car was reversed towards our direction, hitting **Charlie** and breaking a wing mirror. Heated words were exchanged as we walked into the club. We did not know it then, but we had just been introduced to the Russian Mafia. A bill of $300 was being asked for to repair the damage. We of course all refused to pay and asked the barman to call the police–he refused! The leader of this gang was a guy called **Sergei**. **Sergei** introduced himself to us and we explained that we did not carry that amount of cash on us. At this point the American, who should have known better, decided to argue with the man. He was promptly removed from the premises and severely beaten up, threatened with a pistol, put into a taxi and despatched. Watching this happen from inside the club focuses the mind considerably and we realised that things were really becoming pear shaped. In the end we were stuck in the club for about five hours before we managed to get out by convincing **Sergei** to visit the British Embassy who would pay for the damage and as collateral gave him half a visa. We got back to the Arbat Hotel about 0500 hrs and I realised we were going to be picked up by **Igor** from the British Embassy in just five hours.

THE FIRST DAY

Igor (that really was his name) duly arrived later that day, in a mini-bus thankfully, and we departed to the Embassy for final briefings before deploying to the Vystrel Academy. **Sergei** and his friends duly showed up at the Embassy later on, where the visa was recovered, and they were promptly shown the gate with obviously no exchange of cash.

Vystrel Academy is situated North West of Moscow, approximately an hour and a half journey by road or train, near the local town of Solnechnorgorsk. The academy is used for 'higher officer' training. Vystrel translated is 'The Shot'. We were greeted by our chief instructor **Maj Vidakas** and shown to our rooms. The rooms had all the bare essentials, except adequate maintenance, so every morning when you entered the bathroom you were treated to a cold footwash. I was told to unpack and to get into uniform for the briefing from the Course Commandant. Briefing over, we were given the opportunity to meet with the other students in a friendly game of volleyball. This was a nightly event after lessons and the Russian students were almost obsessed with the game.

THE COURSE

The course comprised of four Brits, two Americans, a German and 19 Russian students from the Army, Navy and Air Force, the majority of whom were multi-lingual. Subjects to be covered were the history, principles, origins and purpose of the UN, driving, first aid, stress management, observer duties, navigation and various other UN duties. The course would be conducted in English.

The course itself was fairly uneventful except for a couple of incidents I would like to share with the readers. As part of the joining instructions it had been stated that I should bring three IV drips (complete) in the event of any accidents. I was curious as to where I would be expected to use them. I soon found out–the driving course!

DRIVER TRAINING

I would just like to jog the memories of the readers as to the state of the Russian armed forces at the time I was out there. Many of the soldiers and officers had not been paid for at least six months. Officers were moonlighting as taxi drivers, doormen or security guards. The armed forces were in disarray, except for the nuclear contingent of troops who were still paid. **Gen Lebed** had just been kicked out by **Yeltsin**. **Yeltsin** himself was extremely ill and awaiting a possible heart by-pass operation.

I would like to think that the state of the jeeps that I was to drive was because of the upheaval that they were going through. How on earth those vehicles were allowed on the road defies belief. I was thankful it had four wheels! The fact that there was no tread on the tyres did not seem to bother our instructors. This was going to be interesting.

We were taken by bus to a training area called the 'Polygon' where we were split into two groups. One group was made up of the Russian students and the 'foreigners' made up the second. Obviously the Europeans were more experienced than our Russian counterparts as most of us had been driving since we were 18 while some of the Russian students only had two or three years under their belts. This turned out to be a revision exercise for us. The course required us to manoeuvre the vehicle through cones, zigzag, reverse, drive up some steep ramps and complete a figure of eight. Which of the three vehicles you got decided how well you stopped, how good your visibility was through the damaged windscreen, or how easy it was to move the clutch assembly (when you depressed the clutch to change gear the clutch pedal stayed at the bottom of the floor and had to be physically man-handled to the top if you needed to change gear again). After Day One we all agreed it was going to be a good idea to bring the medical packs and IV equipment every time driving was on the programme.

The second stage involved negotiating a tank driving course with a dodgy jeep! It was certainly an experience. I have never driven in and out of a concrete anti-tank trap, over snow covered 1:4 hills and a trench which required us to use the surrounding lumber to bridge it and then drive across it.

The third stage of the course was the town driving. This was relatively easy as road rage has not hit the Russian drivers. We were required to do some evasive driving and also play catch-up with the jeep in front to further test our driving skills.

The fourth stage was the night drive. I was unlucky to draw the jeep with the damaged windscreen and this was concerning me slightly so I was not listening as intently as I should have been to the briefing from the MTO, **Col Lukyanov**, until I heard the Colonel say, '. . . *and my friends it is normally at this time of night that we have problems. Our Russian drivers have had too much vodka, as is the way of our people, so beware of the big trucks and be careful.*' If this had been his idea of a motivational speech, it was not filling me with a warm feeling.

There were no 'cats eyes', no centre lane markings on the B-roads and generally very poorly lit conditions–with the road usually covered in mud. It had begun to snow and I was sure I was not going to see the night through. I would just quote the diary entry I made. 'It was our turn at night driving and it was absolutely terrifying. The windscreen wipers on the jeep did not work half the time, the full beam did not work any of the time and the cracked glass just added a new dimension to the driving experience.'

I was pleased that all the students passed the driving exams at the end. A lot of it was due to **Col Lukyanov** and his team who managed to keep the jeeps going even when some of the Russian students did their best to hamper their efforts.

Driver Training

OTHER IMPRESSIONS

In between studies we normally got the Saturday afternoon and Sunday off. We used this time to look around Moscow and do the sight-seeing bits. The train journey was an experience in itself. As we were catching the train from Solnechnogorsk, which was halfway along the line to Moscow we stood a lot of the time. The Russian people used every opportunity to make money. The train would pull out of the station and within a few minutes there would be people selling their wares. Everything from religious icons to torches to books and even medicine were sold on the train by these people moving from compartment to compartment and at times we even had musicians.

During my time in Moscow we visited the Bolshoi Theatre; the Pushkin Gallery–where I bumped into **Tina Turner** as she did a tour of the place; various war museums and galleries including the infamous Izmaylovskiy Park (where you could buy anything). I settled for the Matrioshkas (Russian dolls). Red Square, Lenin's tomb and the Kremlin were impressive, as was Gum (pronounced 'goom') the Russian equivalent of Oxford Street but twice as expensive.

I must point out that if you ever go to Moscow, you must use the Metro to see what must be one of the world's most ornately decorated underground. The marble statues, stone carvings and bronze work are amazing.

A few Russian students were 'assigned' to us as we went sight-seeing, not through their choice because the Lt Col in charge of the course thought we might be harmed. After two weeks of this we got the AMA to draft a letter absolving the Russians from any harm we might suffer and dropped our escorts. The rest of our time there was uneventful.

After the final exercise there was the Graduation Ceremony, followed by the Graduation Dinner–with just a few bottles of vodka being drunk and good fun was had by all.

FINALLY

On reflection it was an interesting time to be there and have the opportunity to discuss various issues with the Russian Officers and get their private views, which at times differed from the 'party line'. The officers themselves were charming and helpful, possessed a great sense of humour and they love the British and have a high respect for our soldiers. My personal view is that the biggest threat the Russian armed forces faces today is itself.

107 (ULSTER) BRIGADE EXPEDITION TO MOUNT PALDOR

EXERCISE ALPINE ALBERT FINN–28 OCTOBER-28 NOVEMBER 96

By Ganesh Himal

One afternoon in early September, the phone rang and a voice said, 'What are you doing in November?' As I run a Cadet Training Team the answer was easy, 'The usual stuff, night visits and a few weekends.' 'Ah, good!' the voice noted, 'Fancy climbing in the Himalayas for a month?' Difficult choice! 'Count me in if you can square it away with the Chief of Staff.' As fate moves in mysterious ways, **Maj Peter Holliday** (Chief of Staff 107 (Ulster Bde), the expedition leader of Ex Albert Alpine Finn and the voice from the other end of the telephone) knew my Chief of Staff at 51 (Highland) Bde.

My Team, knowing my penchant for climbing, did not blink as I swivelled round and blanked out November on the SASCO year planner. With a, 'Carry on Sergeant Major.' I found myself eastbound on a dodgy Aeroflot flight with a team of TA Ulstermen (and woman). The aim was two fold for the expedition. (Yes I know you cannot have two aims, but this was the Irish!) Firstly to climb Mount Paldor (5928m) and secondly to introduce the most of the team to alpine mountaineering. The majority had not seen an ice axe or crampons and, as far as I could gather, we were achieving both aims concurrently. Anything for a wild life!

After the Team had managed to complete some administration, contact the trekking agency and contract some 'Kathmandu Quickstep' we headed for Langtang Himal to undertake an 11 day acclimatisation trek. The first day was similar to the retreat from Moscow as four of us felt really awful. I think the porters were wondering what they had let themselves in for with these 'hardened mountaineers'.

We duly arrived at base camp, which we put as high on the terminal moraine as we thought practical. This was about 1hr above our perceived rivals (a Southern Irish expedition)! We had eight days to climb the mountain which may sound like a long time but with acclimatisation to the new altitude and the basic climb taking two days it is not a great deal of time. We still had to fit in some instruction with the ice axe and crampons. **Maj Holliday** sent the lead sherpa and myself up to the East Glacier for a recce. I on return, five hours later, suspected ulterior motives i.e: we were needed to break trail up the glacier.

After two days of preparation of carrying equipment and ensuring everyone was up to speed on their snowcraft, we decided to give the mountain an attempt. At midnight, unable to wait any longer and wanting to have the temperature as cold as possible, **Maj Pete Holliday**, **Capt Kevin Mosedale RLC**, I and the chief sherpa set off to climb Tilman's Ridge. Doubts were already in our minds as during the day a French Team, led by an Alpine guide, had returned unsuccessful. With a 'gallic shrug' the guide had said the snow on the ridge was 'dangereez'. We wondered whether this was the same as 'dangerous'? On the ridge that night we discovered it was. In a climber's understatement it was 'dodgy windslab' and on the avalanche scale of 1-5 this was an 8.3. **Maj** 'OC Sahib' **Holliday** pulled the plugs and we returned to the high camp feeling like British Rail with the excuse of 'bad snow on the tracks'. The rest of the team looked sceptically at us and we all loaded our rucsacs and headed for base camp.

The next day we went climbing. I took a team up Phutta's Peak. A rather nice climb was had by all and we were back drinking hot tea at midday. The other team tried to climb the South Ridge of the Fang (it is as bad as its name as it resembles a fang and is as loose as a cairn). They came back later and they all sported the latest 'ten thousand yard'. It was an excellent effort and they were unlucky in not getting to the summit. From base camp we could see the entire South Face and our guidebook helpfully described a slightly harder route up the face. This coupled with an understanding expedition leader who agreed to take the rest of the expedition up the subsidiary peak (Paldor West), allowed **Capt Kevin Mosedale** and myself to have another crack at the mountain.

We decided to travel light and only carried bivouac gear and one or two bits of climbing equipment (which we managed to leave on the bivouac ledge anyway). The first part of the route was a long slog up the West glacier to the base of a rock buttress. We dug out our ledge and settled down for the night. At 0300hrs we started brewing tea and it was 0500hrs by the time we had packed up and had enough brews. Climbing in the dark with only a headtorch on a rock and ice buttress could be described as interesting as we were led down one or two blind alleys. Sunrise saw us leave the buttress (as it finished and not because we had fallen off) and hit the upper face below some nice and unstable towers of ice (seracs). The angle was reasonable steady at 50-55 degrees and without too much difficulty we reached the summit,

We were reasonably smug with ourselves because we think it is a first British Army ascent (of the route and probably the mountain) and first ascent this season. Across on Paldor West we could see the rest of the expedition reaching that summit. We then only had to climb down safely and the expedition could be deemed a success. At Base camp that night we were treated to a cake by the cook and some alcohol appeared from somewhere and we sat around feeling chuffed with ourselves.

Grateful thanks must be extended to **Maj Peter Holliday** and every team member who helped in the excellent organisation of the successful trip.

REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION (RFEA)

The RFEA assists ex-regulars to resettle and find employment, provided they left with a character assessment of 'satisfactory' or better and served a minimum of three years in the ranks. This includes those who were subsequently commissioned. Anyone who is medically discharged is also eligible regardless of time served. Application to register may be at any time up to the national retirement age and as often as necessary.

This is done in close co-operation with the Ministry of Defence's Tri Service Resettlement Organisation, the Regional Resettlement Centres and the Service Leavers' Support Teams, as well as the other principal job finding organisations–the Services Employment Network central database 'SkillBank' and the Officers' Association. We also liaise closely with the Employment Service and the Training and Enterprise Councils/Local Enterprise Companies on retraining and job opportunities and by working closely with the ex-Service welfare community, we are also able to put registrants in touch with other agencies for advise on housing, education and welfare matters.

Registrants receive personal counselling and local job finding advice. Employers have access to a responsive recruitment service. Our Employment Consultants, all of whom have had a full and successful Service career themselves and worked in commerce or industry, put the two together and provide this free service from thirty nine branches throughout the United Kingdom.

Sadly, only half of those eligible to register with the Association do so but during the period 1 April 1996-30 November 1996 some 7,643 men and women joined our register and 3,182 left it having been placed in employment. Many more will have secured jobs as a result of the advice job search information we provide. Of those placed 1,447 were from the Army.

The Employment Consultant nearest to your Corps Headquarters is **Cynthia Pettit** in Salisbury. Why not telephone her on 01722 334872 and see how she can help you.

Other Branches are listed in Yellow pages or local directories.

Alternatively contact Head Office at: 49 Pall Mall, London SWIY 5JG or ring 0171 321 2011 or fax 0171 839 0970.

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MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

FEBRUARY - 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Col P. T. Innocent	HQ Land
Col S. M. Siddall	NATO Defence Coll Rome
Lt Col S. L. Goodman	International DGD&D
Lt Col A. J. Hutt	RSS
Lt Col M. V. Ledwards	Int Centre SO Unit
Maj A. D. Burgin	HQ PSC North (BAE)
Maj M. R. Complin	HQ ARRC
Maj M. R. Coram	HQ Land
Maj M. A. Coupar	7 Sig Regt (main HQ)
Maj C. S. K. Paterson	Princess Marina College
Maj A. Robertson	Int Centre Support Unit
Maj A. Sugdon	CIS Eng Grp
Maj W. N. White	HQ Land
Maj D. G. Wright	241 Sig Sqn
Capt G. N. Addley	15 Sig Regt
Capt J. W. MacKay	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Capt K. A. Townsend MBE	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt P. G. Newson	RSS
Lt J. J. Torrel	2 (Trg) Regt ACC SAAVN
Lt M. J. Wong	RSS

MARCH - 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col G. A. James	16 Sig Regt
Maj M. A. W. Besant	2 Sig Regt
Maj S. J. McConnell	37 Sig Regt
Maj S. P. Hunt	RSS
Maj J. E. D. Pughe-Morgan	HQNI
Maj P. T. Riley	2 Sig Regt
Maj P. D. Shawyer	CIS Eng Grp
Capt R. J. Anderton-Brown	216 (Para) Sig Sqn
Capt K. B. Barker	RSS
Capt R. M. Brown	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn
Capt C. N. Cooper BEng (Hons)	37 Sig Regt
Capt N. M. Deacon	15 Sig Regt
Capt S. T. Gillespie	216 (Para) Sig Sqn
Capt R. A. Scott	RSS
Capt J. J. Smith	9 Sig Sqn (Radio)
Lt (A/Capt) W. J. J. Brennan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Lt (A/Capt) T. Inman	HQ R Signals
Lt (A/Capt) D. T. H. Wilson	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ Sig Regt
Lt D. W. Edwards	9 Sig Regt (Radio)
Lt J. I. Heywood	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Lt S. J. Morgan	216 (Para) Sig Sqn
Lt G. G. A. Reith	2 Sig Regt
Lt N. R. Shenow	1 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn (215)

WOs and SNCOs

FEBRUARY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO2 B. J. Alexander	7 Sig Regt
WO2 (FofS) Skelton	259 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 T. W. Comyns	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)
A/WO2 (FofS) J. A. Lockert	264 (UK) Sig Sqn
SSgt T. W. Davies	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
SSgt M. J. Dennis	FSST Germany
SSgt P. B. Goodliff	40 Sig Regt
SSgt S. R. Owen	2 Sig Sqn
SSgt A. R. Yeaman	2 Sig Sqn
SSgt (FofS) Batley	9 Sig Sqn
SSgt (FofS) J. Docherty	600 Sig Tp
Sgt A. B. Dixon	ATR Bassingbourn
Sgt M. M. Evans	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt C. J. Health	CIS Eng Gp, Blandford
Sgt J. Holt	HQ AFCENT
Sgt K. F. McHugh	HQNI & 15 Sig Regt
Sgt A. M. Odell	7 Sig Regt
Sgt J. R. Penrose	30 Sig Regt
Sgt D. J. Pocock	2 Sig Regt
Sgt D. P. Sheerin	21 Sig Regt
Sgt K. Stacey	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt S. Taylor	7 Sig Regt
Sgt J. M. Thorne	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
Sgt D. C. White	225 Sig Sqn
A/Sgt P. R. Anderson	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Sqn Regt
A/Sgt M. J. Smith	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)

MARCH 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 K. C. Hallet	33 Sig Regt (V)
WO1 D. G. Ikin	2 Sig Regt
WO1 M. R. Widdicombe	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)
A/WO1 P. R. Atkinson	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
A/WO1 J. McLachlan	32 Sig Sqn (V)
WO2 P. D. Ashworth	14 Sig Sqn
WO2 S. Carr	215 Sig Sqn, 1 Mech Bde
WO2 M. J. Harvey	BMM Kuwait
WO2 P. J. McInally	600 Sig Tp
A/WO2 P. R. Flemming	16 Sig Regt
A/WO2 J. O. Paterson	71 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt G. Davies	7 Sig Regt
SSgt D. C. Halkett	241 Sig Regt
SSgt R. Lang	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt M. A. Shirley	7 Sig Regt
SSgt K. A. Williams	218 Sig Sqn, 8 Inf Bde
A/SSgt T. J. Lappin	34 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt M. J. Allwork	7 Sig Regt
Sgt P. Barber	213 Sig Sqn, 39 Inf Bde
Sgt A. Burdus	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt P. A. Hay	11 Sig Regt
Sgt M. S. Holden	7 Sig Regt
Sgt D. J. Kirk	7 Sig Regt
Sgt D. Middleton	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt I. W. Moore	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Sgt R. A. Parr	16 Sig Regt
Sgt A. J. G. Powell	9 Sig Regt
Sgt P. J. C. Reeve	HQNI & 15 Sig Regt
Sgt S. Rouse	7 Sig Regt
Sgt S. M. Schofield	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt P. Storey	1 RHA
Sgt G. S. Taner	DST leconfield
Sgt D. Taylor	RSS
Sgt I. S. Wheeler	39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt S. D. Wilkinson	7 Sig Regt
A/Sgt S. Barrass	1 Welsh Guards
A/Sgt A. Bolton	HQNI & 15 Sig Regt
A/Sgt J. Clarke	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/Sgt T. J. Croxon	24 (Airmob)Bde & Sig Sqn (210)
A/Sgt M. R. Harbin	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/Sgt K. L. Parkinson	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt G. C. Welsh	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt

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NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Headquarters Land Command

TALLY HO! AND MIND THE SHELL HOLES

The glamour and excitement of a traditional country hunt was pictured on the edge of Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) recently. Over 30 members of the Royal Artillery Hunt gathered in the village of Orcheston following an invitation from local landowner **Maj Sarah Shepherd** R Signals. 'I've lived here for four years and have lost a lot of ducks to foxes,' said **Maj Sarah Shepherd**, as she welcomed the Hunt.

Maj Sarah Shepherd at the Meet

Maj Jonathan Seed RA, MFH at the Meet

'Hunting out on the Plain is fast and you need a good horse to keep up,' explained former Master, **Lt Col John Jago**. 'You also need a horse that is capable of avoiding all the shell holes, which can make hunting with the RA quite exciting!'

The 90,000 acres of SPTA is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and provides a wonderful wildlife habitat. 'Experience has shown that if any area of Salisbury Plain is not hunted, then foxes can quickly become a serious problem,' said **Maj Jonathan Seed** the Master of the Hunt. 'Ten years ago when hunting was suspended in the Artillery Impact Area, local farmers and residents demanded that hunting should be reinstated there as the fox was using the Impact Area as a safe haven and becoming a real problem to the surrounding area.

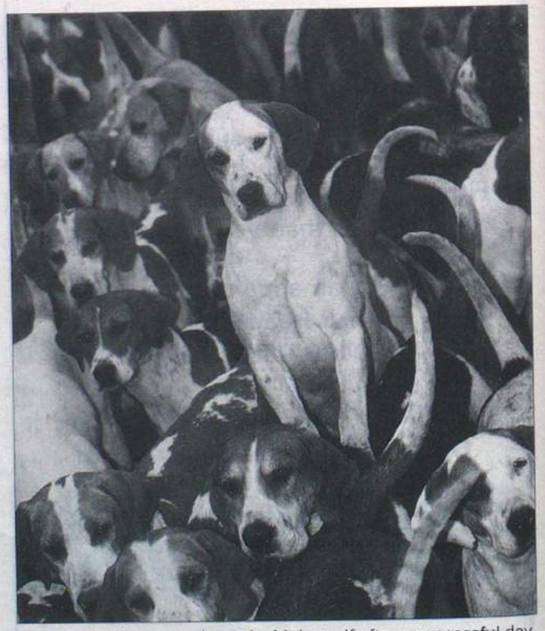
'We are sometimes asked to places where people have been feeding foxes, this creates an even worse problem for poultry keepers as the night they are not fed is the night they start taking poultry. In this situation I have to cull these rogue foxes whereas generally my aim is not to kill every fox but to keep the fox population to a healthy and acceptable level'.

Before the hunt set off from the meet, they were all given the customary stirrup cup–a glass of port. This was designed to set everyone up to jump the four fences leading out on to the Plain. As with all good military events this was preceded by an 'O' group when the Master told the Field what ground he was expecting to cover during the day and gave a range safety brief as the guns were live-firing in some areas that day.

The Master and the two whippers-in, **Bmdr Stuart Sharp** and **Michael Stokes**, wear green coats in recognition that it used to be a harrier hunt that hunted hares. The Field Master wears a red coat and most of the other subscribers wear black coats although it is quite acceptable for people to wear tweed jackets. The Field Master is responsible for looking after the field but he is likely to send you off on point duty or road safety duty if you are caught chatting too loudly at a crucial time. A typical days hunting goes on until dusk–some five or six hours after the Meet. If you or your horse get tired before that, it is etiquette to say 'Good night' to the Master before retiring. This is often simpler said than done if hounds are still hunting when it can prove very difficult to catch up with the Master long enough to speak!

The RA Hunt is run by members of the military in their spare time. It's origins date from the turn of the century when a pack of harriers were given to the officers of the Royal Artillery in Bulford. During the Second World War the Hunt turned from harriers to foxhounds and they reached their 50th year of fox hunting last year. The kennels in Bulford are maintained entirely at private expense, having been erected by private subscription in 1937.

In those days most of the Army guns were pulled by horses. Hunting still provides a change of scene for the ceremonial horses and soldiers and often gives them a new zest for life. This is recognised by all the mounted units and especially the Kings Troop RHA whose horses and men are often seen out with the RA Hunt. The RA Hunt meets twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the season which lasts from September to March. 'We go out of our way to encourage people to come out for a day's hunting', said **Lt Col Nick Hornby**, the Honorary Secretary. 'If anyone would like to find out more I can be contacted at my office on 01985 222328.



Lantern feeling very pleased with herself after a successful day

NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

Headquarters Royal Signals

VISIT BY INDIAN ARMY SOINC TO BLANDFORD

A cold, foggy Britain greeted our special visitors from India when they flew in for an action-packed programme of visits to the Corps and defence industry organisations. **Lt Gen A. J. S. Bhalla ADC**, who heads a Corps of some 80,000 Signals personnel, arrived in the UK on 27th November 1996 accompanied by his wife and **Brig G. K. Nischol**.

Following a visit to DRA Malvern, hosted by **Lt Col John Macfarlane** R Signals and accompanied by ADC **Capt Lisa Giles** R Signals, the Indian officers visited Blandford on 29 November. Having been briefed at HQ R Signals by the SOinC(A) **Brig N. F. Wood** ADC on the latest developments, the party then moved on to Army CIS Engineering Group and the Royal School of Signals.

On 2 December they visited HQ LAND and 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, and relaxed later that evening at a dinner party in HQ Officers' Mess attended by senior serving and retired officers of the R Signals and their wives. Unfortunately bad weather on 3 December cancelled a planned visit to 30 Sig Regt , but some hot planning provided our guests with briefs on Project CASH, UNICOM and SATCOM.

Their visit ended with a trip to Cogent Defence and an evening at the Tower of London! It was a very successful visit which our Indian guests appreciated, and we greatly enjoyed their company and the exchange of ideas and information which ensued.

L-R: Sgt John McNeill, Brig N. Wood, Capt Giles, Lt Gen Bhalla, WO1 (CRSM) Derek Deegan

11 Sig Regt
Blandford

HQ SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj T. Friend**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) R . Snow**

There has been little movement in and out of the Squadron. The 2IC, **Capt Ros Brown** having been with us barely a year is off to pastures new. She is posted to Bletchley and joins 1(RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) (V) in March. Her replacement, **Capt Dave Kenyon**, is already in station and his dog Merlin has already taken up residence in the 2IC's office.

1 SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Paul Rutherford**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Mark Anderson**

The Squadron is, as many of you should already know, one of the Single Entry Soldier Training Sqns, responsible for all the potential upgrading and technicians. In addition to that role the Squadron is also the Receiving Sqn for all arrivals from the ATR's. We then look after everyone of them through their Basic Signalling Skills course and their Driver Training. This of course is not a continuous process for the majority and waiting times can be anything from a few days to a few months, and maybe more for anyone who fails to pass a particular section of their training. This has caused the HUGE Tp known to all as Charlie Tp to be formed and to continue to grow, and they continue to look at many initiatives to gainfully employ soldiers who in all respects are not yet fully formed.

This Squadron undoubtedly offers the permanent staff the challenge of a lifetime. How many people do you know that have worked in Troops of up to 500-600 soldiers in strength. If you think you are up to being a role model for the new generation of the Royal Corps of Signals then get your posting preferences in now. Anyway enough recruitment for now, time to say a farewell from the Squadron, the Corps and the Army to **Capt John Dakin** who is now gone off to Civ Div, we wish him the very best of Luck. We also say a sad farewell to **Cpl Dave Parkes** as he is transferring to the AGC, we wish him and his family the very best of luck.

VISIT OF LT COL M. J. M. SWAN CD ROYAL CANADIAN REGT.

Lt Col Swan visited the Regiment to check that we were looking after one of his fellow Canadians properly, and he concluded that we were working **Maj Paul Rutherford** far too hard. 1 Sqn marked the occasion with the Cadre photo.

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO1 Martin George**

Charlie Tp as you all know from the last few months instalments is what only can be described as the melting pot of the future generation of the Corps and is as ever in transition from monster Troop to a manageable progression for all phase two soldiers. In short, the Troop is not smaller but the wheel has been reinvented and policies are written to manage the Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training, in a positive and constructive, not to mention progressive manner. Nothing out of the norm for Charlie Tp this time apart from the few defections of the Tp Comd, **Lt Paul Atkinson** to stand in as the 2IC Sqn, until **Capt Dakin** is replaced and of **SSgt Smurthwaite** to the new Alpha Tp.

EXERCISE GRID IRON

Members of Charlie Tp yet again under the guidance of **SSgt Garry Smurthwaite** set out on their expedition, this time into the frozen wastes of Snowdonia. The snow had been falling, leaving the ascent no longer the easy Sunday afternoon stroll that it would be in the summer. **SSgt Smurthwaite** and **Sgt John Reid** with 12 young soldiers from Charlie Tp set out up the Watkin path to the South side of the range, and were soon into three foot of driving snow and wind. After a difficult afternoon it was time to make camp and all they had to do was to dig down to find the ground before their tent pegs would stay in (Good advice given to the party by **Sig Gaber**). Day two was an attempt on the Summit (Snowdon that is, not Everest), no mean feat never the less when the snow is up to the waist, and when met by two mountain rescuers who said they had failed to make the summit, we thought it prudent to try another day.

3 (PENNEY) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Dave Lumb**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell**

PARACHUTING IN NETHERAVON
by AT Boyle

On the first weekend of November, 30 Apprentices from 3 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt, volunteered to attend a weekend's parachuting course in Netheravon, Wiltshire. The weekend was organised by **Lt John Torrell** and **Lt Paul Jones**, who also accompanied the group for the duration of the course. The Saturday consisted of basic training, mock exits from aircraft, a briefing on the parachute we would be using and the round reserve chute we would have to deploy if any problems arose. We also had to practice our emergency drills in suspended harnesses which was rather painful as we dangled from the ceiling. On the Sunday we were to exit a perfectly serviceable aircraft at the dizzy height of 3500 feet. To round off Saturday's events there was a social gathering of both instructors and pupils with some lively conversation and a few drinks at the bar. On returning to our accommodation ie the tents, **AT Harvie** thought he would practice his freefall onto a tent as the people inside slept, they weren't too amused.

Unfortunately, on Sunday it was far too windy for us to do our parachute jump, and although disappointed, we all thoroughly enjoyed the course and can't wait to do our first jump in the near future.

After note: All but a few have now completed their jump.

Sig Taylor demonstrating 'Snowball Catching'

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO1 Billy Ogden**

Alpha Tp has been reformed as the arrival of **WO1 Billy Ogden**, gave us the increase of management to take over the responsibilities of an external activities cell. Therefore, **SSgt Garry Smurthwaite** has moved again but still in his capacity as the SATT's adventure training co-ordinator and now **WO1 Ogden** is the overall manager of external activities including the Satisfied Soldier detachments.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO1 John Grandison**

Bravo Tp is the Trade Training Tp for all Technicians both basic and upgraders, and things are busy but fortunately a bit more stable than most Troops due to the length of the courses. A 'congratulations' is in order for **SSgt Dave Cummings** on his selection for promotion to WO

(L to R): AT Cpl Lee, AT LCpl Foster, AT Lamont, AT LCpl Cowley, AT LCpl 'Gita' Wood

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS FUNCTION
by AT Dolan

3 Sqn ended what's been a busy year for the apprentices with the annual Christmas bash. The party got off to a good start with a delicious buffet, after which everyone sat down to enjoy a hypnotist show, the hypnotist announced herself as **Mrs P. McKenna,** I think that she has been watching too much TV!! Most of the volunteers went under quite quickly apart from **AT Lamont** and **WO2 (SSM) Udell** who had to rejoin the audience as the rest fell asleep. However, **AT Meikle** who was sitting in the audience managed to go under and had to be rescued by **Mrs McKenna**. The show was most entertaining with the acts varying from the famous balloon dance to the X-ray glasses. **AT** 'Studdly' **Beardsley** won a prize for being the most entertaining male of the night, his conversation with **AT** 'Gilbert' **Postlethwaite** in the familiar language of Zogg was outstanding. The most entertaining female of the night was **AT Snell** who's headbanging laugh and erotic shaking of the hips impressed all.

The Xmas raffle also went down well with plenty of expensive prizes and lots of happy winners, all due to **AT Sgt** 'Bimbo' **Verrall** and **AT Cpl** 'Bruce' **Lee**'s excellent work in organising it.

The night finished with a comedy band, incorporating a few funny sketches in their singing, but I still have not managed to understand why they kept trying to show us their large beer guts. Overall the apprentices and permanent staff of 3 Sqn enjoyed the night and celebrated Christmas in style.

Snow Whites Corner *(L to R):* AT LCpl 'Grumpy' Marsh, AT 'Doc' Heath, AT 'Sleepy' Crawley, AT 'Happy' Tucker, AT 'Dopey' Flavell

SCOTT TROOP
EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP
TWO DAYS IN THE LIFE OF AN APPRENTICE
by AT 'Brum' Burford

SCRAMBLING

The group set off from Capel Curig Camp at about 9.00 am and we arrived at the bottom of Triffan at about 10.00 am. The group was looking forward to the scramble that they had ahead of them. A few of the group were a little worried about the climb as they were scared of heights. The group was led by **Cpl Mick Anderson** with the help of **Sgt** 'Jock' **Reed** and also tagging along for the scramble was **Maj Lumb**. I was hoping that I would make it to the summit in one piece and then back down again on the other side. I found myself in a few scary situations perched on ledges which were very icy should you slip you could get badly hurt. When we finally reached the summit, the group was very happy as we had made it to the summit in one piece. **Cpl Anderson** had decided to take us up the hard routes to make the day more adventurous.

When we reached the summit we stopped for a short time to have some lunch. After we had finished lunch I was tasked to lead the group down the mountain. This was difficult as there wasn't a definite route down the mountain side. Going down the mountain was a lot more exciting as we started sliding down on the ice. The highlight of the day was when **Maj Lumb** was walking down the mountain side and lost his footing and slid into some rocks. Then the rest of the group decided to slide down except for **AT** 'Flapper' **Knight** who had had an accident the day before when he slid down the mountain and it was only the second lot of rocks which stopped him, so he was in a bit of a panic. We finally reached the bottom and then had a short walk to the car park and then went to a cafe for some scran.

(L to R): AT McKenzie, AT Johnson

(L to R): AT Mathie, AT Thorpe 170, Cpl Anderson

CLIMBING
by AT 'Flappy' **Knight**

The group set off on the Thursday morning to the Beacon Climbing Centre Cavern, led by **SSgt Morris** and **LCpl Thomas**. We entered the building and proceeded to hire out some 'stickers' to ensure maximum grip for our feet on the climbing wall. We then went downstairs to the climbing walls and started our day's activities. **SSgt Morris** then instructed us in the basics of rock climbing on artificial walls. We started on the below-head-height walls working on the various 'problems' of the different coloured grips. Then the OC, **Maj Lumb** arrived to supervise the activity briefly and even attempted some of the problems himself. The simple stuff was over and the ropes and harnesses came out. We then did some top roping enabling us to climb higher with safety. The OC had an attempt at this then waved us goodbye and we were freed from his watchful eye.

We now went onto the large walls where we started off top roping and some brave souls attempted the more difficult walls with overhangs clipping their ropes as they went along. Eventually **LCpl Thomas** got his chance and borrowed someone's stickers and harness to have a go at one of the more difficult walls–and fell off on his first attempt but went again

and succeeded. It was a good day's activity and **ATs McKenzie** and 'Jemima' **Johnson** showed their aptitude at the sport whilst others stood and watched or went on the lower walls again. At the end of the day everyone had enjoyed themselves greatly and had learned something, either about climbing or themselves.

AT Sherrington

SPORTS

INTER SQUADRON BOXING–9 DECEMBER 1996

Gordan Banks, **Kris Akabusi**, **Guy Whittingham** and **Gareth Archer** are all ex-Royal Signals soldiers who have gone forward to fame and fortune due to their sporting prowess. If that Monday night in December is anything to go by, there may be a few more young men who will be walking that same path to glory.

SSgt Andy Slack and **SSgt Dave Stewart** trained their volunteers in their own time and are highly praised for their sacrifice in getting together two formidable boxing teams. The night started with 1 Sqn having a seven point lead due to their successes in the preliminaries. The packed Gymnasium then erupted as the first of the boxers were introduced, each escorted to the ringside by Apprentice drummers, the cacaphony abated momentarily while the MC for the evening, **WO1 RSM D. A. Sacree** introduced the pugilists. In the Featherweight category, **Sig Pyrah** of 2 Sqn beat **Sig Kemp** also of 2 Sqn after the Referee stopped fight in the second round. 2 Sqn continued to cut away at the lead 1 Sqn had built up as **Sig Dawson** beat **Sig Bruce** from 1 Sqn after the Referee stopped the fight in the third. **Sig Foster** then fought **Sig Taylor** also of 2 Sqn and won by a unanimous decision and as a former international Kick-boxer showed that he is a most promising boxer.

After the interval the competition continued and some cracking bouts brought the lively crowd to fever pitch. **Sig Chester** v **Sig Chapple**'s bout earned a standing ovation for their efforts and **Sig Chapple** was rewarded with the best runner up prize. Finally to the eagerly awaited match but also sadly the last bout. The evening came to its perfect conclusion. As near hysteria swept through the arena, the last of the boxers marched proudly into the forum to the beat of the snare drum. The two Sergeant Majors bristled with pride as their representatives were introduced, 'Seconds out' World War III with gloves. Despite the result of the competition now no longer in the balance **Sig Bracken** launched a fierce attack on the eight years his senior **Sig Hopkinson**. His 'Mike Tyson' style of boxing left **Sig Hopkinson** stunned and the Referee was forced to stop the fight after two minutes into the first round.

The commentary cannot reflect the sheer effort put in by the competitors. Later, they were invited to a few drinks in the HQ Sgts Mess and as the competitors nursed the bruises and batter marks from their evenings exploits you could sense how proud they were of themselves and left us in no doubt that they enjoyed the whole event.

VOLLEYBALL

3 (UK) DIVISION MAJOR, MINOR, AND WOMEN'S INTER UNIT VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS 1997

After a great deal of practice and training, the men's and women's Volleyball teams arrived, on a very cold Thursday 30 January, at the Metropolis that is Larkhill. We were pitched against four teams in the men's competition and the women had two teams to beat. The standard was extremely high, the RAC Centre, Bovington had five Army players including the Army captain. The women's biggest challenge would be the AGC Centre, again numerous Army level players and a well drilled side, would ensure a hard fought match.

The men were playing exceptionally good volleyball and had used the first two teams to iron out tactics and remove some of the pressure. By the time it came to playing the RAC Centre the team were quietly confident and mentally prepared for the type of play they would encounter. As suspected, as soon as the big hitters started to be blocked the School team were able to settle down into their own game, this resulted in the School taking the first set. By the second set the RAC centre had calmed down and regained their composure. In a very close and hard fought slog the School lost 15-13. In the third and final set the contest became frenzied. The School fell foul of the Rally Point system and lost by a narrow margin, eventually losing the match two sets to one. The men's team finished second overall. The Women's team were in excellent form and decimated both of the opposition teams, without losing a single set, to finish in first place.

The end result was that the Royal School of Signals have a men's and women's team going forward to the Army finals in April . . . WATCH THIS SPACE!!

Royal School of Signals Men's Volleyball Team

Royal School of Signals Women's Volleyball Team

NETBALL

Netball in the Regiment has been going from strength to strength under the watchful eye of **SSgt Ann Adams**. From the success of third place at the Army Netball Association Open Competition, the Regt Team came second in the 3 (UK) Div Championships. Their final game was against our old sparring partners in all Div sporting events–the AGC centre, Worthy Down. This was to be the deciding match and a very close fought game ensued, with the lead switching from one to the other the whole time. Unfortunately the AGC scored the crucial winning goal that secured their place in the Army finals. The team were obviously disappointed at having been pipped at the post.

CO 11 Sig Regt with the Regimental Netball Team
Back row (*L-R*): SSgt Adams, Sig Burtenshaw, Lt Col L. A. Relph, Capt R. M. Brown, AT Torode
Front row (*L-R*): SSgt Richards, Sig Davies, ATLCpl Limbert, Sig Westrop, Sig Portlock

INTER CORPS NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS–18 JANUARY

There is no rest for the wicked!–14 girls from the Regiment were selected for the Corps Squad, to take part in the Inter Corps on Saturday the 18 January at Aldershot. The 11 Sig Regt contingent travelled up on the Friday night and received a warm welcome from everyone at Hemmersley Barracks, who had all obviously been briefed that a minibus of netball players was staying the night! After a carbo-loading pizza and an early-ish night the teams were ready for the competition ahead.

The tournament was based on a round robin where every team played every other. The A teams of the AGC and RLC were the teams to beat and we knew that those games would be tougher than the rest. The honours were shared and pride was left intact for the R Signals A v B match. Although the B team would have enjoyed beating the A team it was not to be and there was a low scoring 3–3 draw! Congratulations go to the A team, captained by **Capt Ros Brown** who came third, behind the RLC and AGC A teams respectively. The B Team was captained by another 11 Sig Regt member, **Cpl Jackie McCorry**, and they came eighth. Six members of the Squad were selected for the Army Squad, five of which are at Blandford. They are **Capt Jules Walster**, **Capt Ros Brown**, **AT Wendy Torode**, **Sig Julie Portlock**, and **Sig Jane Robinson**.

Hopefully when the girls are posted on to their new units after their training at Blandford they will be able to continue their netball. The Corps Team and Army Netball will be in good hands providing the enthusiasm and momentum is maintained once the soldiers are posted onto the field Army. Those interested in getting involved, or wanting information should get in touch with the Corps Netball Secretary, **Capt Jules Walster**, who is working at Blandford in SORLS

Royal Signals Netball A Team
Back row (*L-R*): SSgt Sue King (15 Sig Regt), AT Wendy Torode, Capt Ros Brown (Capt)
Front row (*L-R*): Sig Julie Portlock, AT LCpl Jess Limbert, Sig Jane Robinson, SSgt Lindsey Manktelon
(15 Sig Regt–not shown)

BAND TOUR TO CYPRUS 1996

By Drum Major (Cpl) Miles Nipper

As a result of 'Options for Change' the number of bands, and the number of musicians employed, in the Army has been greatly reduced. Specific Regiments, and in some cases specific Corps, no longer had their own band permanently attached. The Band of The Royal Corps of Signals 'escaped' with only a reduction in personnel. However, the change from Regimental to Divisional bands, means that there is now no band deployed to Cyprus with the duty Regiment. Instead, there is a Band Plot roulement system now in place for Cyprus, RMA Sandhurst and others. From September to December 1996 it was the turn of the Corps Band to supply musical support to all British forces in Cyprus.

The tour started on 12 September with the arrival at a blistering Akrotiri of the main party led by the Director of Music, **Maj David Wall**. The fact that the six tons of instruments, music, uniforms and other assorted equipment necessary for a tour of this magnitude was already there and unloaded, was in itself something of a miracle. **Sgt Martin Hancock** had managed to get all the kit organised and packed after a stressful and frantic few hours following the last agricultural show of the summer. (Think of what cows leave behind for motor-cyclists and bandsmen to march through!!) Everything was packed in MFO boxes, manifest forms filled-in in SEPTLICATE and finally removed to the care of the RAF. They then flew it to Cyprus where it was unpacked by the advance party of: **WO2 (BSM) Russell Duckworth**, **SSgt Phil Doyle**, **LCpl John Bilby** and **Musn Lee Singleton**, using blunt knives in the absence of screwdrivers to open the 31 boxes.

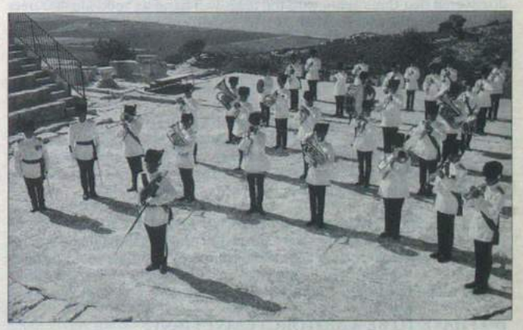
The band was accommodated in Episkopi by the resident battalion of The Royal Gloucestershire Berkshire & Wiltshire Regt. The SNCOs living in a tin hut reminiscent of the TV series TENKO! but everyone else in comparative luxury! As everyone travelling to or working in hot countries knows, it is essential to have a period of acclimatisation in order to reduce the risk of heat related illnesses. This is a luxury never afforded to musicians though and the band found itself pounding up and down HAPPY VALLEY stadium in very hot conditions, only one night after arriving, for the Episkopi Garrison fete. The band performed three short marching sequences and for the Finale were joined by I RGBW's Corps of Drums.

Over the following three months members of the band were to become very familiar with the valley, in particular the beach and the water-sports club. From then on the tour took on the appearance of another day at the office, periods of intense activity interspersed with long periods of waiting and even longer periods of travelling. All of this of course in an unfamiliar 30 degrees of heat. (Just like Public Duties in 1995!). There were too many engagements to be able to mention everyone. It would be better to mention the various combinations that the band now puts out on these engagements and some of the work they undertook.

The Dance Band played in various high class hotels including the Elias Beach in Limassol and the Coral Beach in Paphos. They also backed **Jim Davidson** during his visit to forces on the island. The two Brass Quintets were kept very busy playing for various units, including 9 Sig Regt and UNFICYP throughout the tour. These engagements range from mess nights to church services. The tour also saw the first performances from the Wind Quintet which played for church services at 9 Sig Regt and also at a cocktail party there. The Saxophone Quartet was also seen out and about, most notably playing one fine morning under the Director of Music's bedroom window in the Officer's Mess Episkopi, prior to the Officers Pension Fund meeting. The clarinet quartet was also busy on the smaller, quieter occasions. The band was also present at the start and finish of the Cyprus Walkabout Orienteering Competition. As the start was held at 0630 the lack of light and organisers foresight meant that the band only played a couple of numbers before all the competitors had departed and because of another engagement at Air House, there was only a Brass group available for the finish.

This cocktail party on the lawn at Air House is possibly the most memorable engagement the band has done in many long years. At 1611 on 9 October, during the march 'Seventeen come Sunday' (part of Vaughan Williams's Folk Song Suite), there was an earthquake. It started with a very loud rumbling noise, then the ground started to move about. The noise got even louder and you could hear the windows in the house shaking. At this point the Bandmaster (**WO1 (BM) Kevin Davies**) was seen to stop conducting, lean on his music-stand and say (allegedly) 'That's one brandy sour too many!'. In best 'Carry on up the Khyber' style the band played on, before eventually grinding to a stop. (Except for the Tuba player **LCpl Simon Stember** who continued playing because, 'I just thought it was one of my funny turns'). By now the ground was actually jumping up and down; the carefully manicured lawn was rippling beneath our feet and the legs of chairs and music-stands sank into the soil. Everyone was looking at the house as it shook, swayed and creaked. The locals all dropped to the ground and held hands. After what seemed like an eternity, but was in fact only one minute, the noise stopped and the shaking and jolting of the ground subsided. Another round of drinks was served to the guests and the band played on.

It turned out that the earthquake had an epicentre (a point on the surface of the earth above the site of the initial shock) 32km off the coast at Paphos and an estimated focal depth (the actual depth at which it originated) of between 5 and 10km. Damage across the island was severe but there was only one death associated with the event. (Full details can be obtained from the author, a student of geology.) As if an earthquake was not enough, the following day Cyprus endured a tropical-like storm, complete with pink lightning and walnut-sized hailstones and two-foot deep tidal-waves surging down the strip in Limassol.



After all this excitement it was nice to take some R+R at the half-way point of the tour. Some of the band took the opportunity to take cruises to the Holy-Land and Egypt while others explored the island itself. Most (if not quite all) spent a considerable amount of the three months appreciating the wines, cuisine and Carlsberg on offer everywhere. After the R+R period it was back to work as usual. It was a personal pleasure to work with 39 Regt RA on their UN medal parade in November at the Ledra

Palace Hotel in Nicosia. UN Medals were presented to the Regiment (including the two soldiers injured in cross-border fighting in June) by the UN Force Commander, Commander British Forces Cyprus, Commander UK Land Forces and the British High Commissioner for Cyprus. After the medal parade the band performed a short retreat ceremony that culminated in Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. The Regiment wanted lots of thunder-flashes and mortars to go off during this but due to Turkish-Greek tensions at the time it was decided that fireworks and one big bang would have to do. The tie-in of music and pyrotechnics was undertaken by the Bandmaster (who seemed to quite enjoy it).

Remembrance weekend followed this and it was also the time to put away the rather comfortable white uniforms that we had been wearing up to now and return to the rather thicker(!) woollen(!) scarlet tunics so familiar to everyone who has seen the band. Although even in November the temperature was still well up in the twenties Celsius! Remembrance saw the band once again split-up across the island. With the Bandmaster in charge at Curium and Episkopi, the Director of Music took the rest of the band to Dekhalia and Ayios Nikolas for services on Sunday and Monday. There was also a Brass group in Nicosia for the UN contingent's Service of Remembrance.

The Cyprus tour was the last for the Drum Major **SSgt Barry Cornforth** who retires shortly after a full and colourful career, but as one leaves so another appears. On a less busy day **Musn Steve Spicer**, who had only been with the band a few months prior to leaving for Cyprus, was presented with prizes for clarinet playing he had won as a pupil at the Army School of Music, Kneller Hall. **Steve** is from Blandford and is the youngest member of the band.

On November 28 after a further recent but not so severe earthquake the main party returned to a freezing RAF Lyneham. The coach was at Brize Norton, and so was the fog, so there followed a wait of some time before finally being reunited with families and friends before returning to all the pre-Christmas Officer's Mess dinners at which the band is always needed. A small rear-party, under the command of the Bandmaster and **SSgt Kelvin Bryant** remained in Cyprus (sitting on the beach in December is not recommended in Dorset). They did find time to play at the opening of a new branch of Marks & Spencer in Limassol though.

Earthquakes, storms, sweltering heat and bitter cold not withstanding, all in all it was a successful and different tour. The Corps Band completes many tours but usually for shorter periods, usually the longest tour undertaken is the annual tour to Germany. It was therefore something of a challenge for all members of the band and of course their families back in Blandford. It was a challenge that was met, as usual, with humour and professionalism by all concerned. 9 Sig Regts hospitality certainly deserves thanks, but there are too many people to thank individually for help received during our stay in Cyprus but if you are reading this and you were one of them, Thank you. (9 Sigs Go-Kart Club in particular did not seem to mind **LCpl Mick Gibbs'** attempts to write-off their prized karts.)

In 1997 the band is expecting to visit, amongst it's normal commitments to the UK and Germany, the USA. The coming year looks like being as busy as ever. Watch this space!

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT JOINING THE MOST FAMOUS MOTORCYCLE TEAM IN THE WORLD

WHAT ARE THE WHITE HELMETS?

The Royal Signals White Helmets celebrate their 70th Anniversary this year and continue to be recognised as the oldest, most famous and accomplished display team in the world. Formed in 1927 as a combined display of horsemanship and motorcycle riding skills by Royal Signals despatch riders it has evolved, over the years, to become a display involving motorcycles only and adopted the name **The White Helmets** in 1963. Today's 35 minute display comprises a unique mixture of fast crossover rides, spectacular jumps and skilful balancing feats. The team enjoys an extremely high profile at major outdoor events throughout the UK and Germany with regular appearances on TV and at the Royal Tournament.

WHY DO WE HAVE THE WHITE HELMETS?

The White Helmets display is both a tribute to the skill and courage of the Royal Signals despatch riders of the past, plus a reflection of the versatility and personal qualities of the modern Royal Signals soldier today. The team are a major interface between the general public and the Corps, stimulating interest in the Army in general and the Royal Signals in particular. As such it acts as a terrific recruiting tool, keeping the Corps firmly in the public eye.

HOW LONG IS A TOUR WITH THE TEAM?

Each team member would expect to complete a three year tour as a White Helmet. Anything less would not allow individuals to progress through the various skills, culminating in their participating in the most difficult tricks/rides in their third year.

DOES A TOUR WITH THE TEAM REPRESENT A CAREER FOUL?

There is a lot of stigma attached to this question. In short, no! No volunteer is permitted to progress through the selection system once it is discovered that three years with the team will harm an individuals career prospects. Whilst with the team, the opportunity to attend career courses is made available during the out of season period, normally October to February. One thing is for sure, after three years as a White Helmet, individuals return to their units better all round soldiers.

DO THE TEAM EMPLOY WOMEN?

The present Team Captain is **Capt Lisa Giles**! Question answered. Unfortunately no other women has been successful on the selection course, although several have tried. Providing a candidate measures up to the high standards and physical demands required, there is no reason in principle why a woman should not succeed as a White Helmet.

DOES EVERYBODY HAVE TO DO ALL THE TRICKS?

As explained earlier, riders are expected to progress through the various skills over a period of time culminating in performing the more difficult tricks/rides in the third year. First year riders generally stick to relatively simple tricks, like hanging on!

DO I HAVE TO BE A MOTORCYCLIST FIRST?

No. Most members of the team had never ridden previously. Once you show the aptitude on selection, we will teach you what is required.

WHAT DO YOU ASK OF ME?

The prime requirement is commitment and team spirit. In addition you will need to be reasonably fit, determined and have a certain amount of courage. A sense of humour and ability to laugh at yourself is vital.

WHAT DO YOU OFFER IN RETURN?

A lot of hard work, some bruising and battering, some very unsociable hours, many weeks away from barracks, lots of travel, an opportunity to test and extend yourself, a little bit of fame and glory, membership for life of a unique, world famous team and possibly the most rewarding and enjoyable three years of your entire service career.

WHAT DO I DO NOW IF I AM INTERESTED?

Simply complete the proforma (p103) and return it to the Team Secretary. When we start recruiting later in the year we will write to you personally and provide you with an individual application form which will require processing through your unit. Returning the proforma commits you to nothing but it does register you on our books to receive individual attention. Alternatively, if you are in the Blandford area, call into the team office and introduce yourself. If the team are in barracks you can have a look around and meet a few personalities. What have you got to lose.... ?

On returning from the festive break the team has embarked with a vengeance on some pre-season training...with a difference. Due to a couple of collisions which now means **LCpl** ''Lance' **Malin** has a slightly bigger than normal 'thumbs up', **LCpl** ''Mr Bean' **Hankin** is a one armed bandit and **Sig** ''Gaz' **Ryder** indulges in the use of walking aids, a different mode of transport has been introduced. I Sqn, 11 Sig Regt were approached and 12 pink mountain bikes were signed out. Members of the Team donned black balaclavas, lest they be recognised. On the airfield they peddled furiously, cutting in and out at closing speeds of, well, at least 9mph. The aim was achieved, despite one collision, which on a Triumph would have resulted in battered and bruised men and machines and the opening and closing rides are now well out of their infancy.

The inclement weather has not, however, assisted training intentions. When wind and rain threaten to overturn even the most secure of balance acts, the Team keep themselves busy by maintaining the bikes; a never ending task, and by ensuring that there are enough qualified drivers to move the truck, trailer and coach from one end of the country to the other. Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Scratchy' **Downton**, **Sig** 'Scotty' **Eccott** and **Sig** 'Gaz' **Ryder** on passing their C+E tests first time and **Sig** 'Itchy' **Teague** for getting it right on 'Go number 2'. Additionally, thanks to our friendly MT, we hope that our selected potential coach drivers will soon be armed with the relevant qualifications.

Out of the show season, LCpl 'Taff' Jenkins finds the time to read the final chapter of 'Gone with the Wind'

NEWS FROM BOSNIA

MND (SW) HQ & Sig Sqn (200)

OPERATION LODESTAR

SHQ

Sqn Comd	**Maj Jim Richardson**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Kev Jones**

THE MOVE TO BANJA LUKA

Our two months in sleepy Sipovo finally came to an end and we were forced to move north to Banja Luka Metal Factory–our home for the remainder of the tour. The transition to SFOR is now complete and with it we have inherited a rather large Divisional Headquarters–and funnily enough a lot more work.

In the New Year we said farewell in splendid style to **Maj Tony** 'Morphetus' **Morphet** who moves on to be COS 1 Sig Bde in Rhiendahlen. Congratulations to him and his wife, **Katrin** on the birth of their twin daughters in January. Our new OC is **Maj Jim Richardson** and we warmly welcomed him and his wife **Paula** to the Squadron. Hopefully the Squadron won't have any more six month tours of Bosnia or else he might as well consider taking up permanent residency here!

THE 'SPLIT LO'S'

Slipper City has not changed much from Op Grapple days, that is until **WO2 (SSM) Mark Tivey** and his 'A Team' rocked up. They have been seen on numerous occasions running around like headless chickens looking after R and R and duty flights, compassionates and visiting officers. Despite the long hours there have still been several sightings of the 'A Team' in a popular pizza parlour in Trogir. From several reports we hear a stay in Divulje Barracks is guaranteed to be a pleasant one.

PART ONE ORDERS FROM THE 'DIVISIONAL UAO'

After finally settling in and beginning to run smoothly, the Unit Admin Office, moved from Sipovo to Banja Luka to find that the Brigade had ballooned into a Div, therefore increasing our workload by 50%. After much clutching at straws, throwing of teddies and hard work things are now beginning to stabilise. This will be a short period of stability however, as it is shortly handover/takeover time (207 Sig Sqn–Hello!!). The UAO Team is currently as follows; **SSgts Mac McFadden** and **Mark Davidson**, **Cpls Mark Fairbairn** and **Billy Flanagan** and **LCpl** 'Not Taff' **Wainwright**. We welcome to the fold our recently arrived RAO–**Capt Steve Skidmore** who has the luck of leaving when we depart despite the fact that he's only just got here! We also welcome **Cpl Rob Lavers** from Rear as we bid farewells to **Cpl Pete** 'Grandad' **Howes**, **Cpl Andy** 'Pointy Head' **Berrill** and **LCpl Craig** 'Arthur Tour' **Johnston**, thanks for all your help boys and good luck!

The Chief Clerk collaborated with **Maj Jody Probert** from the HQ staff to write a hilarious Christmas Play which started off as a 10 minute skit and turned into 2½ hour epic! Various characters were assassinated and worst hit were the outgoing OC, our RSM, **SSgt Steve Bovan** and the Chief Clerk himself. All was delivered as one huge Boxing Day Punch in the best possible taste and the Chief Clerk is happy to say that he has not been sacked as a consequence! A great effort was produced by all involved and brilliant performances were displayed by a novice cast especially; **Cpls Wayne Dunbar**, **Simon Wareham** and **Tony Stead**, **LCpl Craig Johnston**, **Sigs** 'Brummie' **Nicholls** and **Craig Straughan**. Pictorial evidence is enclosed to embarrass our budding thespians.

The Main Team Players enjoy their Christmas Breakfast!

King Razzmanus skillfully played by SSgt Mac McFadden

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Dave Seymour**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Tony Taylor**

The Troop is now scattered around the four corners of MND (SW) AOR, with a fair few back in either UK or Germany enjoying some well earned R & R. Since the move from Sipovo (the glory days), the Troop has grown to number nearly 70. Each day seems to bring with it a new face and the changes in manpower are too numerous to mention. We prepare to welcome back **Sig** 'Buzz' **Bury** who lasted minutes few in civvy street before deciding to rejoin. He will be able to share a few war stories with **LCpl Crowder** (who flies in as a Battle Casualty Replacement for **Sig Honeywell,** on their flight from Germany. We thank **2Lt Mark Chambers** for furthering the myth about officers and maps during his short but memorable attachment to the Troop, whether the RLC are quite so grateful after he bogged in one of their DROPs vehicles on the wrong track is rather more doubtful.

We now have 5 rebros and 4 rear link detachments that keeps our resup team, headed up by **2Lt** 'Bill of Bosnia' **Holbrook**, extremely busy. His more than able assistants, the armoured farmers (or Ant Hill Mob), also double up as the Commander's Warrior crew. **LCpls Goodman**, **Johnston** and **Warner** continue to bring morale as well as mail and rations to all whom they visit. Four of the rebros live comfortably in their winterised hill top sites, where their main concern appears to be whether the Sky TV is working. RRB 21E, on the other hand, exist out of one corimec with no running water, no AC power and surrounded by derelict houses. **Sig Burns** was, however, heard to comment that it was just like home.

The four rear link detachments all have their own appeal, although they are still waiting to find it at CZECHBAT. During their time together at CANBAT, **LCpl Don Garner** and **Sig Montgomery** hatched their great plan to overload the Forces Postal Service, one letter to the *Daily Mirror* and hundreds of replies later, **LCpl Garner** now knows how he will spend his R & R. **Sig Moss** has now jumped on the bandwagon and is also helping to delay everyone else's mail, whether **Sig Goodacre**'s letter, typed at the dead of night in SYSCON has the same results is rather more doubtful.

Meanwhile, back at the factory, the arrival of the new Sqn Comd brought with it the exercising of armoured Tac HQ. On their first overnight deployment onto a local range, they were called upon to send two real time sighting reports of T55s also exercising in the area! **2Lt Holbrook** was left wishing he had packed his TAM nearer the top of his unfeasibly large Bergen. For the deployment, **Cpl Dixon** handed over the reins of the Radio Room to **LCpl Michelle Greenslade**, who promptly set about giving the Scots Dragoon Guards a few pieces of comms advice. **Sig Mickey Devlin** was left to hold the fort in the troop stores, whilst **Cpl Louie** 'Benetto' **Plested** continued to pretend he was some sort of expert on the warrior's gunnery system–and no **Capt** 'Big Nose' **Boyne** the turret does not fall off if you rotate it more than five times in one direction.

To close, just a few announcements, **LCpl** 'Comms Doctor' **Thompson**'s surgery is currently being held in the Metal Factory with Comms Doctor Jnr **Sig** 'Noblet' **Noble** also available for consultation. The

sun is currently shining in Banja Luka after six weeks of life as the cloud people. Perhaps now air and aviation will start to earn their pay. And finally, after much speculation as to what SFOR stands for, we can now confirm that contrary to popular belief, it actually stands for STAB FORCE in recognition of the vast numbers of volunteer territorials in theatre and not stabilisation force as previously thought.

THE SET UP OF REBRO 21F
by **Cpl Louie Plested**

On the 23 November 1996, a team of five soldiers from Comms Tp set out on the task of providing a rebro station on a hilltop at a place called Vitrenik, situated 1645m above sea level on the Federation side of the Inter Entity Boundary Line. The team comprised of **LCpl Tom** 'Forest Gump' **Anscomb**, **LCpl Mike Parke** (Tech), **Sigs Dave Dowson** and **Phil** 'Apprentice RSM' **Gray** and myself, as commander. We departed in one of the recently arrived BV 206 over-snow vehicles on what should have been a 72 hour task. It ended some six days later following some of the worst snow storms that Bosnia had ever experienced.

We arrived at the MALCON Base of the Malaysian Army just outside the town of Livno. We had been informed that MALBAT had an established rebro already on the hill and they provided us with two guides to show us the way to the Vitrenik because the summit lay somewhere above the low clouds. We began the climb but as we did the track began to disappear as the high winds produced near white out conditions. We finally made it to the summit, having recovered a Croatian and his Lada 4x4 en route. What we found there was a building which looked like something out of the film 'The Thing'. As we looked around the building we found that every window and door had been either removed or destroyed and there was a massive hole in the roof, where it looked as if the place had been shelled during the conflict.

We decided to set up a dismounted rebro detachment in a 9 x 9 tent inside one of the rooms that had been boarded up by the co-located Malaysian crew. We then set about bringing up the rest of the kit and equipment which we had left at the Livno base camp. Unfortunately, the weather had changed for the worst and having just finished a tour of Norway with 249 Sig Sqn, I was well aware of the need to get all the equipment up the hill before last light. Whilst moving down from the summit, we lost the track completely and the BV 206 got bogged in. After several attempts at self recovery the vehicle ended up on its side and we ended up walking back up to the summit, man-packing any equipment we could manage. The remaining kit was left until we could get in contact with the Malaysians in Livno who had a fleet of BV 206s that they used for resupply of the Vitrenik. So the first night was spent with half the crew at the top and the other half left down in Livno.

The next day, the weather conditions improved 100% and the Malaysians sent up three BV206s with the rest of our equipment. By 1700hrs, on 25 November, callsign 21F was up and running on the Brigade Command Net at last.

The following four days were to prove just as eventful with **2Lt Bill Holbrook** and his trusty resup crew trying to resupply the site using the last of our BVs (by this stage the other two had been bogged in on the Viterog in similar conditions) and the help of the Malaysian Army as well. On the sixth day at around 1000hrs, the wonderful sound of an RAF Chinook was heard at the location. It landed at the improvised HLS and off came the replacement crew of **LCpl Carl Payne** and **Sig** 'Baz' **Harvey**. **Sig Dave Dowson** had unknowingly volunteered to stay with the replacement crew for another three days. The rebro was jinxed from the start. Rebro 21F was closed on 24 December 1996, but that is, as they say, another story.

Footnote: anyone who served on or had anything to do with 21F always seems to shudder at the mention of the callsign and the Ops Officer **Capt Boyne** has vowed never to have a callsign 21F again whilst he is serving with the Squadron. The grid square has now been removed from the map.

Sigs Lewis, Nicol and Honeywell (before his fall in the tunnels of 21C) at Lisinia West RRB site.

LCpl Bartlett and Cpl Plested during the 'Glory Days' of IFOR in Sipovo

RRB 21F–the Vitrenik Hill Top Site in rather better weather conditions.

QM's DEPARTMENT–'THE DINGLES'

QM (Admin)	**Capt Peter Whitehouse**
QM (Tech)	**Capt Mick Roche**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Mark Schofield**

On our arrival at Sipovo there were no tents or corimecs to be found but instead the five star Hotel Janji. However, this did not last long as the move to Banja Luka destroyed our dreams and we now all live in tents and corimecs. During our short stay in Sipovo the **RQMS** 'No Sleep' **Schofield** allowed us to tour the mountainous countryside on our state of the art mountain bikes. It turned out to be a trip in the Andes where the 'Old and Bold' most definitely showed their fitness. The return journey was given a spiritual boost from the Padre who we met running faster than we could peddle!

On the Hearts and Minds front there has been some small scale involvement. Firstly we presented some local children with a new football, as their own was a pigs bladder. Even such a small gift brought considerable joy. The Padre then invited **LCpl** 'Stubbsie' **Stubbs** and **Sig** 'Birdman of Alcatraz' **Thorpe** to help with the distribution of clothing and other gifts to orphanages in the local area.

Since moving north to Banja Luka Metal Factory, a number of new faces have joined the team. Welcome to **Capt Mick Roche** (QM Tech), **Cpl** 'Mac' **McGuinness** (who only left BLMF for a few weeks before returning), and **LCpls Bowdidge** and **Hackford**. With everyones hard work the QM's domain has now been reorganised and renamed 'Trumpton Town'. The RQMS is now considering giving his soldiers six nights off each week but two cans would do quite nicely Sir, in light of your recent selection for promotion to WO1. Congratulations!!

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
BFPO 35

Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Condie**

COMBINED TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Gareth Lamb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Rob Melotte**

Since the festivities of Christmas Leave finished, the Troop has got back into the hard work routine. The majority of the Troop have been away on pre deployment training in sunny Warminster. Always in search of an alternative approach, **Lt** 'Rapid Fire' **Lamb** did exceptionally well demonstrating the new, heavy-handed approach to peace enforcement operations!

The majority of the Troop technicians have also been away in Italy and Belgium on technical courses and having a break. The Troop is working hard in between these courses getting ready for the second line inspections, **Cpl Tony** 'Porta' **Caban** has managed to find his way through the mountain of 1045s to keep the RMA shelters in order.

We have to say thank you to our storeman **LCpl Adie Howarth** for being a constant source of amusement. During a bad day in the secure garages he decided that getting the exhaust stuck was not quite embarrassing enough so he covered himself from head to toe in soot to complete the performance. In case you are wondering, no he didn't get time off for a bath!

Due to our ever important Bosnia commitment there seems to be lots of people arriving and few leaving.

We would like to welcome all the new arrivals and their families. They are: **Sgt** 'Tuppa' **Ware**, **Sgt Guy Roberts, Cpl Menzies** (congrats on your promotion), **Cpl Andy** 'Wild Thing' **Sargeant**, **LCpl** 'PTI' **Icke**, **LCpl** '264' **Lobb** (welcome back!).

SQUADRON MT

After the hectic Christmas period we're now back to some normality but due to postings in and out, and courses to get people ready for Bosnia phase 2 of 3, it's still pretty hectic. Added to this is the problem the young drivers are causing us, by trying to wipe out our lease vehicles faster than they can be repaired. I think it must be something in the water at Leconfield.

So now onto the goodbyes and hellos.

Goodbye's to:

Cpl McKenzie	**Cpl Brown**

Hello's to:

Cpl Betts	**Sig Radivojsa**
Sig Calladine	**Sig Turner**

280 (UK) SIGNAL SQUADRON (FWD)

Sqn Comd	**Capt Nik Beecher**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Ivan Shiels**

At the time of writing today is D+48 and those of you who were lucky enough to visit Ilizda during the ARRC's time will be amazed at the changes that have taken place. The complete refurbishment of the site continues with 90% of the windows having already been replaced, hot water on demand (almost) and the Wooden Palace open for business–supplying those most important factors to a Comd HQ–coffee and pizzas. Along with the refurbishment of the HQ has come a large number of changes in the communications set up, which has directly led to the Squadron working long hours to ensure that the deadlines for the various builds are met. The new ramp is currently under construction and will become the focus of effort for the Sqn and our attached Dutch linemen over the next weeks. The next big project on the horizon is the move of Zetra Stadium to Butmir airfield, once it has been cleared of mines. Ilidza's new Major, **Maj Dunaj** (US Army) has promised that the swimming pool will be reopened in May . . .

The Ops team, consisting of only **Capt Dougie Brisco**, **Lt Jo Evans** and **WO2 (YofS) Lee Keily**, have replaced ARRC Comms Ops, 7 Sig Regt CP and SYSCON! They work from a single corimec (that's a portacabin for those few that haven't been to Bosnia), which has allowed the staff HQ element to expand into the slots previously occupied by the comms command elements. When Ptarmigan was removed life was to be simple with one non-secure fixed comms system (IPN) and one secure tactical system (MSE). However, the staff elements left over from the IFOR mission refused to relinquish the many other national tactical systems, so we still have some responsiblity for all systems less Ptarmigan.

To look after these systems the organisation has been set up into small Operation and Maintenance (O&M) teams which are more suited to the nature of modern commercial networks. The Ilidza O&M team is ably led by **Cpl Dean Spiers** and augmented by 2 reservists, **Cpls Jim Beech** and **Danny Bird**, with radio support being provided by **Cpl** 'Si' **Ferrer** and **Sig Dave Howie** from 249 (AMF(L)) Sig Sqn. The remainder of the team is made up from 280 stalwarts, **Cpl** 'Tex' **Walker**, **LCpl Terry Venables** and **LCpl Phil Gavan**. To date the team have been responsible for the following achievements: the removal of over two tons of aerial field cable, the installation of over two tons of underground twisted pair cable, the rationalisation of the numerous MDF rooms to allow for ease of maintenance and further installation, whilst prudently maintaining red and black cable and ducting separation. In the course of the installation the team have used over 25 kilometres of ducting, installed over 700 telephones, connected over 5000 Krone blocks and terminated over 50,000 telephone pairs courtesy of 7 Sig Regt SYSCON (remember that one Krone tool you lent us? To be returned at the end of the deployment, honest Guv). Mystic Meg predicts that this workload will continue for the foreseeable future.

OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOUR

SSgt 'Scummer' **Dore**	**Cpl** 'Ginga' **Willis**
Cpl 'Geeek' **Skidmore**	**LCpl** 'Shifty' **Rutland**
Sig 'Bellies' **Benham**	**Sig** 'Hydie' **Prydie**

With the handover from 1 ADSR to 20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (200 Sig Sqn) completed to everyone's satisfaction, life started to return to normal, or as normal as it gets at Banja Luka. With the local people celebrating Christmas and New Year by emptying magazine after magazine into the air (where does that stuff come down?) and the chefs recovering after an exhausting Xmas lunch, we tried to get back into the swing of things. The weather was living up to expectations and snow drifts littered the landscape. Ice and compacted snow were making life difficult underfoot and **Sig** 'Bellies' **Benham** took this opportunity to demonstrate the drill to be carried out, when coming under effective enemy fire while walking down steps. Needless to say, after the performance and the critique was over, the majority felt that the double back flip would indeed put off any would be sniper. **Sig** 'Hydie' **Prydie**, our resident 249 Sig Sqn representative, refuses to believe that –20°C is cold and keeps telling us that it's colder in Norway. Thanks for that!

During the festive season **Cpl** 'Computer Geek' **Skidmore** demonstrated an unnerving allergic reaction to a cigar! Make of that what you will, but all the charges were dropped. In direct contrast, **Cpl** 'Ginga' **Willis** has shown almost nun-like qualities in preparation for her forthcoming wedding to **Dougie Celerier**. Congratulations to you both. **Sgt** 'Scummer' **Dore**, he is most comfortable with his feet resting on the kit, his headphones on, engrossed in a book/game/sleep, all the usual things, stirring only to hear the weekly Southampton score. As for **LCpl** 'Shifty' **Rutland**, he didn't do a thing! However, he was the only one around when the request for *Wire* Notes arrived.

TUZLA DETACHMENT

Sgt May	**LCpl Baber**
Cpl Butlin	**LCpl Cochran**
Cpl Allmark	**LCpl Smith**
Sig Cant (249 Sig Sqn)	

THE TOUR SO FAR

It was a warm and sunny day when the detachment arrived in Tuzla back in October, not bad we all thought! An hour later the heavens opened and the now infamous Tuzla mud was all around and it has been with us ever since, apart, of course, from a month snow break over the Christmas period.

From the outset everyone has been busy building their own shelving, tables and benches and have also managed to convert an iso container into a bar, outside of which is a barbecue, kindly donated by China Cooper and his 7 Sigs det (thanks). This is used every Sunday whatever the weather including Christmas Day, which saw a snowfall of 9 inches and by the end of the day we had our snowmen in the shape of the chefs of the day, Messrs **Shaun May** and 'Smudge' **Smith**.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE:

Matt Baber	Surfed with ferrets
Rob Butlin **Rick Allmark** **Paul Smith**	Mud wrestling champions
Eddie Cochran	Fertility Monster
Chris Cant **Shaun May**	Burger eating champion Survived all of the above

MND SE MOSTAR ORTIJES

The 280 (UK) Sig Sqn Det in Mostar have now been residing in the grounds of Ortijes Airport for four months. The five of us: **Sgt** 'Fergy' **Ferguson**, **Cpl** 'Beaz' **Beasley**, **Cpl** 'JR' **Whitmey**, **LCpl** 'Ronnie'

The ISO-Bar at Tuzla with, from *(L to R)*:
LCpl 'Eddie' Cochran, Addie Bowden, LCpl Matt Baber,
Cpl Rick Allmark, LCpl SSgt Al Eley,

Radford and **Sig** 'Jamie' **Brown** (on loan from 249 Sig Sqn) deal with all aspects of communications in and out of Mostar Airport. Our main responsibilities are the IDNX Cronos network, VTC and IPN Switch, but we are also involved with other systems such as CTAPS, as we are the only communications personnel in the area.

When we first arrived in Mostar we had very little in the way of facilities. We lived in a tent for two months and our office was very 'open plan' . . . it was a set of steps outside the main HQ! We have put in a lot of hard work, however, and the location is now becoming a real home from home. We have a corrimec to work from (very grandly named 'The network room!') and a nice little accommodation area that is right next to the runway. The airport area offers little in the way of facilities and recreation, although this does not really concern us, as we rarely get the time or opportunity to use what little is available.

The working relationship we have with the French division is, at times, strained, but usually acceptable. This division, however, is soon to be handed over to German command and most of us have at some point worked with the German army. This change of command promises to bring better living conditions, and we are also hoping that the quality of the cuisine drastically improves. For anyone who hasn't visited Mostar the toilets are something of an experience. If you ever do find yourself in Mostar (God forbid!) and you feel the call of nature, all you need to do to find these toilets is follow your nose!

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV HQNI and 15 Sig Regt BFPO 801

CO **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**
Adjt **Capt Fred Whichelo**

The Regiment has continued to be extremely busy, even over the Christmas period; a result both of the upturn in activity within the Province and the additional work caused by the 7 October bombing. The Regiment has welcomed it's new 2IC, **Maj Jim Clark**, who has shown the right spirit by immediately deploying on the Regiment's ski exercise in Serre Chevalier (all be it minus his skis!) With two new Sqn Comds and a range of other new personalities arriving the Regiment has started the New Year with a clean sweep.

VISIT FROM THE COLONEL IN CHIEF

The social climax of the last two months came almost unannounced when, on Tuesday 4th February, the distinctive red Wessex of the Royal Flight landed in Thiepval Barracks, catching the majority of it's residents entirely by surprise! **Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal** visited a number of locations in the Province during the day and honoured members of the Corps serving in Northern Ireland by taking lunch with them.

As her helicopter touched down, she was greeted by the CO, **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**, the AAdjt (and ADC for the day), **Capt Louise Warrack** and the A/RSM, **WO2 (SSM) Hodgson**. As she arrived at the Officers' Mess she was greeted by OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Gerry Hegarty**. She then met some 50 Officers and Warrant Officers representing all the Royal Signals units in the Province over lunch before continuing with her remaining engagements in the afternoon.

The Colonel In Chief is greeted by the CO

Maj Gerry Hegarty welcomes The Colonel In Chief to the Officers' Mess

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Nick Keen**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Geoff Hodgson**

The increased threat and terrorist activity in the build up to Christmas and over New Year did not stop all the members of the Corps' second largest Squadron and their families enjoying the festive season, while operations continued unaffected.

A warm welcome to the new OC, **Maj Nick Keen** and his wife **Pamela** who arrived from Germany shortly before Christmas. The new OC arrived in time to participate in the final CO's Cup event, the cross country run, spurring the Squadron on to win the event and the CO's Cup for the second year. November also marked the 9th Annual Howells and Wood Memorial Rugby match against Lisburn Rugby Club. Mr Wood and members of his family were hosted by members of the Lisburn community over the period of his visit. Unfortunately the Regiment were also beaten for the ninth year although it was the closest yet.

COMMCEN TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 (YofS) Andy Drummond**

HAIL AND FAREWELLS

Over the Christmas/New Year period Commcen Tp have seen a number of changes in personnel one way or another. The Troop has said its goodbyes to two of its very valuable members **Sgt Al Chester** who has gone to ACE Commcen in SHAPE and **Cpl Tony Gardner** who has departed these shores for civvy street.

A warm welcome goes out to the new members of the Troop, **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow**, **Sgt Andy Corlett**, **Cpl Sandra Thompson**, **LCpl Roz Holmes** and **Sigs Richie Allen**, **Sam Skyvington**, **Kelly Ruddy**, **Richie Lloyd** and **Neil Ross**. Last but no mean least, congratulations to **LCpl Greg Miller** and his wife **Dawn** on the birth of their son **Andrew Jordan**.

The Troop recently had a Christmas party which deserves a mention. It came in the form of a 70's theme night with Karaoke and Disco. A number of unusual Troop members who attended included a bunch of hippies, in other words **Cpls Shameen Newman**, **Vicki Baggaley** and **LCpl Sharon Rogers**. **WO2 (YofS) Andy Drummond** looked like an ageing Jimmy Osmond with a very suspicious looking Jackson Five. The evening was a great success all thanks to the organiser **Cpl Wayne Robson**. This party brought the end of 1996 and the beginning of 1997 to a very good end/start which I know will carry on throughout the year.

Commcen Tp 70'S Night
L-R: Wayne, Shameen, Norma, Sharon, Claire and Sara

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Rich Rumsey**
FofS **SSgt (FofS) Sue King**

The festive season and the end of 1996 did little to lessen the busy schedule for all the sections within the troop. January arrived and so did **Cpl Dave Thomas** and **Sgt** 'Tug' **Wilson** who we hope will enjoy their tours with the Troop–**Sgt** 'Tug' **Wilson** will have to improve his card skills if he is not going to spend the next two years making the brews! **Sgt** 'the pie-man' **Heakin** has returned to the fold as a fully qualified Crypto Accountant who must have slept through a lot of the course if his MoD 102 work is anything to go by! Two other members of the Troop getting themselves fully qualified prior to their Yeomans Course are: **Sgts Steve Buckley** and 'Bear' **Convery** who at this very moment are enjoying their RSSC; an ideal 'beat-up' for their Crypto course. The greatest achievement over this period, apart from the Troops huge amount of style in turning the Squadron Christmas function into a 'black tie' occasion was the Yeoman's success in gaining his promotion–Congratulations **Billy**!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Gig Plumb**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ged Keane**

Thereís been a lot of change in TM Tp recently with the new arrivals of **SSgt Shaun Cook**, **Sgts Paul Cleet**, **John Davis**, **Dave Kilgallon**, **Steve Colbeck**, **Pete Szeremeta**, **Cpls Matt Clark**, **Bob Godfrey**, **Lee Robinson**, **Harry Dunlop**, **Paul Cleghorn**, **Bernie Steadman**, **Mark Baker**, **Dave Alderson**, **Jas White** and last but not least **LCpl** 'Tank Boy' **Hamilton**. We would like to welcome them all, but sadly have to say goodbye to **Sgts** 'Rennie' **Renshaw**, **Shaun Davis**, **Cpls Damian Thorpe**, **John Brady**, **Steve Armstrong** and **Shaun Hodgkinson** who we all wish the best of luck.

One thing in TM Tp that never seems to change are the number of trophies bursting out from the trophy cabinet and after our victory in the cross-country, is it any surprise! The TOT, **Capt** 'Gig' **Plumb**, has been extremely busy in the past few months in an attempt to back this years Grand National winner, by teaching some of the Troop to horseride–but by the results so far I think he's better off with a lottery ticket!

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj D. Whimpenny**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Hymas**

The Squadron welcomes its new Sqn Comd, **Maj David Whimpenny**, who joins us from Donnington. The Troops are being strengthened, ready for a busy period in the Province, and refurbishments to the Squadron building have begun.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 (RQMS) Sartorious**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Swift**

The majority of the reporting period has been spent on the task of rebuilding the Squadron and all the associated work that goes with trying to maintain the effort in a Bombed out Building. Frequent visits by Micks-Are-Us Builders and Co can cause some major disruption to the work schedule, but the product remains the same.

A social event forgotten in our last report due to the slightly weightier events of the moment was a Charity Day organised by the Tp to raise money for Action MS. The day involved a 10 mile ramble (??) followed by a meal in the evening. The day was a tremendous success with over £1000 being donated. The photo shows the survivors at the end. To end the year in style the Troop held its Xmas Party in the derelict remains of the RQ's store, well at least it saved on clearing up. The evening was highly entertaining with the New Sqn Comd playing at Santa (any excuse to say 'Sit on my knee little girl'), and as a finale the RQ gave an excellent demonstration of dancing skills taught by his son.

Members of Alpha Tp 225 Sig Sqn at Ramble's End

Farewells are extended to the former Sqn Comd, **Maj Tim Wadey**, **Cpl Jayne Richardson**, **Cpl** (newly promoted) **Tony Cherry**, and from attached arms **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Sharon Simmons AGC**. Hello's to the new Sqn Comd **Maj Dave Whimpenny**, **Cpl Liz Drew**, **LCpl Jimmy McLean** and on the support side **Cpl Blair AGC**.

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd **FofS T. Steele**

Golf Tp had a very busy Christmas period with **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Brown** and **Sgt Keith Muggleton** being deployed on none other than Christmas day. The call personnel were so busy that they worked more hours than a junior doctor. When everyone returned after the break all the work was already done.

There has been a significant change over of personalities within the Troop with the arrival of **SSgt John Greenwood**, **Cpls Steve Simpson**, **Billy Share**, **Paul Amies** and **Dave Brown** (his posting delayed due to being selected for the Army Ski Biking in Austria). We've got to say goodbye to **Cpl Jef Stobbart** who's off to play Sunday Pub football for a living and also to **SSgt Dave Whiting** off to Aldershot to attempt Pre-Para. The only things of note were **Cpl Tam Ewart**, the Troop's parachutist, not even managing to drive his Saab from Aldershot to RAF Digby for a Rigging Meeting due to HEAVY snow (or that's what he said anyway).

Cpl Carl Rossall has now received the Tp globe trotting award (Skiing in both Portugal and California and adventure training in Kenya). **Sgt Keith Muggleton** is trying to catch him up by parachuting in Spain.

DELTA WATCH ECHO TROOP

Delta Watch Supvr **SSgt (Supvr R) Fisher**
Delta Watch Sgt **Sgt Robson**

Delta Watch have had a very busy last few months with many personnel away on various courses. Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Robbo' **Robson** on gaining Top Student on his RSSC and to **LCpl** 'Swampy' **Wade** for successfully passing his RSCC and gaining the distinction of being Top Spec Op (despite being the only Spec Op on the Course). Congratulations also go out to **LCpl** 'Pat' **Patrick** on his recent promotion to Cpl, **SSgt Fisher** on his recent selection for his LS&GC Medal and **Sgt Robson** and his wife **Jackie** on the birth of their daughter **Katie**. Good luck to **LCpl Russell** and his T1 Upgrading Course and **LCpl** 'Salty Sea Dog' **Baker** on his selection for transfer as a Naval deck scrubber.

The Watch would like to welcome **Cpl Dave Marrs** and **Cpl Campbell** and family. Goodbyes go out to **Cpls Patrick** and 'Towny' **Townsend** and to **Cpl Tel Parr** who has seen the light and leaves us for civilian life with his wife to be **Vanessa**. **Cpl Parr** assures us this move has nothing to do with him being under the thumb.

On the social front Alpha Watch constantly challenge us to a five-a-side football challenge and constantly get thrashed. They are either real suckers for punishment or they need to lay off the pies. The Watch have had many

a function over the recent weeks the best of which was a restaurant night which culminated in each member of the Watch having to drink a bottle of wine from every continent of the world. Not too many words slurred that night honest.

E TROOP

The Troop has had quite a busy period with a large turnover of loyal members. We say hello to the following new arrivals **SSgt Anita White** and husband **Sgt Dave White**, **LCpl Shane** 'Heed' **Hodgson**, **LCpl Al** 'Liam' **Roscoe**, **LCpl Neil Crispin**, **LCpl Richie Cross**, **LCpl Steve Burton**, and **LCpl Duncan Lewis**. We bid a fond farewell to **WO2 Mo Bostock** who goes to terrorise the trainees at CSG, **Cpl Si Green**, **Cpl Nige Hunt** to Italy and **Cpl Lee Leggett**. Two other lucky lads **LCpls John Seaton** and **Neil Worsnop** go to join the recently departed **LCpl Keith Wade** at 11 EOD Regt RLC.

Congratulations are due to the following personnel who have been justly rewarded for their soldier like performances: **SSgt Bob Bogan** on his promotion to WO2, **Sgt Mark Robson** for coming top of his RSSC, **LCpl Pat Patrick** on his promotion to Cpl and **LCpl Duncan Halls** for coming top of his RSCC.

An excellent Squadron Xmas Bash was organised by the stalwarts of Bravo Watch at the RUC Sports & Country Club in Belfast and a good time was had by one and all.

A superb Burns Night Supper was organised by **LCpls Billy Wardrope** and **Nick Robson**, with good effort put in by **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave Watson**, **Sgt** 'Jock' **Munro** and **LCpl P. J. Donaldson** to turn up in full Highland Rig. Patriotic Scot **LCpl Billy Wardrope** was also attired in traditional dress and piped the Haggis in and played a medley of traditional Scottish tunes throughout the night. Several attempts to identify any 'true' Scots by the ladies were all thwarted by a variety of undergarments.

QM'S DEPT

Not a lot has happened since the bomb, things have slowly got back to normal. Although the building has been condemned, we are still in situ with no signs of movement for the foreseeable future.

The Dept's Christmas party, saw the RQ getting a hefty bill, from the QM, because it took place whilst the QM was on (yet another!) course on the mainland. The rest of the dept had a boozy time, thanks RQ. The start of 97 has brought with it a host of new personnel. We would like to welcome **Sgts Al Bolton** (and family), **Chris Hood** (and wife) and **Cpl Kev Joyce** (and family), hope your tour is a safe and happy one.

Finally, we would like to say farewell to **Sgt Bill Edwards**, who left the Dept, to take over the job that **Kev Joyce** just left. Good luck in your new post **Bill**.

40 Sig Regt (V)
Belfast

CO **Lt Col N. C. Beacom TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J. S. Black**

It is with regret that the death of **Cpl Nick Brewer** is announced. **Nick** was killed in a car accident on the evening of Sunday 15 December 1996. **Nick** was a devoted and loyal member of the Regiment whose contribution and dedication to the Territorial Army will always be remembered. Our sympathies are with his family.

WELCOMES

The Regiment warmly welcomes a few fresh faces. **WO1 (RSM) John Black** from 8 Inf Bde Sig Sqn, **WO2 (YofS) Pete Goodliff** and **Andrea**, **SSgt** 'Ginge' **Coburn** and **Sgt Troy Burrows** from 2 Sig Regt. May your time with the TA be enjoyable and rewarding. The Officers' Mess warmly welcomes **2Lts Tracey Dempsey**, **Jeanette Ferry** and **Andrea Bowen** who have transferred from Queens UOTC and **OCdt Patrick Watson** who has been awarded a bursary and a place with R Signals on completion of his studies. Welcome back to **Capt Robin Butler** who has decided to return after a two year leave of absence.

GOODBYES

Fond farewells to **WO1 (RSM) Bill Ogden** off to Blandford, **SSgt Ian Goodson** and **Lynn** go to 264 on promotion and **SSgt (YofS) Mark Dennis** off to Herford with his new wife. Many thanks for your efforts and achievements over the past two years.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **SSgt** (now WO2 (SSM)) **Irvine** who has taken over as SSM 66 Sig Sqn from **WO2 Maurice Stanley**. **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Williamson** who has returned from her tour in Bosnia and **Sgt** (now SSgt) **Shaw**. Many congratulations and best wishes to **Maj** (QM(V)) **Dave Doherty** and **Maura-Ann** who were married on Saturday 30 November. Congratulations to the CO and **Isobel** who are expecting their first child in April.

Congratulations also go to our prospective **OCdts Phillip Adams**, **Sam Burgess**, **Darren Ferson**, **Jill Forsythe** and **Ashley Preston** on passing the Unit Selection Board. Best of luck with the TA Commissioning Board in March.

BOSNIA UPDATE

All of our personnel less **Capt Diana Griffiths**, **Cpl McArdle** and **LCpl Holding** have returned safe and sound. Many congratulations and thanks for a job well done and upholding the good name of the Regiment to: **Capt Mike Fraser-Brenchley**, **Capt Lynn Colan-O'Leary**, **SSgt McLean**, **SSgt Reid**, **Cpl Bromfield**, **Cpl Martin**, **Cpl Herridge**, **Cpl Fleming**, **LCpl Campbell**, **LCpl Giles**, **Sig Amos**, **Sig Bradley**, **Sig Davis** and **Sig Lynch**.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR ACTIVITY

Christmas is always a period jam packed with various celebrations. The Officers' Mess celebrated a little early on Friday 29 November, 66 Sig Sqn on Saturday 30 November and the Ladies Club on Monday 9 December (with a nice line of entertainment from the joking QM, the cross dressing 2IC and TOT, the singing RMQS(V) and SSM 85 and finally the Riverdancing troupe with the Adjt standing in for the unavailable Michael Flatley, 'No pictures were taken so vetting and career prospects remain intact'. 69 Sqn celebrated on Friday 13 December and the WOs & Sgts Mess dined and danced the night away at HMS *Caroline* on Saturday 14 December before appearing in Clonaver Park TAC for 'Crazy Sunday–the soldiers' Christmas Carol Service and Lunch on Sunday 15 December. 85 Sig Sqn brought up the rear on Saturday 21 December. WHEW!!!

In the middle of all these festivities, elements of the Regiment deployed to provide Comms and admin support for 107 (U) Bde's TA Staff Course Part 2 (7/8 Dec). I thought Christmas was supposed to be a holiday !!!

The work hard-play hard ethos continues into 1997. The Officers' Mess celebrated Burns Night in Scotland and the Sgts Mess stayed in Province. The RAO staff underwent their annual SPS inspection and RSIT descended upon us. As always RSIT visit in February and all members of the Team were invited to the Valentines functions in the respective messes. This is in no way to be interpreted as an attempt at bribery. However, the TOT, **Capt Joe Long**, has been seen with a smile on his face and still in uniform so it looks like a favourable report has been received.

On 10 January 1997 the Regiment came under command of 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde and the Comd, **Brig D. J. Wills**, made a brief visit 27/29 January. His busy programme saw him travelling the length of the province seeing all aspects of the Regiment and the peculiarities of the TA in Northern Ireland. The CO presented him with a plaque and then ensured that he was correctly dressed by presenting a Blackthorn Cane. 11 Sig Bde staff officers watch out!

69 (NIH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

69 (NIH) Sig Sqn have now recovered from their end of year parties having also celebrated the presentation of an MBE to the former OC, **Maj George Wylie**, and PSAO **Capt Mac McGowan**. Our previous PSAO, **Capt Dougie Roy**, received a GOCs Commendation for his efforts with the Squadron. The Squadron would like to send its warmest congratulations to all three officers on their awards.

The seven members of the Squadron, **Capt Colan-O'Leary**, **SSgt Lyle**, **Sgt Williamson** (recently promoted–congratulations!), **Cpl Bromfield**, **Cpl Martin**, **Sig Davis** and **Sig Lynch** who all served in Bosnia during 1996 have safely returned to province.

THE FUTURE–1997

1997 looks busier than ever. In April there is the 107 (U) Bde FTX in Scotland. In May the Regiment is running Ex Executive Stretch also in Scotland and in June the Regiment deploys to Germany on Ex Able Condor. Running throughout the year will be celebrations commemorating two very important events–the 50th Anniversary of the reformation of the TA in Northern Ireland and the 30th Anniversary of 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V).

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Matter for June edition must reach the Editor by 15 April–latest!

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3. If any assistance is required with the Application:

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4. Ensure your boots are well broken in. Any black military style boots can be worn.
5. Ensure you are confident at map reading.
6. Personal administration is organised before the course.

TRADE	TYPING SKILLS	
	TRADE ASSESSMENT WEEK	RSTO 36, 36A
TELE OP (TG)	36 WPM (MORSE 15 WPM TX/RX)	36 WPM
TELE OP (SPEC)	36 WPM (MORSE 15 WPM RX)	36 WPM
TELE OP (DATA)	36 WPM	36 WPM
TELE OP (SYS)	36 WPM	36 WPM
TELE OP (RR)	15 WPM	30 WPM
TELE OP (R)	15 WPM	30 WPM
STORES ACCT	15 WPM	30 WPM
DVR ELEC	15 WPM	30 WPM
DVR LMN	15 WPM	30 WPM
Note:	No Morse test (unless shown) as from 1/97 course	
TELE TECH (SYS) TELE TECH (RAD) T MECH	Tested on basic principles applied to unfamiliar equipment and show the potential to work on both system and radio equipments.	

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MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION (218 SIG SQNS SUCCESSFUL TITLE DEFENCE)
by LCpl McIlroy

The Mereury Cup is a Northern Ireland, Royal Signals competition run throughout the year. The competition involves several events from potted sports to military skills. Under the expert guidance of **Capt** 'Zebadee' **Vaudin** the Squadron entered a team of hopefuls into the Mercury Cup military skills competition. The Team had been thoroughly trained for the event by **Cpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** (RLC), during a couple of days on the ranges and were in a confident mood that we could retain the Cup which we had won last year.

The morning of the competition it dawned bright but cold with the temperature thankfully below zero and a nice wind chill factor to keep us company. We knew that the day had many challenging tasks ahead and with other teams having more wings on their arms than you find in the average aviary we wondered if our earlier confidence in our ability was well placed. **Sgt** 'Sniper' **Eldridge** came up trumps on the pistol shoot along with **Sgt** 'Dead eye' **O'Hanlon**, **LCpl Foster** took charge in the command task and at the halfway point the team position was quite healthy.

The NATO Assault Course was only a 4 man event so unfortunately someone had to drop out. No one really wished to so **Sgt** 'Call me a martyr' **O'Hanlon** took the initiative and adopted the sitting position for the event. **LCpl McIlroy** took over the team for the first aid stand and to everyones amazement all the casualties survived to tell the tale. The final event was the fire team assessment involving a two mile forced march and then a shoot starting at 600m. Coming into the last event it wasn't possible to get an up date on the scores so it was all to play for. The team completed the march in the allotted time (one of only two teams to do so) and then completed the shoot.

When the prize giving started we soon realised we had won. It wasn't until the scores were read out that we realised we had run away with the title. We won two events, come second in three events and fifth in one event. Overall the team had won a notable victory and returned home with the Cup for a second year.

Mercury Cup Military Skills Team
Back (*L to R*)–LCpl Foster, Capt Vaudin, Sgt Eldridge.
Front (*L to R*)–LCpl MacIlroy, Cpl Smith (RLC), Sgt O'Hanlon (RLC).

RMAS ALL ARMS PRESENTATIONS (A SOLDIERS VIEW)
by LCpl Muhsin

Capt Vaudin and I took part in a presentation at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, the aim of which was to recruit officer cadets into the R Signals. Suitcases in hand we departed sunny Londonderry for Heathrow and on arrival at Sandhurst I was immediately impressed by the Camp's historic buildings, the landscape and the training facilities (this must be where the Army spends all it's budget then!)

After a quiet night in the local town we rose early and set up our part of the presentation. This took some time as we had to beg, borrow and steal to get tables, TVs and videos for our display. Some of the other units had very impressive displays with lots of Gucci equipment. Not to be deterred, we admirably promoted the Corps and the Squadron as well. We dragged the officer cadets away from the thrills of 216 and 249 Sig Sqns and 3 and 14 Sig Regts and showed them what it was like to actually do your job, for real, in a live operational unit.

The day was a great success and I feel confident that we recruited some of the officer cadets into the Corps.

FAMILIES SECURITY BRIEFING
by Cpl Thompson

Security isn't only a matter of concern for the soldiers in Northern Ireland. Dependants though not a direct target for the terrorist can sometimes be caught up in incidents. The Squadron views the security of it's dependants as a very important responsibility and therefore organises security briefings to inform and update the families on this most important aspect of life in the Province. This briefings are aimed to allow the families to take all necessary precautions whilst maintaining a normal pattern of life.

In August of 1996 a presentation was held at the MT Section for the wives and dependants of the Squadron. The brief was given by the EOD, the Intelligence Section and a couple of lads from the MT. The presentation started with the OIC of the EOD and the Intelligence Section in the comfort of the rest room with tea, coffee, biscuits and cake, all served by **LCpl Roy**, whilst **Pte Brady** kept the rug rats amused. We dragged the wives away to the less comfortable surroundings of the servicing bay. Here the wives were led two by two into the servicing pit to the underside of a waiting car. The main areas where the terrorist would plant a UVIED were shown and what a device would look like.

A systematic search was shown later by **WO2 (MTWO) Simpson**, where a lot of useful tips were given for approaching and checking a car that had been left unattended. The entire presentation took about one and a half hours and was very useful not just for the wives but for the lads of the MT who got to scoff all the remaining cakes once the wives had left.

Cpl Thompson points out the likely locations of a UVIED to a group of attentive wives.

SHQ TROOP

AO	**Capt R. G. Broad R Irish**
Tp Comd	**SSgt (Ch Clk) Standaloft AGC (SPS)**

SHQ Tp has experienced a wide turnover of personalities during the last month. Farewell and good luck to **Mr Toon** who used to be the RSM, but is now making the transition to civvy street. Hereford's beer profit will now explode to an all time high! Welcome to **WO1 (RSM) Fisher** who arrived from 3 Div, (rumour has it he was feeling a little bored, and turned up at the square to see if there was any tracks that needed bashing, or any packs that needed lifting). Sorry sir this is Northern Ireland long hair, civvies and sidies. Oh and by the way no tanks! Farewell and goodluck also to **WO2 (FofS) John Skelton**, **Sue** and family who as a reward for two years here, got rainy Cyprus. I say rainy because everyone always says sunny Cyprus so I thought I'd be different. The Foyle View's beer profits will now explode to an all time low, **John**. Welcome to **WO2 (FofS) Phil Court** and family from 215 Sig Sqn, I have written out Foreman of Signals in full, because apparently he doesn't like to be called FofS. Other hello's to **Ptes Simone Box** and **Hayley Smith** who have a hangover after a bad night on the pop, and last but not least **LCpl** 'Steak and kidney' **Pye**, who could possibly be the nicest bloke in the whole world. A real all round good egg!

Life still goes on for the rest of the Troop in between beer sessions. I forgot to mention our new mascot, namely SPARTACUS (the Chief's German Shepard), approach at your own peril!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes**
Site Manager	**Sgt Andy Craig**

The Xmas period was thankfully quiet on the work front which came as a relief to **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** who inexplicably found himself on BART during the period. The duties NCO is now doing a long stint in klink. The busy social calendar allowed everyone to let their hair down culminating in the Troop gathering on the floor of the Waterside Club. We knew that **Sgt Andy Craig** was in charge of masts and towers but we did not realise he was responsible for pylons.

Another outstanding performance over the Yuletide period came from **Sig** 'Pip' **Roberts**. He agreed to be head chef and bottle washer for the single lads stuck in the block on Christmas day. He was probably the only chef in Europe to advocate cooking turkey for 14 hours, surprisingly the fowl survived and was a culinary delight.

Several of the Troop have branched out into second careers and started apprentice courses at the school for crash test dummies. **Cpls Gareth Dearden** and **Jim Burnham** have both passed the width and length modules while **Sig** 'Noo Noo' **Miers** has already progressed to advanced limbo in a light goods vehicle. **SSgt Dave Halkett** surprised everyone by being in the office for a few days and not just hours, much to the relief of **Cpl** 'Jesey' **Wales** who has spent more time on the wagon recently than John Wayne. **Dave** as the resident computer Whiz Kid was trying his hardest to fix one of the Troop laptops but was being totally unsuccessful. He called upon the radio techs to aid him (**Dave** is a systems tech) but they still could not locate a fault. The chase had been given up when lineman **Sig Paul Creeley** fixed the fault with a flick of his wrist. Tech heads were hung in shame and **Sig Creeley** should be able to bribe a few drinks out of them to keep this one quiet.

On a more serious note the Tp has had a lot of recent success on trade upgrading courses with **LCpls Tony Hughes**, **Steve McBride** and **Pete Richards** all passing their respective courses. Finally there have been some outstanding physical performances lately. Well done to **Cpl Martin Dixon** for doing a PT session, **Sgt Col Bentley**'s cat for breaking the land speed record in an enclosed space and **Mrs Joanne Singleton** for making more brews than was thought humanly possible while the riggers were 'playing' with the RSM on the mast outside her quarter.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Pete Griffiths**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Mark Wareing**

The Christmas period has been a busy one for the Troop with the usual discussions of who should get leave and when, like Santa the OC managed to give everyone just about what they wanted. The Troop has once again seen a large turnover of personnel and we would like to welcome **Cpl Hunt** from ATR Bassingbourn (who is already missing the recruits so much he volunteered to take Drill on the Squadron cadre course), **LCpls Benson**, **Williams**, **Marritt** and **Sig Knox**.

Leaving us, having completed their sentences are **LCpls Briscoe**, **Gronn** and **Cooper** as well as **Sig Garner**. They are all off to pastures new but perhaps not that green. We would also like to congratulate **Cpl Budding** for coming off the promotions board and we would like to tell him we are running a sweep stake of how long he will survive in the Sgts Mess this time.

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NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2 Sig Regt
York

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON
FALCON TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Lyn Burrell**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stu Allister**

HELLOS

New arrivals to the Troop include **SSgt Stu** 'Maddog' **Allister** as the Tp Staffy and **Sig Mitchell** who is fresh from trade training. **Cpl Burt** and **Sigs Walker** and **Giles** are welcomed back into the fold as they have recently made their return from Bosnia.

FAREWELLS

In the New Year the Troop were sorry to say goodbye to **Sig Mal Connop** who has chosen a life as a well paid civvy over a life in the Corps. Good luck!!! **Cpl Menzies** was also given a decent send off as he recently left the Regiment on posting.

The Troop had a busy social period just prior to Christmas leave and were in fine voice at the Regiment Carol Service. There was much merriment to follow at the Christmas lunch, served by the Regt's officers and SNCOs, which was followed by an all ranks Christmas celebration in the NAAFI.

Falcon Tp has had a busy time since Christmas in preparation for the year's forthcoming events. Falcon Tp, along with Eagle Tp took part in Ex Phoenix Skywave, a five day RADEX which had them deployed all over the country to Marchwood, Colerne, Haverford West, Colchester and Bramcote. The exercise was a success and many thanks go out to those units within the Corps who hosted the Troop. The forecast of events includes the Regimental Adventurous Training Package due to take place 10/16 March '97 which enables the Troop to take part in any of the 16 different activities being offered in various locations.

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Seymour**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Allan**

Farewell and congratulations to **LCpl** 'Barney' **Rumble** and his wife **Tracey**, on promotion and posting to sunny Bulford.

Hello's to **Sgt** 'Einstein' **Fielding, Sig** 'Snowplough' **Brown**, and **Sig** 'Smiler' **Parker** who have arrived into a leaner and definitely more polyunsaturated Troop. Also congratulations to **Cpl Elliot** and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Williams** on their promotion and to **Sig** 'Dirty Baz' **Nicholson** and his wife on the arrival of son, **Daniel**.

The Troops' sportsmen and women have done well, with three people making the Army Athletics Team, and our Rugby players reaching the Army final at Sandhurst.

On top of all this sporting success, the Troop still found time to do well on our BF Radio Exercise, Phoenix Skywave. Detachments were sent throughout the South of England, and many thanks go to all the hosting units.

EXERCISE BAVARIAN EBOR–4-25 JANUARY 97

On the 4 January a six man team of skiers departed for the R Signals Corps camp in Kaprun, Austria. After a traumatic drive across Europe in blizzard conditions the team took to the slopes and quickly obtained their BASI Bronze awards, most skiing to a higher standard. The next step was race training for our inexperienced team and to compete in the Corps Championships. The standard was high but undaunted **Sig** 'go faster stripes' **Jupp** and **Lt** 'I ski therefore I am' **Seymour** clinched gold and silver in the novice categories for the Regiment. After this win unfortunately **Sig Jupp** damaged her knee and ended up on crutches (no violins please).

After ten days of skiing and sampling the delights of sunny Kaprun it was off to the UK Land Ski Championships at Serre Chevalier, France. The journey took in another four countries including breakfast in Milan. The team entered all four disciplines, Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super G and Downhill. **Sig** 'pasta and Dolmio' **Rennie** was the star of the team coming 55th in the combination out of 150. Followed by **Lt Seymour** who had trouble getting into the start gate without tripping over his skis. A valiant effort by **Sig** 'cannonball' **Birkett**, who was moving at such speed when he wiped out on the downhill, he snapped a ski. **Sig** 'snow plough' **Brown** tried to defy gravity but in the end it overpowered him and he finished nowhere near last. Despite these minor setbacks the 2 Sig Regt ski team will be back next year with a stronger, fitter and more competitive team confident of more silverware.

A special mention must go to **SSgt** 'MIA' **Allan** who was last seen swanning in a medical facility known as Hedley Court. He must have realised the Troop would send him insane eventually. So the good ship sails off into another year of excitement.

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RHQ

CO	**Lt Col G. R. Leach**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) K. Fitzpatrick**

All change at almost the top. The new incumbents of the Regimental Second in Command and the Regimental Sergeant Major posts quickly settled in to their small offices and large portfolios. **Maj Adam Ewell** (who is not an LE officer despite popular misconception) has made short shrift of the in-tray left by **Maj Dryburgh** by shredding most of it under cover of a cloud of aromatic (but not pungent) pipe smoke. The new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Fitzpatrick** seems like he has been here for many years, and his presence can be sensed as soon as you enter either Camp. Bulford has embraced them both, and we are sure their tours will be happy and successful.

There was a rare sighting of the Adjt, **Maj David** '2 pies' **Kinnaird**, actually deployed on exercise, wearing cam-cream, with mud on his boots. Like a seagull in the Sahara, he did not appear totally at ease in this unnatural environment, and subsequently found any trivial excuse to go back to Camp (to 'work' apparently). The Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Graham Leach** has requested that his photograph does not appear again, and we are delighted to oblige him, for this issue at least.

'Red Tricorn' dinner on Salisbury Plain, 5 February 97
(*L-R*): WOI Deegan, Capt Jane Appleby, Adjt Maj David Kinnaird (adjusting his dentures) and Maj Graham Complin

HQ (SOMME) SQUADRON
QM (TECH) DEPT

QM(T)	**Maj M. Besant**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 Ritchie**

A New Year and a successful move to Picton Barracks from Wing Barracks, followed by the annual Log Sup Inspection, prior to Christmas. Back to work after the festive season and now a new challenge for the majority of the Dept (Ex First Foray) as we are deploying to the Plain with the rest of the Regiment for the first time in almost two years. The QM, **Maj Mick Besant** is now wondering if his four poster bed will fit into a 9 x 9! We say farewell to **SSgt Brian Reid** who is off to complete his Bosnia tour seeing as he only managed three months the last time. Good luck 'Scouse', well done on the promotion and get that Parka off! Soon to depart is the QM off to sunny York with 2 Sig Regt where no doubt he will start up the local branch of the Rangers Supporters Club. **Cpl Helen O'Connor** is to be educated in February and **Sig Allison** '+bump' **Reed** will be covering as Duty Rott weiller during her absence. New arrivals from the factory include **Sig Matt Burdess** (the shortest man in NATO), **Sig Lee** 'Custard' **Custace** and **Sig** 'Cherub' **Hill. Sgt** 'Mac' **McDonald** has recently arrived from 24 AB Bde, Welcome to the fighting third!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt** 'let me just explain' **Sarginson**
WO1	**WO1(FofS)** 'we do not do that' **Mullen**

As TM Tp sobers up from the Christmas and New Year festivities we look back on 96 with fond memories. Our successful tour in Bosnia keeping kit alive and applying some dubious installation techniques on VSAT. Following this we had the Inter-Sqn Boxing Competion in which **LCpl** 'Taff The Bruiser' **Thomas** decided to participate, not his wisest decision, but nice try 'Taff'. A few people were on the move, **Cpl Dave Wilson** off to civvy street,. both **SSgt George Murray** and **Cpl Tony Ramsay** are now in Blandford, and **LCpl Andy Langan** finally escaped to 1 Div. In December we welcomed back **SSgt Dawn McKie**, no matter how temporary the stay, and proceeded into the festive season with the Troop party, unfortunately this didn't go quite to plan, explanations from **Cpl Hutchinson**. Nevertheless, a good time was had by all no matter how loud **Sgt Drew Thomson**'s Hawaiian shirt may have been. As 1997 dawned we had a few swapsies with the Squadrons, **LCpl Ian Aitchison** and the afore mentioned **Sgt Drew Thomson** were traded for **Cpls Matt Clish** and **Sean Allsopp** allowing them to gain some 'real' experience before embarking on their TI courses. Also off to 257 Sqn and subsequently the Falkland Islands went **SSgt Matt** 'Boyce' **Nuttall**, **Cpl Paul Drysdale** and **LCpl** 'Taff' **Thomas**. The new year also brought a few new arrivals so it's welcome to **SSgt Phil McMullan** and his wife **Alison**, hope all goes well with the imminent new arrival, **Sgt Ian Patterson**, and **Sig** 'Max' **Maxwell** who will all be crewing the radio workshops with newly promoted **LCpl Gail** 'Where's my tape' **Harper**, maybe that will stop her whinging. As for the rest of the year TM Tp carry on preparing for exercises and working as hard as ever on the kit including the Regimental gene bay with it's newly promoted **SSgt** 'Ollie' **Lambert** at the helm.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Graham Complin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Geoffrey Hawkins BEM**

There have been a number of changes in personalities within the SHQ element of the Squadron over the last few months resulting in a new SSM, FofS and SQMS. Best wishes go to **WO2 (SSM) Keith Fisher** and **WO2 (FofS) Ian Stringer** who leaves on promotion. A hearty welcome is given to **WO2 (SSM) Geoffrey Hawkins** and **WO2 (FofS)** 'Ossie' **Osborne** and their families. Added congratulations are given to the new SSM who has been selected for promotion after just a few weeks of arriving in the Squadron. The new SQMS **SSgt Tony Manktelow** has moved a 100 yards from Waterloo Tp and is now buried in paperwork and stores checks. One of the SQMS's trusty aides **Cpl Halsall** has picked this moment to depart to 216 Sig Sqn in sunny Aldershot. **Sgt Vince Tipple** has kindly returned from a nine month detachment to BATUS and can be continuously heard saying to the Sqn Comd, **Maj Graham Complin**, 'I can tell you everything you need to know about Canada'.

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Alan Garrett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Jim Stillie**

The last few months have been a little topsy-turvy for the mighty and armoured Overloon. With Bowman folk popping in and out and half a Tp's worth of new people posted in, we can now start to settle down for a while. Perhaps soon, we may have enough drivers for all our 'panzers'. In the mean time, the Troop, under the leadership of **Sgt O'Dell**, put in a creditable performance during the Military Skills week and stuffed the Liney Team that the Tp Comd had taken out. It had been a while since we were tested like this and it proved to be good fun and a welcome break to the routine.

Special mentions must go to some of the chaps and chapesses who represented the Squadron during the Regt Sports Week. Under the coaching of **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cox** (Deano, Deano, Deano!), **Sigs** 'Greeny' **Greenhough**, 'Bomber' **Lancaster** and **Lee Shackelton** put up superb fights to allow the Squadron to win the Boxing Competition. The Troop also comprised most of the Football, Rugby and Basketball Teams. Unfortunately, the Squadron's overall result was not what could have been hoped for. But at least we won the Boxing! We could not forget, as he has reminded us, to mention **SSgt Jim Stiflie**'s wonderful try from inside his own half. For once, perhaps he played a game better than he talked it.

With an admirable band and disco, everyone had a superb night and a wonderful time at the Squadron Christmas Party. Well done to **LCpl Natalie Kemp** for taking on the CO and again thanks to **Sgt Cox** and all his team for putting on a great bash. The Troop managed one or two other social functions, including **LCpl** 'Burny' **Burnham** and **Sig Scott Lewis**'s leaving do. There have been a huge amount of new arrivals, so here goes. A warm welcome to **Cpls Lynn** and **Towers**, **LCpls Barney Rumble**, **Tony Stolarek**, **Nickie Wilde** and 'Woody' **Wood** (get in that guardroom) and **Sigs Andrew Bedward**, **Graham Brown**, **Miles Davies**, **Jainie Galliford**, **Chris Hartell**, **Martin Joice**, **Scott**, **Nick Taylor**, **Paul Westerman**, **Judith Hills**, **David Meachem**, **Stuart Southan**, **Guy Thompson**, **Chris Watts** and **Anne Wilson**. Welcome to Bulford and remember, it's not just for Christmas.

We have had to say farewell to a few. **Sgt** 'Ods' **O'Dell** is off to Germany as is **Sig Scott Lewis**. Apparently, they are looking forward to it, can't think why. **LCpl** 'Burny' **Burnham** is off to Holland, the lucky so-and-so. We cannot forget to mention **Sig Bob Penney**, who is escaping to the outside. Good luck in the future to him, **Stephanie** and little **Sophie**. Right now, we are putting up lots of tents on the tank park, practising for the next exercise. With apologies to the Beautiful South, 'This could be Hullavington, Great Chevrill, Great Coombe Farms or the Plain, but Hullavington is anywhere, anywhere but Bulford . . . Anywhere but Bulford'.

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Blair Mitchell**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Call me Andy" **Crawford**

A warm welcome is extended to our new Tp Comd **Capt Blair Mitchell** and also **Sig Andy Carter** posted in from 1 Div Sig Regt. We

keep saying hello and goodbye to most of the Troop as they disappear and reappear from Bowman trials. We recently said farewell to **Cpl Jamie Gardner** who was posted to Royal School of Signals, Blandford.

The once daunting task of the reconstitution of Div Alt Headquarters has at last reached a point where we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel. Much of this is due to the help from the REME and the hard work of **Cpl Smudge 450** and his band of merry bod's. The Tp storeman, **LCpl Steve Hook** is being kept happy with the arrival of constant presents from Bicester, Donnington and anywhere else they may appear from. Work continues at an alarming rate as the deadline for the operational Headquarters looms ever closer. But don't worry we (will) may be ready on time (that will be a first).

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS)** 'Ossie' **Osbourne**

TECH WORKSHOPS

The technicians continue to work hard on the never ending problems caused by the beautiful beasts called 'Panzers'. **Sgt** 'Sooty' **Souter** has recently departed for the wide world of civvy street, our best wishes go with him for the future. Welcomes go to **LCpls Aitcheson**, **Chalmers**, **Gleadall** and **Ross** on their arrival in the Squadron. Congratulations go to **LCpl Dawes** on his recent promotion to Cpl and to **Sgt John Clarke** and **Sgt Dave Martin** on the announcement of their respective engagements, with **Sgt John Clarke** actually naming the day in September 97.

MT/LINE SECTION

The MT and Line bay have been working hard to restore itself to as normal as possible since returning from Bosnia. There are a number of welcomes to the section. **LCpl Sawyer**, **Sigs Hall**, **Mason** and **Sands** from 222 Sig Sqn, **Sigs Davies** and **Griffiths** from the factory. Other new members include **Sigs Maxwell** and **Richardson** and **Cpl Hilton** who has arrived and is swiftly deploying with 257 Sig Sqn to the Falklands. **LCpl Kidner** is now occupying the dizzy heights of i/c MT. **Sgt Morton** has departed from the hectic life of 202 Sig Sqn for the prestigious job of running Blandford's guardroom. Congratulations go to **LCpls Hunt** and **Sawyers** and **Sig Dane** on being selected for promotion to Cpl and LCpl respectively.

POWER SECTION

There have been several newcomers to the power section since the Squadron returned from Op Resolute. Welcome to **Cpl** 'Plug' **Graham** from 1 Div Sig Regt, **LCpl** 'Bungle' **Briggs** from 206 Sig Sqn, **Sig** 'Eddie' **Waring** from HQ Sqn, **Sigs Shaun Derby**, 'Mac' **McArthur**, **Nat Parkes** and **Jamie Slade** all fresh from training. Farewell to **LCpl** 'Jonah' **Jones** who is departing for civvy street and **Sig** 'Mac' **McArthur** who has just arrived and is now leaving for the Falklands with 257 Sig Sqn, but he will return! Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Kit' **Knight** who has been selected for promotion to Cpl, and is awaiting posting to Bassingbourn, and to **LCpl Tony Darkes** on his recent promotion.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj P .W. Glibbery**
SSM — **WO2(SSM) T .P. Crane**

Comd, 206 Sqn, Maj Paul Glibbery to Capt Nik Bruce: 'Bruce, you're admin, where's my new helmet cover?'

December 1996 saw the departure of **Maj Ian Westerman** to HQNI on another medal hunt after his two year tenure as Comd 206 Sig Sqn. The SSIT **WO2** 'Terence' **Crane**, arranged a leaving party for the 'old' OC for all officers and SNCOs past and present, with partners, in the Sergeants' Mess. This was to be interrupted half way through the evening by the remainder of the Squadron who paraded outside the Mess to present him with his leaving gift and wish him all the best for the future. **Maj Westerman** vowed that by the end of the year he would have moved the whole Squadron out to the Province in one way or another. He may well have been right because so far that's where we all seem to be heading. At the start of the new year **Maj Paul Glittery** hung up his Whitehall slippers and picked up the Squadron reins with great fervour. He was overheard saying to the Sqn 21C, **Capt Craig Sutherland**, 'Give me lots of work as long as there's no paperwork or desks involved!' The entire Squadron wish the 'new' OC an enjoyable and interesting tour. Congratulations must also go to **Capt Coulston** on his promotion and to **WO2 (SSM) Terry Crane** (Right youse lot) and **WO2 (FofS) Dave Ball** on their well deserved selection for promotion to WO1. Finally a belated welcome to the SQMS, **SSgt** 'Dusty' **Miller**, who arrived over eight months ago and hasn't let me forget.

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt A. Coulston**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt C. Lloyd**

On 12 December 1996, Inkerman Tp went on Ex Educating Rhino. This was to be the final exercise of the year which took us to Cherbourg, France. On board the ferry we then became aware of a famous actor in our midst, Emmerdale's one and only Mr Eric Pollard! After a Troop photo with him and some sad collection of autographs we were in France. After a short but furious bout of cross country shopping in France and an eventful ferry crossing home we were back in Blighty for our well deserved tea and medals!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS) D. C. Ball**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt P. Barber**

There have been a couple of changes in the Troop since the last issue. We say a fond farewell to **Cpl Sibbald** and **Sig Fitzpatrick** who have moved to 257 Tp in readiness for the Falklands. We hear that 'Fitz' has a new job as a Double Glazing Salesman, good luck to you both. New to the Tp are **Sgt** 'Steve Davis' **Robinson**, **Cpl** 'Skele-Bob' **Mason** and **LCpl** 'Sig' 'Sproggy Tech' **Rigby** all in the Tech Workshops. We welcome back **Sig Kane** who has undergone a re-trade and is now a Driver Electrician in the Troop and finally **Sig** 'Football Hooligan' **Bracken**. Congratulations go to **Sig Harrington** on getting married and passing his HGV at long last. It's a pity the CDT team doesn't offer re-tests. The Troop has had a busy three months with the prep for RSIT. We then had to prep for Ex Red Tricorn I and First Foray, which is where this article was written. **Cpl** 'Cee' **Mason** has managed to cover herself with mud and **Cpl Rich Hale** had an interesting time deployed with 216 (Para) Sig Sqn on the Plain! All in all its been a good exercise so far–but the GITS arrive tomorrow!

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt N. C. Bruce**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt C. D. Kidd**

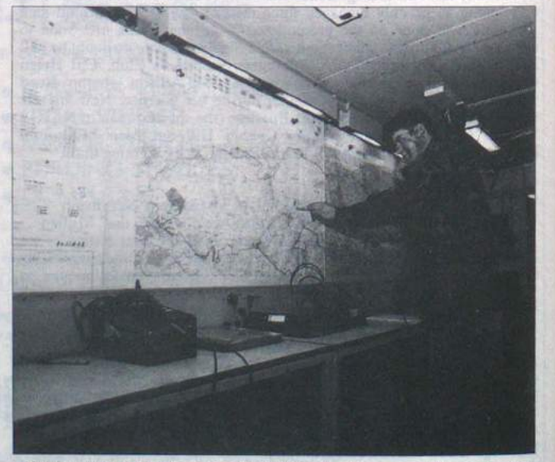
Once again our glorious HQ for the Div Spt Gp, the DRASH (Dodgy Rubber Area where Staff Hangout) was the focus of attention for visiting dignitaries. This time the Indian Army SOinC (whose command is the same size as the entire British Army) was our special visitor and was greeted by **LCpl Jock Campbell**'s silver tongue and **Sgt Andy Mapstone**'s chatter. We have also had everyone from our SOinC to **Brig Griffin** to the COS and DCOS of HQ 3 (UK) Div visiting our unusual tentage system which comes to the end of its trial at the end of February 1997.

Finally we have to say a sad farewell to **Sig** 'Temps' **Templeman** who got himself re-traded and posted to COMMCEN Wilton and **LCpl Keithy Langan** who leaves on promotion to show the TA a thing or two.

CAMBRAI TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt J. H. Harvey**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Day**

At this point our new Troopy, **2Lt** 'Joe' **Harvey**, was introduced to the fold on his Short Service Limited Commission. He enjoyed these first two weeks in the Squadron, although his account of things is by all means a little hazy and distant! **2Lt Jamie McGregor** moved on to new pastures (well out to grass) in RHQ and **Sig** 'Muz' **Murray** departed for 222 Sig Squadron. Both are wished good luck for the future.



2Lt Joe Harvey in Comms Ops DSG, 'Hello . . . could someone get the MO–my finger appears to be stuck to this map board'

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Major R. A. Mulholland**
SSM — **WO2(SSM) G. Johnson**

SHQ TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt S. N. Meadowcroft BEM**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt V. D. Kimber**

After yet another period of upheaval the Troop would appear to have settled down into some semblance of normality. Farewell to **Sgt** 'Ollie' **Lambert** on promotion to HQ Sqn, **Cpls Nick Campbell**, **Stu Cox**, 'Wilkie' **Wilkinson** and **LCpls** 'Randy' **Randerson** and 'Polly' **Pollitt** to 257 Sig Sqn, enjoy the snow and penguins guys. Also **Cpls** 'Daz' **Cattle** and **Roger Doak** on their TI course. Welcome to the following, **Sgts Neil Sorley** and 'Drew' **Thomson**, **Cpls Brett Spruce**, **Mike Saban** and 'Dickie' **Dickinson**, **Sigs** 'Juan' **Periera** and 'Flo' **Flory**.

The local hostelry certainly enjoys our Troops comings and goings as we seem to be having 'Going Away' drinks at least once a month. **Cpl Kev** 'Donkey' **Waring** is always good for a few slabs as is the Tp Comd **Capt** 'Elvis' **Meadowcroft**.

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt N. Morris**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt B. Hogg**

The Troop is currently on Ex Red Tricorn 1000, with a list of new personnel too long to mention. Having spent days on ROP's prior to Christmas **Sig** 'Spawn' **Savage** was selected from a cast of thousands to be the SOINC(A) driver and subsequently was promoted to LCpl, congratulations from all the Troop. Mentions must be made of the two RTA's over the Christmas break. **2Lt** 'Schumacher' **Morris** totalled his F I and has been seen racing round Bulford in a rather cheeky, jet black Mini and **LCpl Savage** decided to have a head on with another driver (SOINC(A) beware). No other parties injured. **Sgt** 'Square eyes' **Morgan** remained glued to the SEGA system throughout the exercise, it would seem he is more competent at SEGA systems than Ptarmigan systems (only joking). **Sig** 'Trevor' **Bailey** has a new companion in the Radio Penthouse in the form of **Sig** 'Blondie' **Smith**, well at least it is warmer in there now and I can't seem to work out why though.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt F. Hay**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Hill**

The past few weeks have seen a number of changes in the Troop. **Lt Bosley** has departed for the sunny climes of the Falklands. The replacement **Lt** 'Fifi' **Hay** moved across from Balaclava Tp along with **Sgt** 'Mild' **Hamlet**, **LCpl Steve Wells** and **Sig** 'Bart' **Homer**. Joining us from other Regiment's are **Cpls Lester**, **Towers** and **LCpl Pete Roggart**.

The year has started off with a two week exercise on Salisbury Plain, with **Sig** 'Victor Meldrew' **Buckingham** remaining his usual cheerful self, especially when he gets the chance to move from one hill to another then back again (all night). Keep smiling **Billy! Sgt Andy Beel** has spent most of the exercise finding who has the best drill boots for his Sgt's course and where he can find the best pasty in NATO. The Troop also had a visit from **WO2** 'Geordie' **Marshall** who obviously misses the good old days with 222 Sig Sqn and has to keep coming back to see us all. You're only allowed a cup of tea if you promise to tab in for it, sir!

Finally, congratulations go to **Sgt Mark Hamlet**, who was recently awarded his LS & GC medal by the Master of Signals.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt G. Tyndale**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt I. Blair**

First there was light, then came the reincarnation of Sharjah after the name of Balaclava was laid to rest. The year of 1997 started well with six days leave, then it was back to reality with a bump, a CO's inspection day, BFT, CFT and a range day from hell. Then it was back to what Sharjah (TN093) do best, exercise! After two moves with one being only two paces right close march, to get things squared away at Div Main. The whole exercise was made easier by the influx of Troops posted in **Cpls** 'Eve' **Eden** and 'Jack' **Hawkins**, **LCpl** 'Babs admin' **Williams** and **Sig Leroy Wilson-Cochran** to replace **Cpl** 'Stripe of power' **Gingell**, **LCpls** 'Taff' **Evans**, 'Burps' **Belcher**, **Sigs** 'Stereo Type Jock' **Lyons** and how could we forget **2Lt** 'Pavaroti' **Tyndale** (Please don't sing next Christmas) who is going to the RSS to get re-educated. The Look Forward Plus Side–More Exercises, Down Side–Even more Exercises.

257 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Matt Fensom**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Steve Mitchell**

When the Regiment deployed to Bosnia in its entirety in January 1996, 257 Sig Sqn was temporarily disbanded. The Squadron reformed on the 6 January 1997, under command of **Maj** 'Seize the opportunity' **Fensom**. 257 Sig Sqn will be providing the Army Element of the JCUFI deployment from the 3 March until late August 1997. The Squadron has been formed from various sources, including elements of the Regiment, 1 and 19 Bde Sig Sqn and several TA units.

The Squadron had just two months to form and prepare itself for the imminent deployment. Almost immediately soldiers from the newly formed Squadron were thrown to the four winds on pre-deployment courses. Several days have been spent running BFTs and ranges in order to pass ATDS. A week long recce deployed at the end of January to enable plans to be made and to enable **SSgt Nuttall** to make his video 'The Falkland Islands–Is this a wind up?'

The necessary luxuries have now been packed into MFO boxes and sent so there is no turning back. The Squadron is now deployed on the Regimental and Divisional exercises for two weeks before a week of leave. The Squadron will parade, for the first time, in entirety, on the 25 February 1997, three days before the advance party depart!

SALAMANCA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Helen Bosley**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Matt Nuttall**

Like the Phoenix from the flames, Salamanca Tp has risen again! The Troop are soon to form the Army element of Charlie Tp, and will marry up with soldiers from 21 Sig Regt and 259 Sig Sqn, who are already deployed in place. The RAF will form a section within the Troop as the Crypto Maintenance Team.

With the Troop widely dispersed around the Regiment, Salisbury Plain and at Blandford on courses, administration has been an interesting challenge. **Sgt Cooper** cruised up to sunny Yorkshire in search of **Sig** 'which planet' **Astbury**'s roots. **Sgt Williams** moseyed on down to Newport on a mission to pick up various Troop passports and **LCpl Bisland** has been all over Salisbury Plain, to every location possible to pass messages or pick people up for kit issue. **SSgt Nuttall** has been greatly challenged during the period. His main difficulty has been the decision as to whether to have just the one or two cups of coffee. **Lt Bosley** has caused the Troop seniors much amusement by listing the contents of her MFO box in minute detail!

As I write, the Troop is tying up loose ends prior to leave and the deployment. Next time you hear from us we will have taken the 'Timmy' from "Brize" via 'ASI' to 'Empers' as 2 Sigs would say.

BALACLAVA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Jason Gray**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ian Flooks**

Captains log, stardate 6 January 1997. The crew of the USS Balaclava have just been assembled in preparation for its first mission to boldly go, where no other Troop can be got to go. At the helm, we have our illustrious leader **Lt** 'good idea' **Gray** ably assisted by **SSgt Flooks**. Flanked by the brew drinking instructors.

The first task was to fine-tune our lads true warrior abilities, so off to the ranges to give those extremely fast moving, inanimate figure 11 targets a good malleting. Then it was time for a competition to show off the physical prowess of the Troop, well, we had a BFT. The next task was to lend our new-born warriors to the Regiment for a two week exercise. Those not involved in the exercise were invited on an all expenses paid holiday residing in the glamorous hotel de la Guardroom Picton Barracks. Luxuries include two hour sessions of R&R on the main porch, overlooking the VCP (lucky lads eh). This luxury lifestyle is only to be short lived, the lads will have to endure ten days leave before returning for the Squadron pre-deployment bash. Then it is off to sample the chilly delights of a tiny island 8000 miles away, some people have all the luck!

A QUICK WORD FROM THE TA ELEMENT

It was the 6 January 1997, and a bunch of TA misfit volunteers, from across the country arrived ready for deployment to the Falklands. We were to be known as 'The Specials'. There were 12 of us ranging from areas such as Liverpool, Nottingham, Newcastle and London. We were to be introduced to the rest of what was to become 257 Sqn via the Kiwi (the local watering hole). **Sig** 'Buspass' **Dodds** became a particular chum of the SSM, **WO2 Mitchell**, his jumper will never be the same. **LCpl** 'sparkplug' **Donovan**, whose brightness glows in fits and starts and **LCpl** 'Dana' **Scully**, a true ferry cross the Mersey form part of the team. And we must not forget **Sig** 'mouth' **Hall**, once met never forgotten, but always heard.

So the intrepid bunch are waiting patiently to go to the land of penguins and sheep, not forgetting bars and countless opportunities for fresh air. The only thing certain, no matter what happens, a good time will be had by all, and the people of the hilly islands had better beware.

SWORD TROOP

Tp. Comd — **SSgt (FofS)** 'Frankie' **Potts**

The Squadron vehicle maintenance falls to the responsibility of Sword Tp the cutting edge. The Troop has the arduous task to maintain three trunk nodes worth of assets so it is down to a detailed work programme from **FofS Potts**. The work continues and I dare say that the Troop will be glad to lose the loiterers from the garages so that they can get on with some proper work again!

STOP PRESS

The Regiment was delighted to hear the results of the recent Infantry and R Signals WO2 to WO1 Promotion Boards. Warmest congratulations to the following Warrant Officers on their selection for promotion to WO1:

WO2 (FofS) Ball	206 Sig Sqn
WO2 (SSM) T. Crane	206 Sig Sqn
WO2 (SSM) G. B. Hawkins	202 Sig Sqn
WO2 (SSM) G. R. Johnson	222 Sig Sqn
WO2 (RQMS) J. Ramsay	HLDRS

7 Sig Regt
BFPO 35

HQ SQUADRON
TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt** 'Noddy' **Baugh MBE**
FofS	**WO1 (FofS) Carl Shead MBE**

After a long absence, the Troop finally fights for a say in the Regimental *Wire* notes from the mighty Seven. We have started the year, holding the title as the busiest workplace in the unit, after such comments from many of the latest batch of young techs. As it's 1700 hrs, why are we still here when the rest of the Regiment is a ghost town! Troop management seems to just ignore other taskings as faulty equipment comes piling through the Troop front door as Squadrons clear their shelves.

We have just finished hosting the screening team from 600 Sig Tp, well marshalled by **WO2 (FofS) Mick Campbell** who have done us proud. Inspected the fleet, pointed out the errors of our ways, gave the systems techs a hard time and the remainder of us just concentrated on our one other focus, the forthcoming Board of Officers.

TM Tp had a busy time in '96. Along with the rest of the Regiment, we holidayed in Bosnia and we are all glad to be back in an icy, cold Germany where the bars are open longer. Some did manage to escape throughout the year from Op Resolute, namely on one of the TOT's leave passes you can obtain free. That is a Sergeants Course, Corporals Course or Leadership Course attendance. Many have successfully completed these courses in the last year, and the Boss is striving to get others what they want, or need.

Back now at base, work continues at a pace with the 'post Bosnia effect' still hitting us hard along with forthcoming PRE's, REME Tels inspections, Rhine Workshops programmes, which all clash with ones own plan to achieve something. By the time everything is in order (never), it will probably fall apart again as the Troop deploys on the first exercises of the year, Woodland Flight in April. It gives us a chance to say we're not all perfect, as techs normally are, but we are all human and make mistakes and believe me, we do.

The Troop manpower has seen some changes in personnel, saying farewell to our long-standing Troop **SSgt Mick Scott** and his wife **Marie** who leave for civvy street. We wish them well. His replacement, **SSgt Huw Evans** was quickly deployed to Bosnia near the end of last year, to get his medal qualifying time in. He has quietly rearranged the office and now the phone rings about mountaineering or Para gliding. Other farewells have included **Sgts Pete Taylor** and **Jim Logan** to Blandford, **Steve Johnson** to the TA, **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Askew** on his T1, **Cpl Brooks** to NI and **Paul Dowd** to civvy street.

The new baby techs come in batches and we had another influx last September. Straight from the factory, bless them, they go straight under the wings of their father figure, the FofS and the trainers, **Sgts Steve Bruce** and **Mark Todd**. At least here they can learn to blow things up, ask young **LCpl Evans** in the radio bay. We also have three baby telemechs in **Sigs Creighton**, **Quinn** and **Mitchell**. May you all enjoy your short stay before the TOT moves you out to the big Squadrons down the road.

Career enhancement goes on and attempting to get through FofS selection is **Sgts Jamie Chambers**, **Mark Todd**, 'Gaz' **Clapham** and **Dave Coffey**. Awaiting departure on a T1 course is **Cpl** 'Mus' **Musgrove** and awaiting the next T1 exam are **Cpls Bill Bailey**, 'Smiler' **Bevan** and 'Thomo' **Thomas**. These guys study hard under the Regimental Tech Trg scheme on the homework set by the Alternate Regimental Foreman 1996, **WO2 Lloyd Bowlby**. Our congratulations to him and his family on his selection for promotion and in posting. We hope he gets the posting move he dreams about.

Any of you out there, want a job in the mighty Seven, are good with AESP's or modifications, or better still can even use a screwdriver and think on your feet then ;

WE NEED YOU HERE NOW.

Give us a ring. In the meantime, back to the grind, this is me, **Sgt Craig Brankin** closing down till the next time.

LAD

The generator repair section within the LAD provided 2nd Line Sp to all the Regt's DEs, as detachments went onto mains power. The opportunity was taken to overhaul the whole 20Kw fleet, as this equipment had been exposed to severe climatic, operational and maintenance problems during the winter. Over 20 hours work was carried out on each, giving valuable experience to our three crews (Sprogs), especially as they were all painted.

The repair section completed seven 20Kw engine changes in the year and were in the end, quicker than a quick fit fitter. During the deployment, we were approached by ARRC Power Tp to assist with repairs on eleven 40Kw generators, which had baffled the minds of the Corps of Royal Engineers.

Other tasks were the installation of two civvy generators, one into the Swedish Embassy although no Swedish birds provided the brews in the cold. The other was a generator fitted in a civvy school in Sarajevo. OC LAD received a free meal down town in thanks for all his hard work, not! Now back in Krefeld, we are all set to refurbish our working accommodation in the LAD and formulating the never ending inspection and repair procedures.

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Alan Stringer**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tony Barry**

The Squadron has finally reformed after carrying the rest of the Regiment for the last year in Bosnia. 229 is back! Most of the hierarchy in SHQ is new, with more changes than the backroom staff at Manchester City and Newcastle combined (although there hasn't been quite the same media coverage as the resignation of Kevin Keegan). The new OC replaces **Maj David Powell** who is off to do something less interesting in the MoD. **SSM Tony Barry** is finding out that life in the main stream Army is different to life in the OTC; he actually has to work for a living here! He replaces **WO2 (SSM)** 'Stan' **Stanford** now basking in the luxury of Civ Div. **FofS** 'Golf Clubs' **Henly** is also living in Civ Div, but working for 33 Sig Regt (V), and **YofS John Evans** has defected to 230 Sig Sqn.

In the Ops cell **FofS Frank** 'Pinky' **Cowan** and **YofS Hodge** 'Perky' **Arthurs** are continuing their partnership, with the usual results. We are a bit concerned what exactly the results are (if any). **SSgt Rab Marshall** has defected to HQ Sqn as the acting SSM for six months, to be replaced by **Sgt Gary Williams** who is making a good job of looking busy. Congratulations to the 'Still' **Cpl Des Holroyd** on his long awaited promotion to Sgt. He is straining at the leash to take up his new appointment within the Sgts' Mess. He takes over in the MT from the 'Now' **SSgt Jimmy Rock**, along with his new opo **Cpl Chris Wilson**.

Lastly, (and definitely leastly) life in the tech workshops has been varied and interesting–yes it really has! **LCpl Andy Hunter** has been given a transfer from HQ Sqn, and replaces **Cpl Andy** 'fish' **Carnegie** who is off to the Falklands with 3 Div, where he will be training for the water polo team in the cool waters off Port Stanley. The only question that remains unanswered in the workshops is what does **Sgt Pete** 'part-time' **Laird** do all day. Answers on a post card to the Blue Peter 'build a comms system out of a cornflake packet' appeal.

NOVEMBER 1 TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Stewart Scott**
SSgt	**SSgt Steve Owen**

These notes are dedicated to welcoming the boys of N1 back to the fold on our return from Bosnia, and the welcomes and the farewells that go with it. Firstly it is goodbye to the illustrious **SSgt Mark Anderson** who leaves us on promotion to go and work in the systems wing at Stalag Blandford. He takes the stigma of 'pots and pans' Troop with him. Taking over as Tp SSgt is **Stevie Owen**, after his promotion as the troop Radio Relay Recce Sgt. He is off to 2 Sig Regt in February and we wish him the best of luck. We have also been issued with one new Troop Commander, complete with the issue 'straight out of the factory' crayon set for colouring in things on exercise. **Sgts Gaz Beardall** and **Chris Hickman** join us from Z Tp (sub titled Rugby Tp).

Changes at the top are fast and furious, and the only one not to be moving seems to be (me) the author, **Sig Stu** 'Sentimental' **Manaton**. A tear was brought to my eye when I heard that **Sig** 'James Dean' **Brown**, the lone drinker departed for 3 Div. I cried when I heard that Inter Tp postings would rob us all of the company and camaraderie of **Sig Rob Garner**, a poor swap for **Sig** 'Stu-pid' **Stewart**. His reputation as a driving instructor has earned him a 'L' plate. The biggest heart wrench of all was the move of **LCpl** 'Jouls' **Neil** who moves to N3. My heart soared, however, as we welcomed **LCpl Sean Bysouth** and **LCpl Lee Glaves**.

Father Christmas promised us the best present of all last year. He came out to the vehicle park, the highest point in Krefeld and promised that all the Radio Relay operators that work up there in the arctic and wind swept conditions could come down and work in the shelter of the secure garages. We have yet to unwrap this present, but all live in hope that it may actually happen. Lastly there is some serious weight loss to be done after the Christmas festivities. In particular **Sig Matt** 'Billy Bunter' **Dudman** and **Sig Alvin** 'Santa' **Carlyon** need to be able to see their toes by the next edition, before it is too late.

NOVEMBER 2 TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Ian Heath**
SSgt	**SSgt Tom Lappin**

The reformation of the Troop has been the priority during the last two months, second only to enjoying the long periods of leave granted on our return from Bosnia. We have yet to see whether we have been allocated more vehicles than we have personnel, but so long as we have nothing to do with the 2IC's car and its maintenance there will be no complaints here.

There have been a number of name changes within the Troop not least of all the title of the Troop. Farewells go to **SSgt Ronnie Brent** off to Civ Div, and **LCpls Billy Morris** and 'Chalky' **White**. Welcome to **Capt** 'Tarquin' **Heath**, **Sgt** 'Kato' **Copper**, **Cpl** 'Willy' **Wilcock**, **LCpl Paul Houndsell** and **Sig** 'Fatlad' **Haslam**. Lastly Hello and goodbye to **SSgt Tom Lappin**, who is off to York with his Susuki 600.

The Troop has now to look forward to another three weeks leave at the end of the month, although the guys are very reluctant to take this leave due to the relationships they've struck up with their detachments. Something like that anyway. The Troop look forward to the return of **LCpl** 'My tops off again' **Slack** from BWT. We eagerly await the far fetched stories that will accompany his return. The Troop gladly sends him on his way to 2 Sig Regt in early February 1997 (along with most of the Squadron).

NOVEMBER 3 TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Trudy Robinson**
SSgt	**SSgt Paul Robson**

This month N3 says a sad farewell to many a Troop personality. **Sgt** 'Thomo' **Thompson** and **LCpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** are posted to 230 Sig Sqn, soon to be part of 16 Sig Regt. **LCpl Tracy Ross** and **Sig Andy** 'Where's my present' **Williams** are posted to 3 ADSR. **LCpl** 'Chalky' **White** has moved across the hall to N2 after his promotion, and is soon to go to 231 Sqn. Lastly, **LCpl Paul Hounsell** is also off next door to N2.

On a happier note the Troop wishes to extend a warm welcome to those who have just joined us. The first of which is the new Tp Comd **Lt Trudy** 'I'll be there next week' **Robinson** from 14 Sig Regt. **SSgt Paul** 'Where's my egg banjo' **Robson** has been posted in from 4 CCT in London, and we are doing our best to work him hard to make up for the easy life he has had over the last few years. The plan seems to be working well–get those stock sheets done! **Sgt Kev Greenwood** is also posted in from ATR Bassingbourn, and has brought his trunk of military qualifications with him. Also in are **Cpl Dave** 'Inspector Gadget' **Turton**, **LCpl Steve Banks** and **Sigs Jim Bonney**, 'Annie' **Lennox**, **Mark Bowcott**, 'Taff' **Smith**, and **John Wharton**. All in all most of the Troop is new!

Lastly, but most important of all the Troop would like to congratulate **LCpl** 'Jules' **Neil** on being awarded the honourable position of Tp storeman.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON
SHQ TROOP
by SSgt Ian Davies

To the uninitiated SHQ or as we prefer to know it, Supreme Headquarters, 230 Sig Sqn are an egotistical gregarious Tp of some eight souls. Top of the heap, as they say, is the OC, **Maj A. J. Wood**. Now as far as OCs go, and lets not forget just who writes the confidentials here, he's a fairly good egg, a bit new but seems eager to learn. Number 2, not unnaturally is the 2IC, who, doing a modern day imitation of 'Hot Lips Hoolahan' is **Capt L. V. Tomkins**, now 'V' as she's known to her friends or Teflon desk to others is also a recent addition, and also very welcome even with the occasional funny noises on sneezing!

Now with all the commissioned stuff out of the way let's get on and assassinate a few other characters. First in line has to be the Sergeant Major, **WO2 (SSM) Kenny Sykes**, yet another new boy on the team whose ability to run vast distances at great speeds and still moan that he can't get any training in are legendary. Next up in the pecking order is big **Frank**. **SSgt (SQMS) Frank Campbell** has, as they say, got physical presence. Wind this man up at your peril, **Frank** is always busy even when he's not! However, as a time served member of the crew, and a graduate of several changes of management, he's big enough and ugly enough to keep him on your side.

This only leaves the Ops shower, and in no particular order they are; **SSgt Graham Beech**, again newly arrived, this one from 2 Sig Regt, apparently having to work for a living was unexpected and a bit of a shock. **SSgt (YofS) Jon Evans** came to the Squadron only recently from within the Regiment and his prowess with the Squadron Database is almost on a par with his coffee facilities? The last two ne'er-do-wells are **SSgt (FofS) Rick Griffiths**, and the author, **SSgt Ian Davies**. The great **Rickardo** is not often seen, and a passing resemblance to Lord Lucan is as they say entirely coincidental, whilst **Ianskii** is seldom seen out of Ops and never more than an arms length away from some money, without a doubt his favourite subject.

To all the 'new kids' welcome and hope you enjoy your stay with 230. To everyone who recently left, the **SSgt Raymondo Counley**'s and **SSgt (YofS) Mark** 'Admin nightmare' **Whiting**'s, of this world keep up the good work and thanks for all your efforts. SHQ are at present preparing for the move to JHQ, and looking forward to the challenges and tribulations of working with a new Regiment, mind you haven't we done this a couple of times before?

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj K. Whitehead**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Pellant**

The Squadron has had an intense period reconstituting post Op Resolute. There have been numerous changes in establishment, man power and terminology. Satellite Tp has now joined 232 Sig Sqn and the remaining Troops have been renamed to more traditional titles. MAN 97 and 98 have become Oscar and Papa whilst Support Tp has fallen in line to become Quebec Tp. Whilst the main effort has gone towards re-establishing assets there have been a few highlights to relieve the tedium of serial number tracing. The Squadron Reconstitution Party was held at the Stadtwaldhaus, Krefeld in January, to celebrate the safe return from Bosnia and to thank the families for their support during 1996. A sumptuous and thoroughly successful evening was had by all who attended and thanks must go to **Sgt Easter** who organized the whole affair.

2Lt Emily Richards ran a successful Inter-Troop Sports Day, with the Troops competing at football, volleyball and basketball. Papa Tp, ably led by **Capt Kyle Barker** stole the day as overall winners. The post competition happy hour held a few surprises for **Cpl Clarke** and **LCpl Morris** who were promoted.

Promotion success also for **WO2 (SSM)** 'Gunny' **Pellant** who is posted to 15 Sig Regt as RSM, to **LCpl Higgins** and to **Lt Nick Yardley** who loses his 'one pip wonder' status. In a time of reorganisation there have been too many farewells to mention them all. A few in particular have made a significant contribution to the Squadron and deserve recognition. **Maj Gus Colville** has moved to fill the post of Regimental Training Major, taking his Scottish Tartan and the best wishes of the Squadron with him. **Cpl Les Robinson** was left speechless on his last day in the Squadron as he watched his colleagues in the Troop smash his cherished mountain bike into pieces. Fortunately his horror was soon transformed to delight by the gleaming new mountain bike that his Troop presented him with. Finally, welcomes to the new members of the Squadron, **Maj Keith Whitehead**, **SSgt Rick Hannah**, and **Sig Carle**.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Since returning from Bosnia, the Squadron has taken a well deserved Christmas leave. We are pleased to welcome **Sig** 'Binman' **Danilly** from training and also **Cpl Richardson** from Lisburn and also to **2Lt Lloyd** as our new Tp Boss.

We sadly say our farewells to **LCpl Phil** 'Grumpy' **Oulton** who departs to 3 Div upon promotion and also to **LCpl** 'Jo' **Biddle** on promotion also to 3 Div, **Andy** 'Cruncher' **Lockyear** on promotion to 30 Sig Regt and finally to **SSgt** 'Chalky' 'Firestarter' **White** and his wife **Sarah** also on promotion to QUOTC.

9 Sig Regt (R)
BFPO 59

CLOSURE OF 2 SQUADRON, 9 SIGNAL REGIMENT (RADIO)

On 6 December 1996 at 1200hrs local, 2 Sqn, 9 Sig Regt (R) ceased to communicate and was officially closed after much sterling service to the Regiment. The day was marked by a closing down ceremony which began with the CO, **Lt Col Tim Inshaw**, aided by the OC, **Maj Jon Watt** sending a message over the communications terminal formally and finally notifying all subscribers of the closure of 2 Sqn. Next came a short parade at which point the acting SSM, **WO2 Phil Ashworth**, presented the CO with a commemorative plaque, the CO then addressed the Tri Service Squadron, thanking them for their hard work over the years. The Squadron marched off accompanied by a piper under the watchful eye of the three services senior Warrant Officers.

With the tricky bit over (drill), the Squadron mounted transport to the Four Mile Inn for light refreshments. The mood was cheerful and the closure of the Squadron (because it had been inevitable for a long while) only caused a little of the sadness usually associated with disbandment. It was, rather, a celebration of past achievements over the years. Former members of the Squadron were also present, as well as **Mr Alan Ash** of Toyota Motors who kindly sponsored the design and production of the commemorative plaque which will be proudly displayed in RHQ.

The Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Squadron have now either been retained in the Regiment or moved on to various units in the UK. The Squadron faced a steady draw down over the past 18 months, leaving only

Maj Jon Watt handing over the ceremonial key to the CO, Lt Col Tim Inshaw, marking the end of 2 Sqn Ops. Surrounding them, *L-R*: WO2 Moye, RSM Duckworth, WO Herbert, WO Shaw, Mr John Evans

about 50 personnel on the final parade. When you consider the Squadron was made up of four Troops, each 70 strong as well as two Troops of about 40, you can see what a dramatic change the closure has made to life in Ayios Nikolaos and to the Regiment.

TRAINING WING TROPHY–15 NOVEMBER 1996

Training Wing Trophy is an annual military skills competition run by the Regt Trg Wing and conducted in and around the area of Ayios Nikolaos. This year's event was planned and conducted by **Capt Gordon Anderson** and **SSgt** 'Taff' **Webb**, with members of the Trg Wing and eager 'volunteers' from the Regiment running the stands.

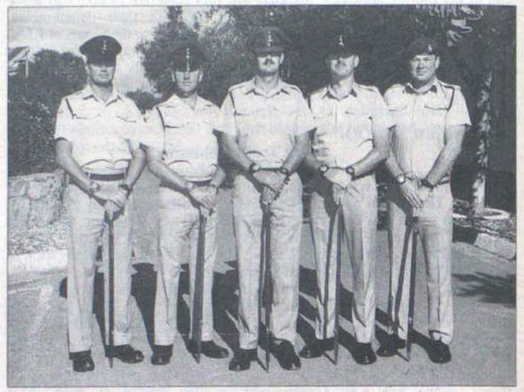
Four teams took part in this year's competition, which was less than previous years due to the effects of drawdown. Each team consisted of 8 persons from HQ Sqn, 1 Sqn, 3 Sqn and a composite team drawn from the Unit of personnel who wanted to play

The competition started with an inspection by **WO1 RSM John Duckworth**, closely followed by a 'gentle' warm up over the assault course under the guidance of **SSgt** 'Fewy' **Wiscombe** and **LCpl Pete Dimmack**. The teams then proceeded around a 12km course encountering various stands and tasks which had to be completed before a team could then proceed. The second stand was the Recognition and run by **Sgt Mick Roe**. Some teams had difficulty in finding this stand as it was buried into a rock face. This was then followed by a Weapons stand conducted by **Sgt** 'crash helmet head' **John Ford**. The Map Reading stand which was set by **Sgt Andy Roberts**, posed a few problems, but the teams appeared to overcome these–eventually. The teams then went on to the First Aid stand with **Sgt Si Donnelly**, a vehicle manoeuvring stand set by **SSgt** 'Tufty' **Browitt** with his faithful side kick **Cpl** 'Zak Dingle' **Robinson** and a command task organised by **Cpl Barney** 'I'm learning how to use crayons' **Revell**.

The final event was a shoot on the 30 metre range conducted by **SSgt** 'bouncing boy' **Steve Behan** who had been let out of his kennel for the day. The only complication of the day was when the HQ Sqn team, under the guidance of **WO2 Tony Slaney** and **Sgt Dave Boswell** disappeared for 45 minutes to reappear close to Famagusta (we think they went on a sight seeing tour as they were in the area). The competition concluded with the presentation of prizes by the CO, **Lt Col Inshaw** after a closely fought competition. The final positions and scores were:

HQ Sqn	1st	54 pts
1 Sqn	2nd	53 pts
3 Sqn	3rd	53 pts
Composite Team	4th	49 pts

An excellent run time for the competition was achieved by 3 Sqn of 1 hour, 28 minutes and 32 seconds. A good day was had by all, followed by a rapid intake of 'fluid' to rehydrate the weary bodies.



A Pride of Sergeant Majors
L-R: SSM Bob Banner (HQ Sqn), SSM Bob Stanton (1 Sqn), RSM John Duckworth, SSM Colin Milne (2 Sqn), SSM Martin Thirsk (3 Sqn). Pose for a photograph prior to the demise of 2 Sqn. They were very keen to display the new watches (genuine Casios) they had each bought whilst shopping in Famagusta.

14 Sig Regt (EW)

LANYARD TROPHY

This years' competition saw a return to the infamous Black Mountains of Abergyffenny. The course consisted of a 40 mile loop, starting at Cwrt-y-gollen Training Camp and finishing to the North of Crickhowell. The terrain was, as to be expected, 'gentle and undulating', with what appeared to be a lot more ups than downs. It was a very demanding course made all the more interesting with the additional battle against atrocious weather conditions, making this one of the toughest competitions to be held for a long time.

The initial training had gone well with the breathtaking scenery of the Pembrokeshire coastline providing the much needed hill work and mileage in preparation for the real thing.

The morning of the competition started with that unavoidable early start, and final preparations, including the addition of good old zinc oxide, were made. Bergens were weighed under the watchful eye of 216 Sig Sqn followed by 'Green On', go. Despite a rather rapid pace, although the team captain, **Maj Fred Bancroft** disagrees, the team soon settled into a steady pace concentrating on the task ahead and the necessity for good team spirit. Despite periods where tiredness took its toll, we were provided with that much needed support and encouragement by the admin team led by **WO2** 'Geordie' **Harvey**. The sight of the finish, approx two miles away, on descending out of the mist provided a new lease of life and on crossing the finishing line the pain and torture of the last 40 miles, and time of 11 hrs and 32 mins were forgotten with talk of how we could improve for next year.

Lanyard Trophy Team
Back Row (*L to R*): SSgt Kev Baxter, SSgt Martin Walsh , Sgt Mumford, LCpl Dave Mackay, Maj Fred Bancroft, WO2 'Geordie' Harvey, Sgt 'Geordie' Hall,
Front Row (*L to R*): Sig Andy Clarke, LCpl Paul Chester, Cpl Lee Hopkins, SSgt Ian Drew, Sgt Ian Giles

5 DIV BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

After an intense training schedule of the two previous dinner times and a gruelling qualifying session against the back roads of Wales, M4, M5 and M42, the Regimental Basketball Squad of eight took to the court in the final of the 5 Div Basketball Championships against last years' winners, 30 Sig Regt.

The Regiment made a poor start to the match with enough 'bricks' being thrown up to finish Petrocelli's house. Tactical changes were made by coach **Capt J. J. Smith**, with the tired legs of **LCpl** 'Magic' **Lee** being replaced by **Sig** 'Bugsy' **Young**, who was in turn replaced by **Cpl** 'Air' **Dawson**, still the Regiment ran out second best at the end of the first half 17–10. The team talk at half time was straight to the point and with the promise of an extra days 'training' in London for the next round, a renewed vigour was installed.

Strong rebounding by the 'Big men', **Capt J. J. Smith**, **SSgt** 'Sir Charles' **Jones** and **Sig** 'The Real Thing' **Clarke** and hard hustling at the top of the key by **LCpl** 'Hustle' **Heads** brought the game back to 30–28 in 30 Sigs favour.

The last few minutes of the game saw 14 Sig Regt (EW) steal the game with a couple of fast breaks that broke the back of the opposition. With the final score of 34–31 to 14 Sig Regt (EW), we look forward to the hard training sessions in the next, unfortunately they are in sunny London.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

December saw the end of an era with **Lt Col Tony Russ** handing over command of 14 Sig Regt (EW) to **Lt Col Ian MacKenzie**. **Lt Col Russ** commanded 14 Sig Regt (EW) for over two and half turbulent years and moved the Regt from Osnabruck to Brawdy as well as fulfilling a large commitment to Bosnia. After addressing the Regiment and planting the customary tree outside RHQ, he took his place in a gleaming 1903 dog-cart and was delivered from RHQ to the main gate. The task of hauling the carriage fell as ever to the young officers and the route was lined by over 350 soldiers. We wish **Lt Col Russ**, his wife **Sue** and family all the best as they move onto pastures new at Land Command in Wilton. Finally we wish **Lt Col Ian MacKenzie** and his wife **Sue** all the best for their tour here in sunny (!) Pembrokeshire.

HQ SQUADRON
QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

QM(G)	**Maj Fred Bancroft**
QM(T)	**Capt Rab Young**

If you really like hard work, sport and solitude, then this is the place for you! After a hectic year we are now settled into Brawdy, a former RAF base and hope that 1997 will allow us the quality of life and fun that has been somewhat amiss. We have had our share of 'brighter' moments; especially when the 'Prince of Darkness', **Maj Fred Bancroft** nominated the whole department to do Lanyard Trophy training. Deep joy. The reduction of troops to Op Resolute has been a bonus to the department. **Capt Rab Young** short toured himself, whilst the stalwarts **LCpl Disley**, **Sig Leon Bradford** and **Sig B. J. Blowes** volunteered themselves for 10 months–commendable but sad! **WO2 Mo Fisher**, even shorter tour, has also returned. Welcome back lads! **Sgt Mick Dullaghan** is still out in Bosnia keeping a tight rein on the Regiment's equipment, and waiting the arrival of **Sgt** 'Scouse (can't wait to get to 7 Sigs)' **Taylor**.

On the sporting front **SSgt Shane Wright** continues to impress the younger generation with his efforts in the canoeing world. At the UK Land Championships at Barnard Castle he won the Veteran Class and was 12th overall. **Sgt Ben Batley** is having a good rugby season and spends most of his time representing the Corps and Haverfordwest, whilst **Sig Shadwell Efans** enjoys having his nose rearranged at the Army Martial Arts competitions.

Sadly, we have to say a few Farewells. **Sgt Dave Wilson** has left us for civvy street, along with **Cpl Meredith**; shortly to be followed by **SSgt** 'Mac (I play golf with the QM)' **McMillan** and **LCpl** 'Jenks' **Jenkins**. **Sig Claire Robshaw** has left us at the end of a long pregnancy, which has left **Sgt** 'Daz' **Mumford** RLC without a shoulder to cry on. Fortunately, we have had an influx of personnel in the form of **LCpl Dai Lewis**, **Sig** 'Doris' **Day** and **Sig** 'Scouse' **Caine**. Welcome.

TM TROOP

TOT	**Capt Tim Prince**
FofS	**WO1 (FofS) Graham Blondel**

The management lunch was the highlight of this month and was also a chance to welcome **Capt** 'Tim' **Prince** to the flock. The Troop also saw the return of the Bosnia crew which doubled the manpower. We can now form three ranks; that pleases the Rd's.

EXERCISE WELLS DRAGON

Led by **Sgt** 'Guy' **Roberts**, the Troop set off for four days of arduous hill walking. The walks would cover 25 miles per day through the Cambrian hills. A base camp was set up at Llanwrtyd Wells, the smallest town in Britain.

Day One saw most people completing the 25 miles in good time. **LCpl** 'Beardsley' **Dennis** and **Sig** 'Sully' **Sullivan** (with age on their side), were first to finish in 4 hrs 30 mins. The rest followed in dribs and drabs, the final walker completing the walk in 6 hrs 20 mins.

Day Two, those walkers with damaged feet formed the '10 at 10' club, led by **Cpl Ralf**. They all managed 10 miles at a more relaxed pace, giving their feet a needed rest. **LCpl** 'Mogsie' **Morgan** defied the laws of physics by covering the last couple of miles of the 25 mile course at 40 mph. (Jack Wagon)!

Day Three, saw only four members of the party able to manage 25 miles. The remainder covered at least 10 miles, but some under duress. The 25 miles route set proved the toughest so far, resulting in walkers not finishing until 1800hrs. The final day saw only **Sgt** 'Guy' **Roberts**, **Cpl** 'Nickie Lauder' **Lord** and **LCpl** 'Beardsley' **Dennis** complete the 25 miles. On their journey, they came across 210 Sig Sqn exercise control; Thanks for the brew lads . . . Not! All members of the exercise gained valuable experience at map reading and navigation, some more than others. A special mention must go to **Sgt** 'Ali' **Mepham** for volunteering to coach the local kids football team for one evening of the exercise.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON
SQUADRON HQ

Sqn Comd	**Maj Robin Clapp**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Mick Couston**

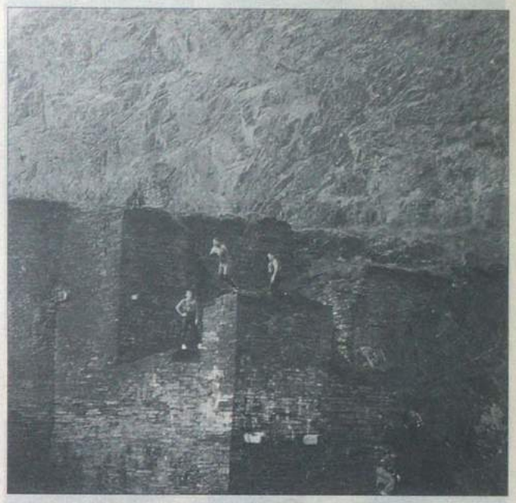
Our previous *Wire* notes proudly stated that we had moved into our new offices and settled in rather well. In order to maintain the momentum for the re-build of Cawdor Barracks we have recently moved downstairs for a period of 'about a month' to allow for further refurbishment, our SHQ has moved more frequently than an average trunk node ever did on Ex Summer Sales. Routine activities have settled somewhat as compared to the Pre/Mid/Post-Bosnia year from which we have emerged, however last minute taskings continue to keep us all on our toes. The autumn gales seem to have deterred visitors somewhat and hence 640 (display) Tp have had a relatively quiet time.

The Squadron has deployed 25+ personnel to pit their wits against Siemens-Plessey's latest equipment–Vixen. We have also supplied manpower to the Bowman trials and H Tp have completed an equipment test, Ex Whale Hunt, in the local area.

The Squadron has also been the guinea-pig for the CO's new Admin Inspection from which we managed to survive relatively unscathed. A premature appearance by the CO at the No 2 dress parade caused a minor hiccup, although with the OC/2IC handing over command so often it is hoped that he who matters never really noticed.

COVE STEERING

As people may be aware by now the Pembrokeshire Coastline is famed for it's rugged beauty and sandy beaches. The area is just as infamous for it's gales and mild (inclement) weather, due to the Gulf Stream we are told, and its remoteness from civilisation. One of the lesser known legal activities that the locals get up to is Cove Steering. The sport consists of getting into wet suits and proceeding Lemming-like off high sea cliffs in the area, the only equipment needed, other than the wetsuit, is a large dose of stupidity, which the two officers **Maj** (Tweedledum) **Clapp** and **Capt** (Tweedle-even-dummer) **Smith** soon demonstrated in donning their suits - not only were they back to front, but inside-out. Getting to the better cliffs (highest and most dangerous) required negotiating a way around the edge of the cove slipping on the rocks and getting pulled out to sea by the very strong undercurrents. Our journey was more notable for the SSM screaming like a girl and the OC giggling like one. **LCpl Preen** and **Sig Chaffer** proved champion lemmings closely followed by **Sig** 'Stillborn' **Still**, all three jumping off with wanton disregard for their lives, whilst the SSM had to be coaxed off like a frightened kitten. A great day was had by all–who said Pembrokeshire wouldn't be fun!



OC 226 Sig Sqn avoids 'looking before he leaps'.
But did he jump or was he pushed?

Sig Still, Sig Chaffer, Capt Smith, Maj Clapp, SSgt Thornton, LCpl Preen

MEDAL PARADE AND VISIT OF COMD COMMS

Comd Comms, **Brig Griffin** visited the Regiment on 3 September 1996. The visit started off with a medal parade for those who were in theatre during IFOR 1: the vast majority of the personnel from the Squadron who were in theatre received their medal. Other medal recipients were **WO2 (Supvr R)** 'Wiener' **Nigel Watton**, and **Sgt** 'Squeaky' **Gibbins** both receiving their LS & GC medals. We look forward to the next good boy awards as the food was excellent and the drinks seemed to go on and on. 640 Sig Tp provided a demo as part of the visit and **Brig Griffin** was briefed on the results and successes of various Troop exercises held since their arrival in 226 Sig Sqn.

The visit rounded off with an inter-squadron shooting competition. Our Squadron entered three teams, four men from each Troop. Comms Tp's team consisted of **Sgt Geordie Heslop** (who missed out on the mess drinks), **Cpl** 'Happy' **Hopkins, LCpl Andy Preen** and **Sig** (Fablon sick chit) **Ade Price**. All the Squadron teams shot after HQ Sqn and with only minutes remaining Comms Tp produced what was to be their joker card–**Sig Ade Price** produced his sick chit and was replaced by **Sig Kev Rutherford**. Having just spent a week at Castlemartin Ranges, the Squadron denied any advantage, but did finish both first and third. The gallant team was a combined H Tp and R Tp effort with the firers being **Cpl Chris Dunn, Cpl Angie Elderbrant** (who failed her APWT the week before), **Cpl** 'Stew' **Ramage** and **LCpl Al Mersom**. Comms Tp grabbed the third place helped by excellent shooting from **Sig Kev Rutherford**.

Brigadier Griffin talks to members of 226 Signal Squadron (LCpl Waite, LCpl Berry, LCpl Anderson) on the occasion of the IFOR medal parade. WO1 (RSM) Payne looks puzzled

Brigadier Griffin presents Sgt Gibbins with his LS & GC medal

HELLO'S , FAREWELLS AND CONGRATULATIONS

The Squadron has said a sad farewell to a number of people. **Capt Brian Alderson, Capt Robbie King** and **2Lt Anna Cliff** who were all dined out recently. **WO1 Mac McCreedy** who left us for Blandford, **Cpl** 'Taff' **Elston** who is on his way to 7 Sigs, and **Cpl Oldfield** and **LCpl** 'Makum' **Anderson** posted to civ div. The Squadron has also wished various members all the best for their forthcoming tour to Bosnia as part of the Follow-on-Force. The vision of **SSgt Dick** 'Drill Pig' **Malt** rifting his Troop (sorry, **Capt Smith**'s Troop) around a snow-bound Banja Luka should keep other forces based there amused (and awake). We have also bid the following our best wishes on posting: **Sgt Dave Lodge, LCpls Andy Nurding** and **Jason Huxley**, as well as **Sigs Simon Chaffer, Dave Kerr**, and 'Baz' **Still**.

Hellos have been extended to **Capt John Merritt, Cpls Geordie Ferry** and **Denny Denton, LCpls Dean Stewart** and **Andy Flannagan, Sigs Emma Dobson, Colin Twells, Lynn Gray, Mel Salmon** and **Naomia Wilson**. Our most recent arrival is **2Lt (SSLC) Hannah Beckett** on pre-University attachment for 10 months, 640 Sig Tp should keep her busy for that period.

Congratulations to the following Corporals on promotion to Sergeant: 'Willy' **Pool**, 'Ginge' **Hall** and **Al Elderbrant**. Congratulations to **LCpls Chris Gunn, Simon Quinlan**, and **Darren Brown** on their recent promotions to Corporal. And finally, proof that wonders never cease; the Royal Corps decided to give **Lt O'Kelly** his third pip.

640 SIGNAL TROOP (EW)

We would like to welcome into the fray, **SSgt Andy Harriot, LCpl** 'Freddie' **Starr, LCpl** 'Shetland' **Iles, LCpl** 'Spud' **Fawcett** and **LCpl Jay Aldred** and family, plus **Cpl Simon Green** who has flown in from over the water to join us from 225 Sig Sqn. Also a welcome to the Troop for **Sgt** 'Jaffer' **Martin, LCpl** 'Ginger' **Boon, LCpl Mansfield** and **LCpl Lisa Stanforth**.

A heartfelt goodbye to everyone who has left the Troop recently, namely **Sgt Pool, Sgt Ackland-Snow, Cpl Paul** 'menace' **Merchant, LCpl Mick Haltham, LCpl** 'Wurz' **Nicholson, Sig Ryall, Sig Rob** 'Zoltar' **Nicholis** and **Sig Andy Gunther**, we wish them all the best for any future ambitions they may have.

A number of congratulations are in order for members of the Troop. Congratulations to **Cpl Burton** on two counts, firstly for his recent wedding to **LCpl Houlihan** of H Tp, and also his recent promotion to Corporal. Also congratulations go to **LCpl Haltam** on his recent selection for promotion. **LCpl** 'Si' **Smith** for taking that first step up the all important promotion ladder. He and his wife **Claire** are also expecting their second child in March. Also helping with the increase in population are **LCpl** 'Babs' **Woodhouse** and his wife **Jane**, who we congratulate on the birth of their daughter **Jessica**. **Cpl Dave Rome** and his wife **Tracy** are expecting their second child later in the year.

The majority of the Troop's time has been taken up with the all important move to the new hangar and the consolidation of equipment returning from theatre in the FRY. Under the watchful eye of **SSgt Andy Harriott** things are progressing steadily, if the current momentum is maintained things should return to being 'ship shape' fairly soon. The forthcoming year should prove to be very busy with exercises but most enjoyable.

OPERATION DOWNLAND

At the beginning of October 1996 a small detachment from the Troop deployed to the sunnier climes of Cyprus. This detachment consisted of 10 men from the Troop and another five personnel from our counterparts in Romeo Tp. The aim of the deployment was to carry out an electronic recce of the Island and also to carry out some well earned adventurous training. One of the other reasons for the deployment was to make sure that the locals were making the famous brandy sours correctly and the mezes were correctly priced. It proved an ideal opportunity to test the newly acquired skills of **WO2 Watton** on his air movement capabilities, he coped admirably however 10 rain forests were destroyed in the process. The two week period started extremely early with a brief from **Lt Col Inshaw** (CO 9 Sig Regt (R)) at 0630hrs on the first day. **Cpl** 'Foggy' **Forshaw** was not too happy about this and placed the contents of his stomach down the back of **Sgt Mick Fords**. 'I didn't realise my brief was that bad', the CO commented. After the military tasks were completed there was time for some adventurous training with CJSATC; this included some diving, canoeing and windsurfing. Finally **Sgt** 'Leroy' **Taylor** received the prize for 'Top Tan of the Tour'.

Back Row (*L to R*): Cpl McCardle, Cpl Forshaw, Cpl Sheperd, Cpl Evans, Cpl Rome, LCpl Nicholson, LCpl Edwads, Cpl Merchant
Front Row (*L to R*): Sgt West, Sgt Lawson, SSM McMurray, Capt O'Kelly, WO2 (Supr R) Watton, Sgt Stevens, Sgt Taylor

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt. Mark Smith (AOD)**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D. Dagnall**

EXERCISE WHALE HUNT 1/96

Ex Whale Hunt was an HF DF exercise, designed to test both the new AE3222 HF DF antennae and the new SSL software package, taking place over the period 11-17 November '96 in the local area. In order to provide the maximum training benefit to all participants, the field phase of the exercise featured aspects of a Squadron call out and tactical deployment and an invaluable opportunity for those new arrivals to the Troop to familiarise themselves with living in the field. The initial phase of the exercise centred around preparations for the deployment whereby all equipment, both detachment and technical was made ready. Phase Two was the deployment proper. Following a bleary eyed early hours call out, the detachments were deployed and became operational. During the ensuing phases, tasking procedure and equipment handling were taught and practised, which were especially beneficial for the new troop members who had arrived following the Troop's return from IFOR duty in July. ENDEX was called at 0830, Sunday 17 November and all detachments returned to Brawdy. Although a degree of equipment failure plagued the Troop the exercise proved a good learning experience for all concerned.

ROMEO TROOP

The Troop bids a fond farewell to **Lt John Collyer** and **Cpl Angie Elderbrant** who have left for 30 Sig Regt and civvy street respectively. We welcome our new Tp Comd, **Capt Katrina Reynolds, Sgt** 'Loz' **Hill** and his wife **Jayne**, and **Sgt Steve Moffet** and **Janet**.

Congratulations to **Cpl Dave Whitehead** on his marriage to **Kate**. Further congratulations to **SSgt Dave Fuller** and **Fiona** on the birth of their son, **Alexander** and to **Sig Jean-Paul Spinks** and **Verena** on the birth of their son **Shaun**.

Recently the Troop exercised jointly with 640 Tp to Cyprus. A solid two weeks hard work . . . on suntans, followed by a boat trip around the Larnaca coastline rounded off a very good exercise. During this period **Cpl** 'Taff' **Evans** proved he was capable of a 6 min BFT provided he was being chased by an octopus!!

The Troop has been involved with several demonstrations and has also starred in the Corps video, next stop Hollywood.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

To say that the Squadron has had a hectic time over the past two months would be rather understating the pandemonium. The Vixen equipment trials as listed below have figured greatly in the Squadron's life and has at times been all consuming. When the Vixen introductory Unit was deployed on Salisbury Plain, the Squadron strength was just eight! It was, however, good to be back out on exercise again after long periods of indolence. Whilst we await the outcome of the Vixen trials, the Squadron assumes a new role with the introduction of Barracuda, an entirely new concept and sophisticated equipment.

Finally 237 Sig Sqn has teeth! The Troops and hierarchy now have to figure out how to use, deploy and fight the battle with Barracuda. An exciting challenge for everyone in the Squadron which is timed perfectly with the changeover of Commanding Officers and the start of the Christmas Silly Season. So until the New Year, it is likely to be a maelstrom of CES checks, training and Squadron/Troop parties; and we get paid for this!

VIXEN INTRODUCTORY UNIT (VIU)

On the 23 September 1996 a band of merry men and women was formed in 14 Sig Regt (EW). Drawn from all four corners of the Regiment it had one mission, to oversee and conduct the Operational Performance Test for the Vixen Comms EW Sys. Led by **Capt Steve Whytock** the Vixen Introductory Unit (VIU) was to carry out three weeks of in-field trials for the system. Phase 1 was an 'in-barracks' trial at the Siemens Plessey site at Hern, near Christchurch. Unfortunately due to a lack of military accommodation the VIU had to be accommodated in the Pontins Holiday Camp at Christchurch. It wasn't all luxury however, as the in-chalet TVs did not have Sky, but we were on exercise after all. The working day was actually quite long but the VIU managed to cope despite being given two days off during the week. This phase came quickly to an end and we then had to deploy to Tidworth for the real in-field trial.

The plan was to deploy two Vixen Intercept Complexes and one from 640 Sig Tp, with a DF baseline of seven Vampires. The 640 Sig Tp Complex would work with manual DF using three Vampires while the Vixen Intercept Complex would use four Vampires and its automatic DF system. This would allow a direct comparison with the new and the old. The intercept complexes and RCP were based at Stokehill Farm and the Vampires were deployed along the Northern edge of Salisbury Plain.

We deployed on Monday 11 November and immediately hit problems as **SSgt Phil** 'The Navigator' **Gordon** decided to go the wrong way on the A303. This was nothing compared to **LCpl Bousefields'** emergency call to the REME that his vehicle had broken down. The REME deployed at maximum speed only to find that your man did not know that in order for the vehicle to move it had to be taken out of neutral first. Nevertheless the vehicles finally made it to Stokehill and the setting up began. At 1100 hrs there was a halt called to the work as all members of the VIU observed a two-minutes silence in remembrance. At 1102 work resumed and the system was ready to go at 1200 hrs.

Like all trials the system took some time to warm-up and there were delays as the engineers took over from the operators to get the system working. While the civilians sweated over the system the military put their minds to more pressing matters by organising and setting up the brew tent. Considering that it was well below freezing on the Plain this was a very important mission indeed. With the system up and running the VIU set about working a difficult shift system which involved a lot of work during the day and periods of near inactivity during the day. The fines system continued to flourish as many a person was caught by **Lt Niall Stokoe**'s notebook. Endex had to be called before the Troops ran out of money.

When Endex was finally called on 22 November the VIU and the system was exhausted. It is amazing that it takes soldiers only a quarter of the time to tear down when those magic words are called. The results of the trial are currently being analysed and the VIU is no more. However like the sleeping knights of the round table they are ready to re-form and take on Vixen at a moments notice, but please next time can they have a brew first.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Davis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M. E. G. Heelan**

SQUADRON UPDATE

It can certainly be said, without fear of contradiction, that the last few months have been both busy and challenging ones for all members of 245 Sig Sqn. With the return of personnel from Op Resolute 11, there are now more members of the Squadron under one roof than most can remember. For everyone, whether recently posted in or not, this has meant getting to know new faces–we are now onto our third OC in as many months–and getting into a different routine.

Vehicles, equipment and personnel have been allocated to the three new Troops and Squadron life has fast returned to normal. Many exercises have been planned and much hard work has gone into ensuring that the Squadron will be ready and able to tackle all the new challenges that lie ahead. The combination of an enthusiastic new management team and wealth of operational experience should certainly guarantee interesting results . . .

Above all, everyone eagerly awaits a decision on Vixen, which has recently undergone it's acceptance test on Salisbury training area. 245 Sig Sqn are looking forward to the future and will 'adapt, improvise and overcome' whatever lies ahead. Until then, the major challenge will be to dust off the existing kit and get it moving–and hopefully working–around the local Welsh countryside.

BACK FROM BOSNIA

By the time these words appear in print, Op Resolute 11 will be but a distant memory for those Squadron members who returned from Theatre in November and December of last year. Unfortunately though, due to an 'administrative error', a description of Squadron life in Bosnia failed to materialize in the last edition of this hallowed publication. And so, ancient history though it is, a description of the tour's special and for some, embarrassing–moments has been included here.

The tour ended for the 'Main Body' of the Squadron in early November, when the Squadron was scaled down to a Troop operation, and so, whilst some were enjoying their End of Tour leave, the 'chosen ones' out in Bosnia saw the arrival of winter and experienced the joys of being snowed in. The tour will be remembered for different things by all those who took part. However, few can forget the antics of **LCpls** 'EOD' **Brown** and 'Stoppage' **Stepney**, both of whom are now believed to have applied for their Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) course. And of course, **Sgt** 'Stuntman' **Newton-Roberts'** dramatic discovery of an undeclared artillery site–namely three ornamental cannons outside a restaurant–is assured a place in Squadron history.

On a more serious note, the Squadron can be proud of it's list of achievements in Bosnia: a new EW system, called Barracuda, was introduced with great success; EW awareness was massively increased throughout the Divisional Staff, and above all, the Squadron achieved it's mission of providing the Commander with timely and accurate intelligence. This was achieved thanks to the excellent team effort of all involved: from the EW operators on the sets, to the Radio Rebroadcast crews who made communications possible, to all those "behind the scenes" who worked tirelessly to support the hilltop sites.

MEANWHILE, BACK IN BARRACKS . . .

As Op Resolute 11 drew to a close life went on as usual for those members of the Squadron holding the fort in Wales. Despite facing all the usual manpower shortages, the Squadron still managed to field a demonstration team for Ex Dragon's Review. This was basically a chance to travel around the country displaying EW equipment and vehicles to anyone interested and, of course, there were plenty of opportunities to enjoy the various attractions on offer in the nearby nightspots.

Driver training and Vixen trials have been done too and, through it all, there have even been a few chances for people to get out of 'green kit' and let their hair down. Thanks to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Hamar** for organising the latest Squadron coastal path walk and also to **Sgt Andy Butler, LCpl** 'Jinty' **Rigg, Sig Tracey Clarke** and all the others who helped to organise the excellent Squadron Christmas Party.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

There have been far too many other hellos and goodbyes since the Squadron's last appearance in *The Wire* for everyone to be listed here. There are, as always though, a few individuals who warrant a special mention. On their return to barracks from Bosnia, the Squadron said farewell to its OC, **Maj John Charnock** and SSM, **WO2 Jim McLachlan**, without both of whom things are certainly quieter! We wish them both all the best in their respective postings at Staff College and as an RSM respectively. Stand-in OC, **Maj Alan Tuck**, has done a sneaky sideways move into Regimental Ops, clearing the way for a completely new 'Dream Team' at the top. Welcome then to new OC, **Maj Mark Davis** and **Debra**, new 2IC, **Capt Andy Lucas** and **Karia**, and, last but by no means least, new SSM, **WO2** 'Mystic' **M. E. G. Heelan** and **Karen**.

21 Sig Regt (AS)
Colerne

REGIMENTAL FLAG PRESENTATION PARADE

On the 29 January 1997 AOCinC Strike Command RAF, **Air Chief Marshal Sir William Wratten KBE CB AFC ADC CIMgt FRAES** RAF presented the Regiment with a new Regimental Flag, incorporating the crest of RAF Strike Command.

The Flag Exchange Ceremony
Sgt Davis presents the new flag to the AOCinC

The composition of the parade represented both the Regular and TA elements of the unit. The Flag Exchange Ceremony was witnessed by a large number of local civil and military dignitaries including the Representative Colonel Commandant **Maj Gen A. H. Boyle CB** and **Brig J. H. Griffin** ACOS G6 HQ LAND and a number of senior RAF Officers from HQ Strike Command.

AOCinC RAF Strike Command, Air Chief Marshal Sir William Wratten KBE, CB, AFC, ADC, CIMgt, FRAeS, RAF signs the Regimental Visitors Book

Maj Gen A. H. Boyle CB, signing the Regimental Visitors Book

WO2 'Flags' Herbert raising the new flag assisted by SSgt Tim Abbott

The following passage is an extract from the programme:

'On 22nd May 1984 Air Marshal Sir Patrick Hine KCB FBIM RAF, Commander-in-Chief RAF Germany, presented 21 Sig Regt (Air Support) with a new Regimental Flag incorporating the RAF Germany crest. This unique privilege was granted on the occasion of the Regiment's 25th Anniversary; moreover it recognised the strong links we share with the RAF, both in barracks and on operations.

Following the drawdown of forces in Germany, the Regiment returned to it's new base in Colerne. The decision was recently taken to embody the RAF Strike Command crest on our flag. This change demonstrates our continued support to the RAF and accurately reflects the operational role of the Regiment.'

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj P. T. Connors**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C. W. Skelton**

We have recently said farewell to **Maj Craig Treeby** who has moved down the road to command 43 (Wessex) Sig Sqn (V). Many thanks for all you have achieved during your long tour at Colerne. That said, we welcome **Maj Paul Connors** from Northern Ireland and wish him all the best for his tour.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPT

Alas only farewells this time: firstly to **Maj Bob Lockwood MBE**, who leaves us after a short tour on retirement. Best wishes to you and your family in Lincoln. Secondly to that enigma within the stores, **LCpl Mick May**, 'They seek him here, they seek him there, they can't find him anywhere!' His specialised and well rehearsed response 'I was checking the Arctic Store' Mmmm!!! Good luck on your posting to Birmingham.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Winners of the RAF Laarbruch and RAF Bruggen Inter Unit Station Commanders Cup. The Squadron have done exceptionally well on the sporting front, having achieved a unique 'double' winning both the RAF Laarbruch and RAF Bruggen Station Commanders Cups in 1996. The competitions consist of 12 different events, run monthly, throughout the year involving all the units, RAF and Army on station. With 220 Sig Sqn being divided between the two stations, H Tp at RAF Bruggen and the remainder at RAF Laarbruch, the Sqn had to fight hard to beat other teams which have up to 300 people to choose from. This has definitely been a coup for the Squadron and morale has soared as has our prestige amongst the respective sporting communities. At RAF Laarbruch the Squadron won the Cross Country, the Athletics, despite a controversial disqualification in the relay which just happened to be double points, and the Rugby 7's. At RAF Bruggen, H Tp the smallest team in the competition, won the Football and the Cross Country. That said though it was the consistent level of performance throughout the competition that brought about the victory. Our moment of glory was confirmed during the Station's Sports Presentation prior to Christmas. Well done to all those involved; the aim for 1997 is to do the same again.

220 Sig Sqn with a glittering display of Sporting Trophies

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

81 Sig Sqn (V) is a Specialist Sqn and is an integral part of 21 Sig Regt (AS). The Squadron is 180 strong and specialises in fixed telecommunications support. Recruited throughout UK, 90% of the Squadron are employed by British Telecom (BT).

The principal role of the Squadron is in support of Airfield Communications. These have seen regular deployments to the RAF bases in Germany and Cyprus but more recently a significant commitment to Mount Pleasant Airfield in the Falkland Islands. The 1996 deployment to the Falklands was undertaken by 855 Tp commanded by **Lt Matthew Yates**. The Troop of 35 completed a very successful multi-cabinet changeover, made all the more commendable given the very tight schedule, particularly during the critical changeover period. Further assistance, from 81 Sig Sqn (V) has been requested for 1997. The other major deployment for 1996 was a major rewiring and LAN provision at a number of sites in Cyprus. 1997 will see a substantial deployment to move the Main Distribution Frame located in Episkopi; a task that will require the deployment of two Troops for some months. The Squadron has also deployed Troops to Germany to backfill our Regular counterparts, 220 Sig Sqn, as they undertake tasks in Bosnia.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Frank Roberts**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Whittaker**

WELCOME AND GOODBYE

Amongst the new arrivals in the Squadron, we welcome in particular our new OC, **Maj Frank Roberts**, who joined us in the New Year from MoD to fill the void left by **Maj Nigel Gill**, to whom we said goodbye in November 1996 when he had to leave early to take up an appointment in Wilton.

CONGRATULATIONS

It's hearty congratulations to both **SSgt (FofS)** 'Solly' **Solomons** and **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Paddy' **Morrow** on their selection for WO2 in the recent promotion board. Well done to both of them!

ALPHA (AMF L) TROOP
EXERCISE HARDFALL/ADVENTURE EXPRESS

Alpha Tp, commanded by **Capt Bob Lovett**, have been in Norway since the beginning of the New Year, making the most of the arctic conditions out there. Two women signallers with the Troop sent us the following article on their training.

ASSC WITH ALPHA (AMF L) TROOP IN NORWAY
by Sigs MacKenzie and **Haines**

Since our arrival in 244 Sig Sqn and subsequent placement in Alpha (AMF L) Tp, Norway was mentioned quite frequently, though not always by us, we hasten to add. After four weeks in Turkey on Ex Ardent Ground and Ex Dynamic Mix, things soon calmed down and before we realised it, Ex Hardfall 97 was rapidly approaching. Five months later–voila!

We began our Arctic Survival and Ski Course (ASSC) feeling very apprehensive as there seemed to be a distinct shortage of female-types! Learning to ski wasn't exactly Alberta Tomba stuff either. After many hours in a classroom, we took to the slopes–or the flat for the majority of us! We were certainly kept on our toes–well, most of us–and full of humour by the Tp Military Ski Instructors (MSIs), **LCpl Horton** and **Sigs Middleditch** and **Cogram**. After a week of practice, we began our ASSC.

The course was divided into three groups with an MSI in charge of each. After two nights out in tents, we returned to a hostel for one night of administration. The next four nights were to prove testing! The final part of the ASSC involved daily skiing over various kinds of terrain and also much night skiing. Over those four nights, we spent three in tents and one in a snow hide, this latter night being our survival night. We even managed the impossible task of having four hours' sleep in it! We ended the course by doing ice-breaking drills, from which we received the stark realisation that the water at home in Scotland was no comparison to that of the Arctic in terms of coldness! The course finally ended that night with a drink or three (!) to celebrate our successful completion.

In conclusion, as the two of us 'crewbirds' passed the ASSC in style, there is absolutely no reason why there shouldn't be more female 'Arctic Warriors'.

Sig MacKenzie about to take the plunge!!

PUBLISH IT IN *THE WIRE*

The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

30 Sig Regt
Bramcote

SUPPORT SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj P. J. Doherty MBE**
SSM **WO2 P. Ellis**

The Squadron is working hard to recover from the gastronomic excesses of Christmas, particularly in view of the fact that it was shortly before the break up in December that, as a result of our famous victory in the Inter Squadron Rugby 7's, we retained the Champion Squadron title. The formal announcement and the presentation of the coveted Alderney Cup were made at the Soldiers' Christmas Dinner and put the icing on what had been a successful year for us.

The manning bill for Operation Lodestar continues to exact its toll on the Squadron as we continue to meet the requirements. **SSgt Rob Carroll** (SQMS) is still doing the business in Split, although the word on the street is that he may be home early! I wonder who started that rumour. With the stand-in SQMS, **Sgt Dixon**, on a long course and the cover for him on the sick, the store keys fluctuate between the OC and the SSM–the 2IC of course being on Lodestar. What's the one about strap a broom to my backside and..... ??? Other than that, the coming year looks to be as busy as ever with the Regimental Fete to plan and implement, and another trip to Alderney in the offing and–Oh yes, the question of the retention of the Alderney Cup–we have much to look forward to.

Sgt McNeilly, Support Sqn Captain
'This is the worst game of Twister I have ever played!'

Maj Pete Doherty receives the Alderney Cup
from the Regt 2IC, Maj Mervyn Johnston

QM (T) DEPARTMENT
QM (T) **Capt Mike Kerr**
RQMS (T) **WO2 Tony Bottomley**

Another new year and so far all quiet on the West Midlands Front for the Regiment's only seven days a week Dept. Last year around July to 31st December (yes New Years Eve), saw a lot of activity with the equipment coming into the Regiment and just as quickly leaving for Operations around the globe. With a complete change of staff in the department the 'Learning Curve' had to be rather steep (vertical) at times.

A two week handover/takeover, including another tour, (2 weeks) of the Regiment's Dets on Op Resolute, saw **Sgt Angus MacPherson MBE** handover the Accts of the Regiment to **Sgt Jamie Alleyne** (what's an MBE?) with a smile and a "cheers easy" complete with pager. Before leaving 30 Sig Regt after three and a half years for an 'Easy Life' across the water (NOT!) July also saw the arrival of **Cpl Charles Neeve** fresh from 11 Sig Regt, who had a smile removed from his face when told he will be replacing **Cpl Merv Ovenden** on Op Resolute (lucky *!*!) He arrived and cleared in one movement. September saw the arrival of **Sig Joe** 'Bob' **Graham** which coincided with Op Resolute Phase 5. The Regt then proceeded to part with all the equipment, we did not have, in Bramcote to 14 new locations in Bosnia. The RQ(T) **Tony Bottomley** and **Cpl Bhim**, having seen it all before decided that this was a good time to leave Split for a bit of sun, sea and Fosters Ice. October saw the return of **Cpl Merv Ovenden**!! Having lost his marbles due to pressure in Split, **Merv** returned to the Regiment full of zest, ready for the forthcoming Army Football season but was quickly shot down by the only FEMALE referee in the Regt, by being Red Carded during a friendly game against the WOs & Sgts Mess. November/December saw no change to the work load when the RQ(T) and **Cpl Bhim** were both paged on New Years Eve to receive equipment required for Hong Kong. The RQ(T), **Tony Bottomley**, was heard to mutter under his breath, 'Oh gosh there goes the naughty pager, lets conga to work **Bhim**.'

In conclusion, 1996 was a busy year for the department, this year will be the same but with a 7 in it.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Nick Metcalfe**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bob Banner**

Once again this has been a busy couple of months for the Squadron. In December we welcomed **WO2 (SSM) Bob Banner**, who immediately had to have a little chat with half the troops, following an alleged striptease act at the Christmas Party. **WO2 Colin** 'Rocky' **Riddell** has departed for the Regt MT, where he will no doubt be worked to the bone. We have also bid farewell to **Maj Simon Renfrey** who has taken up a post at DRA Defford, and welcomed **Maj Nick Metcalfe** as the new OC. Other recent changes have included the final departures of **Cpl Steve** 'what I don't know about Satcom and 501s' **Smith** to somewhere in the West Country after almost 7 years at the Regiment. **Cpl Keef** 'I'll Tell you a story' **Betts** to 280 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Iain Cowan** to Northern Ireland. **Sig John** 'Doc' **Savage** to 16 Sig Regt and **Sgt Mark Hurren** who has headed off but we don't know where.

Farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Hardy** who is to take up a new post as FofS TM Troop. Farewell and good luck to **LCpl Ian** 'Crate-lifter extraordinaire' **Deacon** and **Sig Jo Harrison** who have become civvies.

New arrivals have included **Cpl Mandy Precious** and **Cpl Paul MacDonald**, **LCpl Lockyer**, **Sigs Derek** 'Dickie' **Davies**, **Scott Cooper**, **Gaz Pope**, **Jonny Devine**, **Catherine Pagan**. Welcome to **WO2 (FofS) Ramsdale** returning to the Regiment for another tour.

Congratulations to **Cpl Dave Smith** who was promoted and posted to 17 CTT, **Cpls Cez Wrenn**, **Mick Siggs**, **Ralph Farmer** and **LCpl Dave Knowler** who all gain promotion and not least the new SSM, who has been selected for promotion to WO1 and **SSgt Steve Lockwood** who has come off the board.

EXERCISE COBB RING–6/23 JANUARY 1997

Ex Cobb Ring was a Troop size deployment to MacDill Air Force Base in Florida. One of the aims was to test the interoperability of our kit with the Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE)–the USA's version of 30 Sig Regt.

We deployed from Bramcote on 5th January for the usual 'hurry up and wait' at South Cerney. We then flew at 1000 hrs on 6th January, with a 15 hr stopover at Gander, direct to MacDill arriving in the afternoon on 7th January. Having left England at 1°C, we arrived in Florida at about 25°C..... a bit of a shock to the system. We were met there by **Capt Deb Sunderland** who had extended her holiday in Florida.

'Theirs and Ours'
TSC93 vs VSC 501 and the air conditioned 12xl2s

The Exercise did not start for two days, plenty of time in which to find the nearest stretch of water. That was Tampa Bay, about thirty metres from the Surfs Edge Bar (funnily enough!), and to meet a bunch of really nice guys from the MacDill AFB Security Police–but that's another story.

The Exercise continued with us working three shifts. PT every morning at 0630, plenty of time to get to 'Wet & Wild' with it's awesome 5 storey bomb drop into the water; Disney World; Universal Studios and Buch Gardens which has the famous Montu ride (60+Mph, max G-force of 3.85, feet free and inserted for half the ride).

Once the exercise was over we had time for some sports against JCSE; Rugby, Football which we won and an 8 mile March and Shoot, which we also won. Immediately following the March we moved into the R&R phase of the Exercise, which basically consisted of any park you hadn't managed to do during the Comms phase. The shifts broke down into groups, to hire their own transport for about $15 a day. Finally we all returned to MacDill for a barbecue and curry, excellently prepared by **Sig Prakash** of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, on the beach (at the base!) to say thanks to JCSE for hosting the Regiment yet again on this excellent exercise. Bramcote and Nuneaton don't quite hold the same attraction for the Americans funnily enough, but it would be good to have them over to us for a change.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt Andy Mould**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen**

Congratulations to the following members of the Squadron for being selected for promotion: **WO2 (YofS) Steve Holt, SSgt Kev Belam, SSgt Ian Carter.** Well done, and the best of luck for the future.

Farewell to **SSgt Al Yeaman**, our friendly SQMS, who leaves us this month for pastures green at 2 Sig Regt, York. We all wish him and his wife **Jackie** the very best for the future.

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Ian Hargreaves**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev Belam**

Yet more new arrivals to Delta Tp for the new year. **Sig Barry Still** and **Cpl Andy Smart** who both join us from 14 Sig Regt. **Sigs Claire Sturdy**, **David Kyle** and **Martin Anderson** who also join us from Blandford.

The unlucky people who have to leave the Troop are **Cpl Micky** 'voice of the people' **Elliot** along with his wife **Sharon** and new born baby **Bradley**, who leave to start a new life in Blandford. Newly promoted **LCpl** 'Spanner' **Wilkie** who is off to a sit down job (no change there then!) at COMMCEN Hereford.

We wouldn't forget those on attachments and detachments. **Capt Ian Hargreaves** and **Sgt Cossie Calabrese** who, amongst others, are off to claim their Bosnia medals. Last of all Delta Tp would like to welcome their own little helper; **2Lt Richard** 'he'll change whatever I write anyway' **Todd**, who is here to gain some experience. A late mention to **LCpl Sarah Faulconbridge** who joined us some time ago but has never been mentioned in the *Wire* . . . Miss Popular.

ECHO TROOP
SPONSORED SWIM

258 Sig Sqn held a 24 hour Sponsored Swimathon in aid of **Ben Davison**, a local cerebral palsy sufferer, who has been selected to take part in an Op Raleigh Expedition in Malaysia. Ben has to raise £3000 to participate, so the Squadron and a few personalities from around the Regiment took on the task of raising some money.

All swimmers swam for at least 7 of the 24 hours, including our two voyeur scuba divers, **Cpl Russ Craig** and **LCpl Daz Robinson** who 'just happened' to make it into the pool, during the sessions that the girls were swimming.

Ben (front centre) and the Swimathon Team

The old man and organiser of the event **WO2 Gordon** 'Big Boy' **Hitchen** had problems keeping up the pace, and his trunks, during the event, no thanks to some fellow swimmers! The admin back up team did a superb job of keeping everyone fed and watered during the event. The only injuries that were noted were to **Sgt Cossie Calabrese** who hurt her pride on entering the water as a non swimmer at the end, and **Cpl Andrea Mills** who needed physio to her finger after pressing the length counter button 10,151 times. At the end of the 24 hour period a total of 165 miles were covered by the swimmers and over £2000 was raised. Thanks must go to **Capt Andy Mould** for agreeing to be thrown into the pool, fully clothed, by the Squadron in aid of this event–your dowsing raised an extra £1.

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS IN FRY
OC **Capt Alan Owen/Capt Ian Hargreaves** (Des)
Tp Sgt **Sgt Cossie Calabrese**

With the Euromux build in Bosnia, upon the withdrawal of Ptarmigan from theatre, there have been considerable changes in the Tp. The 501 detachments in Mostar and Kislejak finally returned to the UK much to their crews' relief. New communications sites have been set up across Bosnia. Things appear to have swung full circle with the return of the 30th Sig Regt detachment back to Gorni Vakuf. The detachments have all become increasingly exposed to other nations with the provision of Euromux to the Malays, Dutch and the many other nationalities in Landcent. The advantages of living alongside other cultures have become apparent over the months; the benefits of living in a former ski lodge in Sisava are offset by the lack of rice in the Dutch diet for the Gurkha crew! **Sgt Calabrese** has come to the rescue by swapping her Italian language skills for bags of rice. The end of January finally saw the end of tour for **LCpl Tara Henderson** who has been filling the post of the Admin NCO in Split for the last 11 months. Thanks very much for your invaluable work and help.

MESSAGE CENTRE–KUPRES
Det Comd **LCpl Edwards** 'Gurung'

The Det continues to provide Comms for the RLC Regt in Kupres. **Sig Dave Neadham** has come off the Viterog RR site while **Sig Moore** has come up from Sisava. He is trying to break the habit of showering twice daily having spent two months in Dutch Bat with mixed accommodation and facilities! We are slowly weaning him off obsessive washing but so far are not having the same success getting him off the Mars Bars! The Det has now moved out of a radio relay vehicle into a corimec and has set about dismounting all the equipment into its' new home.

MOST BEAR–SPLIT
Det Comd **Cpl Spike Poole**
Det Tech **Cpl Mick Turner**

The MOST detachment has now inherited its' very own COMMCEN and has seen considerable changes. **Cpl Turner** and **Krishna**, his little helper, have continued the rewire of Syscon and most of the cabling in camp. **LCpl Lake** has returned from her two weeks exchange with the MOST in Sarajevo considerably more knowledgeable about the MOST and also about where to get the best Jellybeans in theatre!

MOST CAT–SARAJEVO
Det Comd **Cpl Andy Bailey**

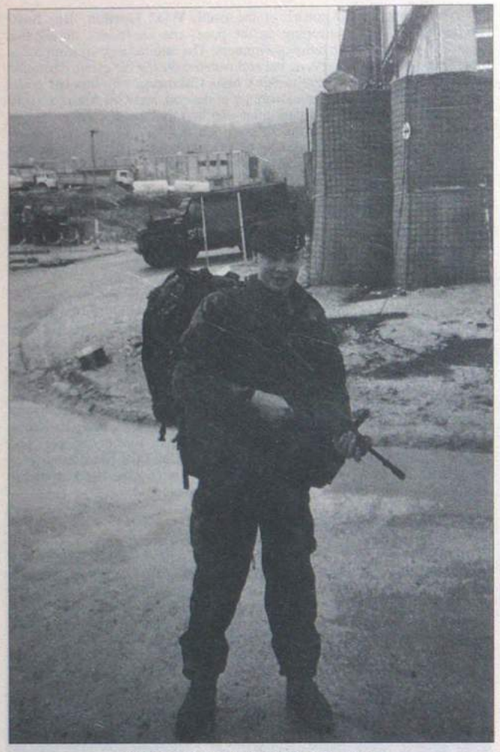
We are awaiting the imminent return of **Cpl Richards** to take over the MOST detachment having only left 7 months ago. The arrival of the Turks, Swedes, Italians, Spanish and several other nationalities in the compound has seen a considerable change to say the least. The Spanish are currently winning the 'who can get their flag highest' competition, but **Cpl Andy Bailey** still has the Scam 12 card left to play. **Sgt Steve Bell** has returned to the detachment after his time in Gorni Vakuf. Now that he has been extended by three weeks, **Jimi** has stopped laughing at **Cpl Bailey** being sent back out to theatre to finsh the rest of his tour when his Det went home. The Det underwent a considerable rebuild under the direction of **Sgt Rick Buxton** who rings up occasionally just to check that it is being kept up to scratch. The Gurkhas are keeping 30 Sigs in the limelight with their continued cooking of excellent curries. **Cpl Bhoj** and **Sig Pratimann** stepped in at short notice to provide a curry lunch for the SOinC while **Sibachan** and **Beg** recently helped out 280 Sig Sqn by cooking for **Lt Gen** 'Cordy' **Simpson** and several other Generals from other nations.

MSG CENTRE SISAVA
Det Comd **Cpl Debendra Maden**

Located in a former ski resort the base and accommodation are in a ski lodge/hotel. Unfortunately the widespread mine fields make skiing a little hazardous! Apart from the continental diet–marzipan and ham for lunch for example, living with Dutch Bat remains very relaxed.

BT ANDORRA AND COMMCEN GORNI VAKUF
by Capt John Luc Scotson

The Det in Gorni Vakuf are boldly going with BT Andorra where no man has gone before, providing comms for the Green Howards in a way unsurpassed in the space time continuum. Bravely battling through the communications vortex to a higher plane of message handling. We are ably assisted by our chief engineer **Cpl Fincham** detached from Deep Space 3 Div. Unlike the rest of the ship's crew who have all been short toured he is still on his six month tour of duty! **Pratiman** has now joined the crew to keep the Warp drive on line. Rumours that the Det are avid Star Trek enthusiasts seem to have been substantiated. **Sig Baxter** has been keeping all those lonely women in The UK entertained with his incredible output of blueys. He is seen here posing in the Precision factory.



Sig Baxter at the Precision Factory
'One for the Wire and a crate for the Det'

EXERCISE HIMALAYAN DRAGON
30 SIG REGT EXPEDITION TO NEPAL
19 OCTOBER–18 NOVEMBER 96
by Sgt Doz Penfold

After all those tours in Former Yugoslavia the time had come for some members of 30 Sig Regt to embark on adventurous training and to escape for a while. For this purpose Ex Himalayan Dragon was dreamed up, with the idea of giving the lucky participants the chance of some trekking and white-water rafting through the remote and picturesque Eastern Nepal.

In charge of this enviable task was our ever worrying illustrious boss, **Capt Rich Newhouse**, supported in almost every task by the resident mountain goat **Cpl Steve Robinson**. So it was that after a memorable flight from Heathrow, which four members of the group almost managed to miss (because they were still in the bar), we arrived in Kathmandu for the start. It certainly turned out to be adventurous training. After a quick admin day we set off in our privately hired and spiritually blessed bus for what we thought would be a two day journey to Taplejung. However, by our second night on the bus we had had only five punctures and a near engine blow out. We deserted our first (but by no means last) unreliable form of transport. We were still over a day away from Taplejung. After some cunning negotiations by our Gurkha, **LCpl Man**, we managed to obtain a lift to the nearest bus stop from one of the locals on his tractor and trailer. Here we boarded another bus on its breathtaking and sometimes downright dangerous journey. This latter fact was reinforced by **Cpl Tony McAleese**, who leapt off the roof when he thought that we were about to roll down the mountainside. He was not alone in thinking that, but no one else had the guts to jump off!

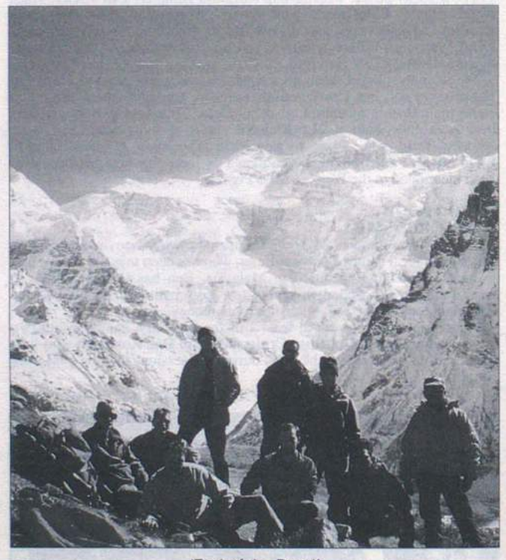
Covered in dust and almost freezing, we did manage to survive this first leg of the journey and then proceeded to bathe ourselves in the solar heated, but still nearly freezing glacial river before the start of our trekking. Although both **LCpl Cez Wrenn** and **Sig Toni Adams** had been slightly ill already, it was **Cpl** 'Taff' **Richards** who set the standard for dietary dilemmas, with his "unfortunate accident'. This confirmed that whilst Rupees and Dollars are very handy, the most important commodity on the trip was going to be toilet rolls and clean underpants.

Our first day's trekking also proved to be a complete culture shock to most of us as we soon discovered that, how ever impracticable it may seem to us the Nepalese interpretation of the 'easiest route' is, the one that goes straight there, not round but over every mountain in its path. So we trekked, and trekked and kept trekking, gradually gaining height but spending a great deal of time losing it as well. We continued to leave behind the relative warmth of the 'foothills' and moved into the rather chilly and sometimes freezing Himalayas.

After leaving our last 'big' town of Ghunsa (3340m) we continued on towards our goal of Pang Pema, the base camp for Mt Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world. As it turned out this was a rather illusive goal for a few members of the group. A few days walk from Ghunsa we stopped for an acclimatisation day at Kambachan (3960m), during which we encountered our first case of altitude sickness. Ironically, it was the JSMEL, **Cpl Steve Robinson**, who had to return to Ghunsa to recover.

'Onwards and Upwards'
Mount Kanchenjunga looms in the distance

Onwards we pushed to Lhonak, where we lost two more people. **Cpl Shaun Tunca** and **Sig Pete Ashcroft** returned to Ghunsa after feeling the effects of headaches and nausea. By now we were only half a day's walking from our trekking goal, so with an early start we set off alongside the huge and very daunting Kanchenjunga Glacier to Pang Pema. Unfortunately not all of us made it, as **Sig Iain Taylor** fell ill within sight of our objective, and returned to Lhonak escorted by **Cpl** 'Taff' **Richards**.



'End of the Road'
LCpl Steve Binks, Sgt Doz Penfold, Sig Tony Adams,
Cpls Cez Wrenn, Tony McAleese, Capt Richard Newhouse,
Sig Anton Pozo, LCpl Man and Gyan the Guide

Out of the original 13, eight of the group made it to Pang Pema to stand staring up at Kanchenjunga and pose for the customary 'blah' photos. Now all that was left was to walk back down our route and meet up with our rafting company. Five days away, this was a task easier said than done–especially for **Sgt** 'Doz' **Penfold** and **Cpl Tony McAleese**. They decided to take the unconventional route across the glacier, and coined the phrase 'we knew we were lost when the mountain started looking awfully steep'. We all eventually arrived back in Ghunsa and collected the three others who had by then recovered. Being squaddies we proceeded to annoy them by telling stories of what they had missed. Justice of sorts was carried out as before departure next morning, **Sgt** 'Doz' **Penfold**'s bowels had followed **Cpl** 'Taff' **Richards**' example. He had to catch up with the rest of the group after a quick change of clothing. Down the mountain we went, enjoying a celebrated bonfire night in which six chickens met their

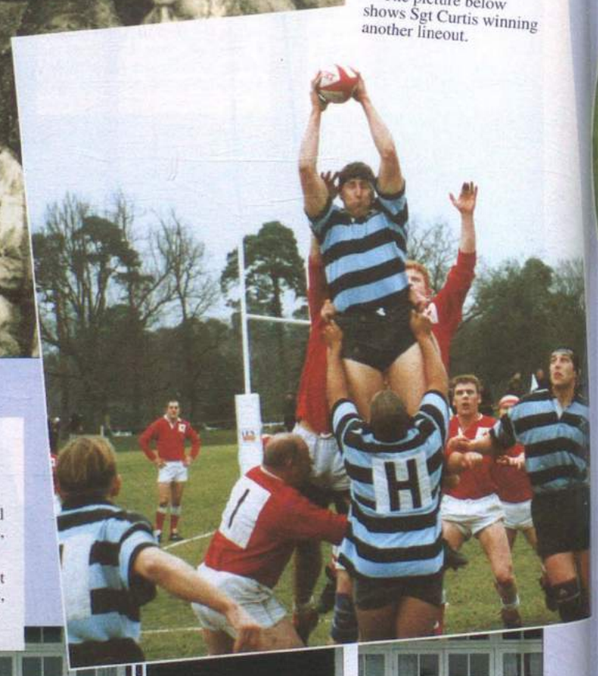
ARMY RUGBY MAJOR AN

DO YOU RECOGNISE THE CAPTAIN OF THIS CUP WINNING RUGBY TEAM? IS HE STILL A SERVING OFFICER, OR IS HE RETIRED?

If you really want to know, we'll tell you in the June issue which will be the first combined issue of the Journal and Wire magazine.

For a full report of the Major and Minor Units Final take a look in the Sports Section towards the back of this issue.

The picture below shows Sgt Curtis winning another lineout.



216 PARA SIGNAL SQUADRON MINOR UNITS RUGBY WINNERS

Back row: Flt Lt Gannon (Team Manager), Sgt Scott, LCpl Patmore, Sig Good, Cpl Poulson, Capt Gunning, LCpl Poppee, Cpl Flounders, Capt Roper, Maj Gyorffy, LCpl Cripps.

Front row: Sgt Wadmer, WO1 Morrell, Cpl Braddock, Capt May, Maj Beaumont, Capt Bennett (Team Captain), Sgt Jones, WO2 Carrick, LCpl Allcock, Capt Cubbin, Sgt Jones, Sig Dick.

MINOR UNIT CHAMPIONS

The picture to the right shows Sgt Curtis receiving The Army Cup on behalf of the 2 Signal Regiment Team.

Congratulations to 2 Signal Regiment and to 216 Parachute Signal Squadron on winning the Army Cup Rugby finals for Major and Minor Units respectively. A great achievement! It is particularly appropriate that the Corps is in the forefront of Army Rugby during the Masters last year in office. Additionally Brian Johnson is to be congratulated in making the England A Squad this year. The Match reports speak for themselves but it is worthy of note that both finals were hard fought games, with the Corps Teams showing real guts and determination throughout.

The picture below shows WO2 (QMSI) Spowart converting another try.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

The Team was as follows: Sig Louis Francois Brown, Sig Steff Gibbs, LCpl Dave Dorking, Sig Lee Francis, SSgt Mark Neighbour, Sig Lee Denham, LCpl Ray MacLeod, Sgt Pete Curtis, Sgt Garry Cassidy, WO2 Chris Spowart, Cpl Jim Tomkinson, Sgt Paul Gartside, Cpl Bill Haley, LCpl 'J' Bean and Cpl Steve Bartliff. Subs were: Maj David Jones, Capt Bob Strawbridge, Capt Dave Edwards, Sig Jim Cook, LCpl Gaz Williams and Sig Scott Wilson.

demise at the hands of the group. Then we were back in the small town of Chirwa for yet another adventure. Upon leaving after lunch, four of the racing snakes went straight on to Sinwa. The rest however were following Gyan, the guide, when he became lost whilst hacking his way through the jungle. After numerous jokes about snakes, spiders and other possible poisonous creatures, a helping hand by two local children got us out of the jungle and onto a path. Serious speed marching to Sinwa followed, but at least we could buy Pepsi when we got there. We were, by then, only a few days walk from Dobhan and the relative rest of rafting, although **Sig Pete Ashcroft** fell rather ill and had to be patched up by the Gurkha Welfare Centre. Slightly late, we all managed to get to Dobhan, in time for a well deserved rest.

By now most of the group were beginning to get tired of the curried noodles, so it came as a Godsend to join up with the rafting company and experience their culinary expertise. We then set off for a five days rafting trip down the Tamur River. Day one was straight into the cauldron, **Sig Steve Binks** being nearly drowned and **Sig Anton Pozo** getting swept out of the raft almost immediately. Two days of relatively flat water were followed by Day Four which brought the return of the white knuckle ride, much to everyone's delight.

It was on the last day of rafting that one of the rafts, having followed a very dodgy route, capsized in slow motion in a grade 5 rapid. Naturally this caused almost uncontrollable laughter from the other raft. Then like all good things the white water came to an end. We bid farewell to the Tamur and moved onto Dharan and then a bus to the Royal Chitwan National Park for a two day safari and a shower.

'White Knuckle Rafting'–the Tamur River

In keeping with the spirit of the expedition the safari at Chitwan proved to be unpredictable as, much to the disbelief of the group, the 400 or so rhinos within the park had suddenly decided to become very elusive. Surely a creature the size of a small family car should be easy to find? Unfortunately not, not even when we took to elephant back for three hours. With the safari over it was then time to return to Kathmandu for a spot of souvenir shopping before our flight back. Even at Kathmandu airport, we had to engage in last minute bartering with the baggage handlers before we bid farewell to Nepal and an extremely memorable and enjoyable expedition.

Eventually, bearded and a great deal thinner, the group returned to Heathrow, with time to savour the welcome delights of Burger King. The last bus of this particular adventure actually worked (well done MT). Although glad to be back, we all agreed that however difficult it may have been at times, a good time was had by all, and yes, most of us would do it again. It just leaves me to say thanks to the man who arranged it all and made it possible - thanks **Rich** (or is it Sir again now ?).

CHANGE OF OPCOM TO 11 SIG BDE

The recent visit of **Brig D. J. Wills**, Comd 11 Signal Bde was used to mark the end of operational command under HQ LAND. With the customary exchange of plaques and the promise of added value from both parties, control of the R Signals contingency operations Regiment switched to 11 Signal Brigade.

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. R. Grant**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Krishna Gurung**

The Squadron recently said farewell to **Maj Sparshatt** and his wife **Louise** after two years here. If there is anyone who they haven't told yet where they are posted, yes it is to the USA (somewhere in New Jersey). We also welcome **Maj Grant** and his wife **Pia** and wish them a happy and successful tour.

ATTESTATION PARADE

After the varied but very demanding selection procedure 160 young hill boys were recruited for the Bde of Gurkhas on 20th December 1995 in the British Gurkha Camp, Pokhara (Nepal). They were then flown to the United Kingdom and based in Queen Elizabeth's Barracks, Church Crookham, where they underwent 42 weeks of training until eventually they emerged as trained soldiers at their Pass Out Parade on 18th December 1996. It was a very proud day for them and closed the first chapter of their career in the Gurkhas.

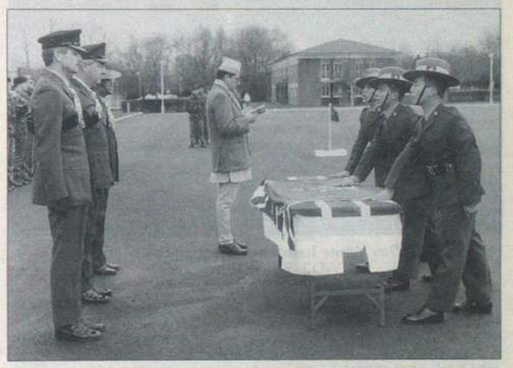
This year The Queen's Gurkha Signals welcomed 15 of these robust, enthusiastic young soldiers as Signallers on 23rd December 1996. They arrived at Gamecock Barracks, 30 Sig Regt and were met by the Gurkha Major, **Maj (QGO) Kamasher Tamang**, the SQGO **Capt (QGO) Shiva Kumar Rai** and **SSM WO2 Krishna Gurung**. They were administered by 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn for the duration of their stay until their departure for the Royal School of Signals to begin their trade training.

To make them welcome, and feel as much a part of the Regimental family as possible, it was planned that they would undergo a variety of familiarisation training. First of all they were taken on visits to the nearest town centres, namely; Nuneaton, Coventry, Leicester and Birmingham. After the Christmas break they were introduced to a basic computer skills course run by North Warwickshire College at the Training Wing. They were also given grounding in Voice Procedure and introduced to different communications equipment. Along side these activities they were preparing for the Attestation Parade, which would mark their entry into The Queen's Gurkha Signals.

The Attestation Parade took place on 21st January 1997 and was led by **Lt (QGO) Santa Pun**. At 1145 hours the Colonel of the Regiment, **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE** took the salute. The Signallers in a group of three marched, at 140 paces per minute, to the saluting desk where they took their oath:

'I, Number, Signaller Name, hereby do solemnly swear that I will remain loyal and faithful to the Queen's Gurkha Signals, at all times whether in war or peace. I further pledge total obedience throughout my service to Her Majesty the Queen, the Regiment and to my seniors'.

This oath is taken by touching the Regimental flag and the Union Jack by all the newcomers to the Regiment. After the recruits Attestation, the parade took the form of a medal presentation ceremony where five serving members of the Squadron received their NATO Medals for service on operations in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia.



Attestation takes place at Gamecock Barracks witnessed by Lt Col Oldfield, Brig Lee and Maj (QGO) Kamasher

Wire PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in *The Wire*, to be returned, unless they are irreplaceable.

Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing a photograph that cannot be replaced.

31 Sig Regt (V)
Southfields

CO — **Lt Col R. T. Weston**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) D. E. Hall**

PERMANENT STAFF COMING AND GOINGS

The Permanent Staff continues to say farewell to some of the seasoned veterans at the end of their tour with the Regiment. Latest to cry tears of sadness on their farewell was **Sgt Phil Robson** a man of limited football ability but he was always popular with the TA! Good luck in NI **Phil**. We have welcomed a new PSI in the form of **SSgt Craig Bruce**–yet another who cries when England play Scotland at Rugby (and football when you come to think of it!). Here's hoping you enjoy your time with the Regiment.

WO2 (SSM) Ray White handing over the reins to his successor WO2 (SSM) Jim Paine

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj R .E. C. Davis TD**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paine**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

The Squadron bids a warm welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Jim Paine**, who succeeded the outgoing SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ray White** on 14 January 1997. **WO2 Paine** has been posted from 56 Sig Sqn in Eastbourne, where his predecessor here is now serving as **WO2 (FofS) White**! Indeed the Squadron says a sad farewell to **Ray** who had a long and varied tour with us, serving in the capacities of both SSM and FofS. His wife **Jan** is also a former SSM here in Coulsdon.

EXERCISE BROKEN BACH IV

The Squadron began the New Year with a now traditional weekend of hill walking in the area of the Brecon Beacons. Ex Broken Bach IV was the brainchild of both **Capt (TOT) Henry Taylor** a former FofS here, and the current PSI, **SSgt Roy Messenger**. The main activity during the day was an exercise in navigational skills, as Troop teams followed a devious route which took in a number of check points, the grid references of which had to be decoded from six figure numbers communicated to them by HF manpack radio. Having yomped around a fair amount of the Welsh countryside, the Squadron proceeded to expend the last reserves of energy at a party which carried on well into the Sunday morning! As always the weekend was extremely successful, largely thanks to the efforts of **SSgt John MacKins** and his advance party who ensured that everybody was well fed and accommodated.

VISIT OF MR RICHARD OTTAWAY MP

The Squadron were happy to assist **Mr Richard Ottaway** our local MP, when his office asked if he could visit the TAC and be photographed with some soldiers. The vain **Capt George Devine** and highly unphotographic **SSgt Roy Messenger** were only too happy to assist and ensured that **Mr Ottaway** was briefed on one of our detachments.

Ex Broken Bach IV participants
L to R: Cpl Tanya Campbell, LCpl Ollie North, LCpl Kerry Cosgrove, SSgt Nobby (glasses) Clarke, Sgt Nobby 'no glasses' Clark, OCdt Katrina Woods, SSgt Pete Lovett, Capt Brendan Devine RLC (son of PSAO Capt George Devine), and Capt John Connelly RLC.

SSgt Roy Messenger confuses Mr Richard Ottaway MP

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj J. Irvine**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) R. Harding**

FAREWELL THEN Cpl A.P.

The Squadron says a sad farewell to that old (47 actually) trooper **Cpl Terrence Arthur Austin Poole**–known to everyone as **Cpl A. P.**–who is leaving the TA after some 22 years service. **A.P.** trained as a Driver Lineman before qualifying to become a Regimental Policeman. He has also completed courses in Regimental Water Duties, Unit Post Orderly and Fluoroscope Operating Duties. Latterly **Cpl A.P.** fronted the Squadron Recruit Reception Team, his ready wit and humour being of great benefit in making newcomers to the Squadron feel at home. Many thanks for all your efforts over the years and bon chance **A.P.!**

PROMOTION IN THE FIELD . . . KITCHEN!

Our Gurkha curry king in the kitchen, **Mark** 'Ginge' **Platts** is now **Cpl Platts**, having been recently promoted in recognition of his services to Squadron appetites. Very well done indeed **Cpl Platts**.

THE 1996 SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Squadron Christmas party was as ever, a roaring success, with more than 75 revellers enjoying a stylish Saturday night of dining and dancing–which for some actually only finished during the small hours of Sunday morning! Pre-dinner drinks were sipped to the mellow accompaniment of our very own 'Singing Signaller' **Lisa May**, backed by her jazz combo. Dinner comprised of all the traditional fare, while the post dinner dancers provided all the usual flair. Three cheers to our special guests, the CO, **Lt Col Weston** and his wife **Jane**, having won two prizes in the raffle, the CO very kindly donated an undisclosed cash sum to the Squadron. Thank you very much indeed, Sir!

EXERCISE COCKNEY COYOTE

The Squadron began the new year with a bang or two. Ex Cockney Coyote–the brainchild of **2Lt John Symmons**–was a communications exercise with a few surprises; Tp Comds were issued with courier delivered instructions to deploy to previously secret locations in the areas of Aldershot and Bordon. A largely unseen enemy carried out stealthy reconnaissance, then launched brave but ultimately suicidal attacks upon Tp locations. Meanwhile our erstwhile, ever so trustworthy Bravo Tp senior, **Sgt Dave** 'Fifth Column' **Alleyne** conspired with "friendly agent" **SSgt Chris** 'Dinger' **Bell** to lay ambush to his own Troop much to the befuddlement of the acting Tp Comd **2Lt Suzy Sidwell**! Well done to everybody who took part.

32 Sig Regt (V)
Glasgow

CO — **Lt Col A. C. C. Lapsley**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) J. McLachlan**

RHQ
ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

From **WO1 (RSM) G. G. A. Reith** on departure:

One of the many jobs of the RSM of this Regiment is to edit *The Wire* Notes. Normally a thankless task. However I am delighted to have the opportunity to welcome on behalf of the Regiment, the new TARA, my good friend and fellow Scotsman, **WO1 (RSM) Jim McLachlan**, his wife **Mel** and their two sons **Jim** and **Rob**. I know you will enjoy your tour.

On a personal note, there can be no prouder moment for a soldier than to be appointed as RSM. For myself, a proud Scot, I also achieved an ambition I held for five years, to be TARA of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V). I had never served with a TA Regiment before and I have found it at times frustrating, annoying, very hard work and without doubt the most rewarding experience of a lifetime. Over the past two and a half years I have developed the deepest respect for the TA as well as a deep bond with this Regiment, the Officers, Troops, and of course my Sergeants' Mess. I have been very proud to serve as your RSM, it grieves me deeply to leave and I wish to thank all members of the Regiment for your support, loyalty and friendship which I hope you will give as freely to my successor.

It has been a wonderful end to a career as a soldier before being commissioned. I wish you all the very best for the future and will count the days before seeing you all again when I return as Quartermaster!

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Capt Cammy Payn**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Terry McVey**

THAT BURNS SUPPER

WO1 (RSM) G. G. A. 'Braveheart' Reith in full flow during his finest hour, 'The Address to the Haggis'

A MANS' A MAN FOR A' THAT!

At Cultybraggan Training Camp over the weekend of 24 to 26 January 1997, the Regiment assembled to carry out vital trade training, well supported in the admin role by HQ Sqn. The highlight of the weekend was a Burns Supper for the Officers and SNCOs held in the Sgts Mess Annex. The food was well prepared and served by our two master chefs, **WO2 Rab Meldrum** and **SSgt John Wren** with the able assistance of **Cpl** 'Shug' **McLean**, **Cpl Linda Richardson**, **LCpl Debbie Carruthers** and **LCpl Christine McCormack**.

The evening was lit up like Guy Fawkes night when 'The TARA', **WO1 (RSM) Graham** 'Braveheart' **Reith**, addressed the haggis with such vigour that he nearly decapitated the whole top table with a single swipe from the huge claymore he produced from under the table as 'legs an' airms an' heids he sned like taps o' thristle!' Other players at the dinner included **Maj Brian Murray** with an excellent rendition of the Immortal Memory, **2Lt Stephen McBride** toasted the lassies but got his 'cummupence' when **SSgt Marylin Niblock** replied on their behalf. No man was spared her tongue lashing! **WO2 Keith** 'Gazza' **Anderson** provided entertainment 'frae th' gallery' and the English members present defended their own corner, but the singing of 'Swing low, Sweet Chariot' was easily drowned out by a well versed effort of 'Flower of Scotland'. When the RSM invited all kilted members to 'show dirks' **WO2 (SSM) Terry McVey** was embarrassed when his Skien Dhu turned out to be a toy plastic knife! The compensating bottle of port went towards hiding his shame. Thankfully only **SSgt Jean Thomson** misunderstood what the RSM was asking the Kilted Warriors to show! Obviously wishful thinking! As the dinner ended, each retired to their respective messes where the jigging went on into the wee sma' hours.

As the RSM moves on to pastures new on commissioning we wish him and **Moira** well in their new career. They have both really taken the time and effort to understand and get to know the TA soldiers . They will be sorely missed!

'Wha's like him, Damn few, An they 're a' deid!'

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–ABERDEEN

Sqn Comd — **Maj Morna Strachen**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Ian Walker**

MOVE TO GORDON BARRACKS

51 Sqn have now completed their move to Bridge of Don Barracks in the North of the city of Aberdeen. Whilst the move went fairly smoothly thanks to the hard work of Squadron personnel, it still takes a bit of getting used to sharing facilities with other units. Whilst on the subject of moves–the Sqn Comd thought that this moving lark was easy–so she promptly moved house at the same time. A glutton for punishment Ma'am.

IFOR

The Squadron is still well represented out in former Yugoslavia with **Capt Dan Robertson** and **LCpl Jimmy Douglas** flying the flag for the Squadron. I understand that **Capt Robertson** has made enquiries about gaining the Kebab franchise for the area.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **LCpl Tina Youngson** and **John Andrew** of the AAC on their recent marriage in Aberdeen. They met whilst serving in former Yugoslavia (I think **Tina** was promised free flights home to attract her interest in the first place). Everyone at the Squadron wishes them both the very best wishes for a long and happy marriage. Very many congratulations must go to our **SSM Ian Walker** and his wife **Heather** on the birth of another wee boy, **Lewis**. So much for his stories about being too busy for ANYTHING these days.

TRAINING

The new training year has started with a bang and the weekends just seem to pile up. The Squadron took part in Ex Testing Angel the format for which was an ongoing quiz over the various circuits. Towards the end of the Exercise the ingenuity of the question setters was being stretched to the limit, and they were resorting to such fare as 'What was the name of the ship in Mutiny on the Bounty'. Speaking of Bounty, the Squadron has completed a Bounty qualification weekend at Barry Buddon Camp where we enjoyed a very good turnout–funny that!

Finally congratulations are due to **Sgt Lyn Bertram** our Squadron first aid instructor who whilst attending a recruiting evening at the local college sprang to the aid of one of the college lecturers who collapsed suddenly. All the college staff were quick to praise the professional way **Sgt Bertram** demonstrated first aid principles on the semi conscious patient and saw the lecturer concerned safely into the ambulance. He has since made a full recovery.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–GLASGOW

Sqn Comd — **Maj Andrews**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) McKay**

After the hard work of Summer Camp, 52 Sqn settled down to a leisurely run up to Christmas. A traditionally quiet time for training there was however, Ex Stagecoach, a weekend communications exercise with 2 Bde. Edinburgh Castle was the setting for the RCP and the SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Ian McKay** and PSI, **SSgt Steve Harrison** were kept busy trying to keep the equipment and themselves cool, as typically the heating was running at full tilt in the hope of delaying the onset of the next ice age. **2Lt Stephen McBride** was best situated with his Troop, in the lap of luxury with wide screen television and all mod cons–he had no trouble with morale. During the pre-Christmas festivities no-one was arrested; despite the riotous behaviour, excess of food, vast quantities of drink and cross-dressing–and that was just at the children's Christmas Pantomime!

The first month of 1997 hit the Squadron hard and dispelled any thoughts of taking life easy. Training evenings were changed from

Thursday to Wednesday and the first three weekends of January were taken up with training. Ex Testing Angel was devised, as its name implies, to test the equipment and personnel and to maintain interest a comms quiz was devised. This was OK if you had received the book of questions and only had to supply the answers. Trying to do both really tested the personnel.

The second weekend was devoted entirely to Bounty Qualifications, no mean feat to get over 80 personnel through all their qualifications and have some fun in between times.

The final training weekend of January concentrated entirely upon promotion and trade training. Cultybraggen did not disappoint and Saturday was as cold and miserable a day that could be forecast, but that did not detract from the warmth of the Burns Supper in the evening and temperatures rose after the English reply during the speeches. A reminder that the English contingent was heavily outnumbered on this occasion had the desired effect and a truce ensued.

A very warm welcome back to **LCpl White** from Bosnia, and congratulations to **LCpl Scott** on his promotion.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Fiona Farquharson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Bill Strachan**

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Christmas period dawned on us again with another hectic time socially–in between some hard work too of course. The JRC function showed some budding John Travoltas in action, **Capt Peter** 'PeeCee' **Campbell** our PSAO and **RSM Reith** (that was my brother George!). The following games night gave a chance for our PSI, **SSgt John Leach** to pose yet again some testing questions. Remember, the quizmaster's decision is final! Thanks to the prodigious efforts of PSAO, **Capt Peter** 'PeeCee' **Campbell** the run of social events, and particularly the all ranks Christmas Dinner went without hitch. Having learned our lesson last year he cautiously planned for a three hour 'chill out' phase prior to launching into the night exercise.

ROMANCE

The past two months have also been busy for Cupid. Sunny Cyprus sparked romance for **LCpl Sharon Moyes** and **Cpl Robert Brannigan** and we wish them well on their engagement. Paris was the venue for our other lovebirds **Capt Alan Pepper** and **Lt Jill Montgomery** (Monty) who also got engaged. (At last 'Monty' has a PEP Plan, no entry fee, no annual service charge etc.). Both are moving out for a two year sabbatical in Kenya. As part of their business development Plan, **Capt** 'Peps' is adamant that **Jill** follow her profession as speech therapist. In years to come we may wonder why Bantu and Hutu children are speaking with a broad Northern Irish accent–its Monty's influence. However, all is not lost as it is rumoured that NCRS will soon be deployed out there–D Troop 61 Sqn here we come.

WELCOME

Welcome back from Land of (B)oz **Cpl** 'Smiler' **Allan**, **Cpl** 'FM' **Faichney** and **LCpl Jimmy Collins**–try not to upset **YofS** (I've no got a medal but my wife has) **Jeff Jephcote**. Welcome too to **2Lt Julie Knight** from City of Edinburgh UOTC to be OC NCRS Mobile Tp, **SSgt Gary Garland** from 52 'Wegian' Sqn to be Tp SSgt NCRS Mobile Tp, **Cpl Ian Dickinson** our PSI Tech to join with **SSgt John Leach** in 'a small part of Scotland that is forever England'.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations go to our Piper, **Alexander Cooke** on his promotion to Lance Corporal , and to one of our RRTT members **Cpl Paula McLean** now sporting her two tapes with a satisfied smile.

COMMANDER 52 (LOWLAND) BRIGADE VISIT

On the 8 January the Squadron was pleased to welcome **Brig Roy Wilde**, Commander 52 Brigade to the TAC at Chesser Crescent to join us for a 'wee dram' for the New Year during which we bid him both 'hello' and 'goodbye' on his imminent posting out of 52 (Lowland) Brigade.

Maj Fiona Farquharson–Brigadier Wilde signing the visitors book on a very low table.

REGIMENTAL PIPES AND DRUMS TOUR TO CYPRUS
28 NOVEMBER–16 DECEMBER 1996

The Regimental Pipes and Drums went on tour with the Corps Staff Band in Cyprus from 28 November to 16 December 1996. Their role was to augment the Staff Band as the majority had to return to the UK during the tour. The pipes and drums numbered fourteen and this gave the island a combined band of 25.

Upon arrival at Akrotiri we were met by the happy faces of the main body of the Mil band leaving for the UK then it was off to our accommodation and the work began. The first Friday was a settling in day as well as find our way about. The first port of call for the band was the Albatross Club, a welfare club set up for the sustenance of lost and abandoned souls such as ourselves. After the usual round of tea and cucumber sandwiches it was off to the band block and start in earnest.

Our borrowed Pipe and Drum Majors soon realised that maybe the alternative offer of a tour of Antarctica was not such a bad idea after all, and that if they were quick they might just catch the last row boat out of Paphos. However after another visit to the Albatross Club for some more tea and sandwiches they decided to rough it with the rest of us. It was about this time that the phone call arrived with the question, 'Is there a piper on the island?' Was this the start of it? after all it was St Andrews Day. We would surely be in high demand, well yes and no it was a request to play at a wedding in Akrotiri Parish Church. And thus our work began.

We started training and rehearsals on the Saturday morning at the usual time of eight o'clock. This was necessary as it was the first time the majority of the band had ever been together at the same place and the same time. After the concentrated efforts of Pipe and Drum **Majs Elricks** (both brothers) Aberdeen OTC and **Sig** 'Rab the madman' **Branigan**, tenor drummer and tech storeman HQ Sqn, the band marched out with pipes a playing and drums a beating to their first full band engagement. So it was off to 9 Sig Regt (Radio) WO and Sgts Mess Xmas Draw where the band provided a 15 minute marching performance outside on the patio. Prior to this **Sig Glen McDonald** Systems Op 7 Sig Regt had piped in the Mess Members and Honoured Guests. Our next port of call was as a result of a panic phone call to **WO2 Smith DY**. The Band Officer for the Pipes and Drums (the only one who did not get a tan). This call was from 32 Royal Artillery Regt who had recently arrived to take up UN duties, they desperately required a band to parade round the barracks with their Battle-Axe Battery. Unfortunately the driver sent from the Artillery to pick up the Band was a sassenach. Thinking everyone looked pretty much the same, he left the band WO behind. All was not lost however, as **WO2** 'no tan' **Smith** promptly got himself on BFBS, advertised the band, received some more requests and then cancelled one of the days off. It was during this broadcast that the now famous statement when asked about the cost of hiring the band he was heard to say not to worry as we were very cheap later corrected to relatively inexpensive.

Our next engagements were school visits on the island which went down very well with the pupils but not so much with the band as the first performance meant being in full piping kit for six in the morning, we covered four schools altogether. Other events covered by the band whilst on the island were both Garrison Sgts Mess Xmas draws, 259 Sig Sqn and BFC Sig Sqn Officer and Sgts mess dinner night, 1 RGBWR Officers Mess dinner night, 9 Sig Regt Carol Concert, a disabled children's Christmas party and various impromptu performances in various NAAFI and Service Clubs. Our last performance was held at 9 Sig Regt, WO and Sgts Mess to the Officers Mess Christmas Drinks. The problem was how do you get 103 members of a tri-service establishment Mess two miles up the road? Answer: You march them. So off we went at the front of this large column of SNCOs brought up at the rear by the crusty old WO on their bikes in the vain hope of keeping up until we reached our first pit stop provided by the Officers of the Navy. Then it was off to the next stop provided by the RAF for a few low flyers. Then off to the Officers' Mess to be met by CO of 9 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Inshaw**. A sight he shall long remember as 103 of his SNCOs with a full pipe band in front appearing from the distance and all in step. Once inside the pipers provided some more entertainment until it was time to depart to Episkopi and the Albatross Club for some more tea and sandwiches.

The tour of Cyprus was enjoyed as much by all those who saw us as by those taking part. New friendships were forged and much was gained in the experience of such a tour. The band is now working well as such and can only go on from strength to strength.

The Pipes and Drums

36 Sig Regt (V)
Ilford

44 (CP) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj N. Thompson TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. Froggatt**

The end of 1996 has been marked by more changes in the Squadron with the posting to new jobs within 36 Sig Regt. of both **Capt Smiths. Graham** has gone to RHQ and **Mark** to 54 Sig Sqn. The Sqn Officers Mess has however gained two new members, with the commissioning of **2Lt Stuart Rowson** and the transfer into the Squadron of **2Lt Paul Whitehouse** from the Royal Anglians. The Sergeants' Mess has also grown in numbers with the transfer into the Squadron of **Sgt Hilary Higgins** persuaded to join us by her husband **Yeoman Brian Higgins**. The return of many of the Squadron's IFOR volunteers after successful tours in Bosnia and a surge in new recruits has filled the junior ranks bar once again.

THE CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

Once again the Squadron deployed to St. Martins Plain Camp for the final training weekend of the year. The weekend was organised by **Lt Neal Bowskill** with the main training taking place at Lydd ranges. Saturday started well with one of the brightest winter mornings seen for months. Conditions at Lydd were perfect for the time of year with frost on the ground and the sun shining. The Squadron was divided into teams for a competition based on performance at a number of military and leadership skills stands. The bayonet practice stand run by **Cpl Steve Bliss** was a big hit with all personnel as for many it was their first chance to practice with this traditional weapon of the British Army. **Cpl Ray Wilson** managed to entertain everybody by quite amazingly missing the target despite a good charge and a loud scream. Even more screaming came from the first aid stand where a team of recruits did excellent service as casualties. **Sig Shelly Curtis** used all her recent IFOR first aid training to good effect in making up the casualties for a simulated incident and **Sgt Trevor Franklin** left his paysheets and forms to control the stand. The Squadron PSI **SSgt Stan Haynes** ran a series of NBC bounty tests in the gas chamber. However, one of the highlights of the day was the command task run by **Sgt Bob Nichols**. The fortunate presence of a pool of water just where the notional mine field was must have been a stroke of good luck as it gave an additional impetus for the teams to succeed. Fortunately for the teams **Sgt Nichols** plans came to nothing as no one was more than slightly damp by the end of the day. After everyone had fired their personal weapons the Squadron returned to camp for Christmas dinner. This was, as is traditional, served to the Junior ranks by the Officers and Seniors before they sat down to their own meal. Dinner was as usual followed for most of the Squadron with a visit to the night spots of Folkestone.

Sunday had the final rounds of the week-end's competition. Team presentations were given in the Camp Cinema while other activities took place on the Square. These consisted of blind driving, blind marching and a trailer push around an obstacle course. At the end of the weekend **Sig Joanne Timothy** had led her team to overall victory by a small margin. There was a good effort by everyone and the weekend was enjoyed by all.

37 Sig Regt (V)
Redditch

CO	**Lt Col Stamford Cartwright**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Paul Edwards**

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Firstly a fair crop of arrivals and departures among the permanent staff. **WO2 (RQMS) Charlie Dubique** and medic **Sgt Sarah Dubique** (nee **Cull**) left us for 14 Sig Regt in windy West Wales. The system brought us a new RQMS in the shape of **WO2 (RQMS) Andy Turner** from 30 Sig Regt, just up the M42 at Bramcote, but TA medics of **Sarah**'s ability are less easily replaced. Our best wishes go with them, and thanks to both for their hard work. We hope that **WO2 Turner** will continue to enjoy his tour despite the privations of life in the mess at Long Marston. The turn of the year also saw changes in TM Tp. Apart from **Sgts Steve Oliver** and **Graham Low**'s excursion to Bosnia, **Sgt Glenn Thompson** has left for his T1 course at Blandford. **Sgt Des Brown** has gone up the road to 30 Sig Regt, where we hope his Mould expertise will be appreciated. In return, we welcome **Sgt Bob Watson** and family from 30. We also welcome back QM(V), **Capt John Byrne** after two successive tours in Bosnia. Hopefully he won't get itchy feet for a few months . . .

Caught in the Drill Hall at Redditch
(*L to R*): Sig Sarah Stanley, OC HQ Sqn Maj Les Porter, QM(V) Capt John Byrne, Sgt Sue Machin, WO2 (RQMS) Andy Turner

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Roy Naylor**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) John Downie**

VISIT BY COMD 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, visited the Squadron on a Winter training night, along with **Cllr D. Booth** of Stratford Town Council and also a member of the West Midlands TAVRA Committee, and **Brig C. M. J. Barnes OBE**, Secretary of West Midlands TAVRA. After briefing by the OC, the visitors toured the garages and met the troops before inspecting NCRS training co-ordinated by PSI, **SSgt Pete Lamont** and **Sgt Roz Thwaites**. **WO2 Brian Smart** briefed the visitors on recruiting and the SSM fell the Squadron in for **Brig Lee** to present medals and awards in front of a good crowd of friends and relatives. **WO2 (RQMS) Graham Bond** of HQ Sqn and **Sgt Andrea Blackford** of 96 Sqn received the first bar to their TEMS. **SSgt** 'Fred' **Hughes** was expecting to receive the TEM but was delighted to also be presented with a Lord Lieutenant's Certificate, recognising her exceptional service to the Squadron and Regiment.

SSgt 'Fred' Hughes proudly shows her Lord Lieutenant's Certificate to (left) Sgt Roz Thwaites and Sgt Lucy Sewell.

EXERCISE HOAR FROST

This year the weekend proved to be more secret than ever, with most people not knowing what to expect until they arrived on Friday night! One such person was **Capt Jo Billingham** who found herself in the role of Platoon Commander for the Bramcote phase of the weekend. The Platoon practised harbour drills and then bivvied down for the night only to be rudely awoken by **Maj Roy Naylor** and **Capt Mal Cooper** acting as enemy. Platoon **Sgt Lucy Sewell** and Section Commanders **Cpl Mick Clarke** and **LCpls Fred Smart** and **Danny Harford** kept control and the firefight was definitely won!

Saturday morning began with a lesson on Platoon movement and harbour drills given by **SSgt Paul Skelton**, then the Platoon split up into sections to visit various Military Skills Stands including the S.A.T., NBC Chamber and Assault Course (which managed to warm people up!).

Once the stands were completed the real activity of the weekend began–the Squadron Christmas Party. In keeping with tradition the Haycock Yeomanry Sword was presented to the Corporal or below who has displayed outstanding achievement in the past year. This year the CO, **Lt Col Stamford Cartwright,** presented the sword to **LCpl Tom Phalp**. The evening was completed with the disco. Much drinking, dancing and karaokeing left most people with sore heads with which to face the OC's Challenge on the Sunday morning.

This consisted of a 4 phase event–changing the wheels on a Land Rover, moving and parking the LR whilst blindfolded (amazingly only **Sig Vicky Solliss** actually broke anything), carrying a log and PRC 320 over ½ mile and establishing comms to bring in the Land Rover. Although a seemingly simple competition it was amazing how many things went wrong–anything to do with the Xmas Party the night before? The winners were 870 Tp by only three seconds and the presentation of the shield rounded off an active and very enjoyable Ex Hoar Frost

CO presents the Haycock Yeomanry Sword to LCpl Tom Phalp

870 Tp–OC's Challenge Winners
Back Row (*L to R*): Sig Vicky Solliss, Sig Andy Clarke, LCpl Danny Harford
Front Row (*L to R*): Sig Humphries, Capt Jo Billingham LCpl Tom Phalp

38 Sig Regt (V) Sheffield

CO	**Lt Col I. W. Griffiths**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M. P. Boyle**

CHANGE OF COMMANDING OFFICER

After two and a half years of service as CO of 38 (City of Sheffield) Sig Regt (V), **Lt Col Roger Davenport** relinquished command on 27 January 1997. He had served with 38 (City of Sheffield) Sig Regt (V) since 1982. Here ends a long chapter in his life and career as a TA officer. **Lt Col Davenport** goes now to serve as the SO1 Comms (V) at HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde. We wish him, his wife **Elaine** and their children **Joanna** and **Simon** all the best for the future.

Lt Col Roger Davenport receives a 'nuts and bolts' parade scene from the LAD's Sgt Ray Boulton

Assuming command on 27 January was **Lt Col Ian Griffiths**. He comes here from the MoD, probably with a deep sigh of relief. We extend our warmest welcome to him, **Peta** and their children **Sarah** and **Kate**. They will undoubtedly enjoy Sheffield as we all do.

Handover/Take-over

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

We bid a final farewell to **Maj Pete Baron**, our former Training Major. He and **Lynn** have moved a short distance to York where **Pete** assumes command of 240 Sig Sqn. We will miss them both and wish them well. **Maj David Larkam** arrives to take over and we wish him, **Fiona** and their children **James** and **Peter**, a successful and happy stay here.

87 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj T. McCappin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) N. Caldicott**

VISIT BY COMD 2 SIGNAL BRIGADE

Brig S. M. A Lee OBE visited the Squadron on the 21 January 1997 to observe a 'normal' drill night. Prior to the Commander's arrival there was therefore a 'normal' flurry of activity; if it did not move it was painted and if it was movable, it was moved to a 'better' location. When the Commander arrived, he was first briefed by the Sqn Comd.

The Sqn Comd, Maj Tom McCappin, briefs the Bde Comd, Brig Lee

The 2IC, **Capt Andy Smith** was instructing the officers and SNCOs on basic fire control orders (although he did have to adapt the lessons instructional content somewhat when **Sgts Craig Toft** and **Georgina Ashcroft** proved that they could probably operate a spacecraft better than they could a compass). The Squadron will wait with baited breath to see what happens in this years Road Rally in which they both intend to be navigators! In the gym, **Sgt Vicci Hardy** instructed the recruits on weapon handling and up on the .22 gallery range, **SSgt Philip Jones** was running the shooting for the remainder of the Squadrons signallers. **SSgt (SPSI) Mark Richmond** and **Cpl Stuart Nesbitt** ran an ATD9 (Recognition) stand which involved slide projections and a practical stand.

Finally, the Commander presented the TEM to **WO2 Nigel Caldicott**.

After the formalities, the Commander spoke to the Squadron 'en masse', congratulating it on the work that the TA do, and reminding everybody how important the TA was to the Regular Army. (We currently have **Cpl Gary Orme** in IFOR, **Capt Frederick Nilsson** has just returned from Moscow, **Cpl Helen Mountney** in the Falkland Islands and **Sgt Mandy Jones** in Norway, all supporting the Regular Army.) **LCpl Dean Britain** very noisily opened a bottle of champagne behind the bar during the Commander's speech. To make things worse, he then decided to ram his finger down the neck of the bottle to try and stop the flow of bubbly and got it stuck! All this happened behind the Commander's back, but in full view of the Squadron members. Well done to the Squadron for not bursting out in fits of laughter and we hope that **Dean** is enjoying service in Outer Mongolia.

Finally, congratulations to **Sgt Craig** (Direction Finder) **Toft** and his wife **LCpl Helen Rawlinson** on the birth of their baby girl, **Chloe**.

The Comd speaks with the SPSI, Maj Tom McCappin present

39 (Skinners) Sig Regt

CO	**Lt Col H. A. R. Hancock**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) McElwee**

Priority must go to **RSM McElwee** who has been selected for commission. Despite the trauma of having to undo his plans the Commanding Officer and Regiment all pass on their congratulations. The Regiment meanwhile has continued to be busy with end of year training and planning for change of style for next year. All in all it has been a successful year with an increase in held strength of 30%. A big recruiting effort in January and an adoption of 'All In' Training Weekends should see improved recruiting and retention.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIG SQN

Hon Col	**Corps Comd A. Whitehead WTS (FANY)**
Sqn Comd	**Maj P. N. Willmott TD**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) S. Prance**

Since returning from annual camp the Squadron has continued with its busy and, at times, hectic schedule. Several Regiment training weekends were attended, the one at Browndown being of particular interest, mainly through the novelty of the new training format but one suspects more because of the excellent Christmas Dinner that was laid on for the soldiers and which was enjoyed by all, well mainly all!

The Squadron provided a strong contingent for Remembrance Day in Harrow which was followed by a Buffet in the TAC organised by the two ACC undercover operators in the Squadron, **Sgts** 'Jim' **Bole** and 'Graham' **Richards**.

The Squadron members attended an excellent all ranks dinner in the Battle of Britain Club in RAF Uxbridge which was well organised–though somewhat costly, for the wrong reasons, by **LCpl** 'Donkey Walloper' **Kneafsey** and the PRI committee. A good night was had by all and Liver was reputed to be cheap the next morning!

Sgt Pete Reeve our much valued PSI Tech–well that's what he tells everyone!–organised an excellent pre RSCC Cadre weekend for the young Non-Commissioned Officers in the Squadron. It was held partly in the TAC with a 24 hour exercise held at Pippingford Park. The exercise was testing and above all thoroughly enjoyable. It's worth was amply demonstrated by the results achieved on the RSCC course at Colerne in December by **Cpl Vincent-Edwards** and **LCpl** 'Tar Baby' **Sharpe** who came first and third on the course respectively. Congratulations are given to them both for an excellent result which had wider implications for the Regiment also, as **Cpl Morgan** of 5 Sqn completed a clean sweep for the Regiment which attained the top three places on the course! Continuing the rash of good course results was **LCpl** 'Claire' **Beckett** who came top of her RMA 3 course

The range weekend at Pirbright, attended by both 47 and 5 Sqns, in December was disappointingly supported in terms of numbers but seemed to be enjoyed by those that made the effort to turn up. The range staff performed outstandingly well and most people managed to fire in the region of 400-500 rounds each, some in the direction of the targets! The night shoot was illuminating in every sense of the word. Not only did the electrically fired trip flares work every time despite **Cpl Gary** (fresh from the front) **Cheshire**'s efforts, and **LCpl** 'Baldrick' **Howes** lighting scaffold work–it was rumoured to have been borrowed from White Hart Lane, the mass of tracer rounds in the air or bouncing off the ground within three feet of the muzzle lit up nearly all of Surrey.

'Oh what a lovely war!'
Squadron Members on Regimental Training Weekend

The Squadron welcomes back from Bosnia **Capt** 'Mike' **Atkinson** and **Cpl Gary Cheshire**. All Squadron members are now back safely from the front and all seemed to have enjoyed a difficult and demanding job carried out in far from ideal conditions. Well done to them all.

Finally congratulations to the following on their well deserved promotions. **Capt Carla Lankester, SSgt Mark Gilfrin, Sgt Dave Lambert** and **Sgt Andy Hutchins, LCpls Luke Holdom, Andy Chapman** and 'Lois' **Lane**. 57 (CITY & COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj H. Aston**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P. Packer**

Following Annual Camp and of course the Lanyard Trophy Competition (see below) the Squadron has had a reasonably quiet build up to Christmas. A Regimental Trade Training weekend with the traditional All Ranks Christmas Dinner and Party held at Browndown Camp, was followed by a Squadron Range and Bounty Test weekend at Pirbright. The ranges on this weekend were of course completed on the Saturday, leaving (due to a sadistic programme writer) the BFT and NBC to early Sunday morning. Just right for those who had had ample sufficiency of the amber nectar the night before! This weekend was also the first, as SSM, for **WO2 Phil Packer** having taken over the mantel from **WO2 Stan Gane** on 1 December. **WO2 Gane** is to take up a training appointment within the Squadron.

We now, after four years of options and reorganisations, hopefully, look forward to a more stable 1997!

THE LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION 1996
by LCpl Bob 'Elephant' **Tusk**

The Lanyard Trophy Competition was held during the period 2-4 October this year in the Black Mountains. Starting at Cwrt-y-Gollen Camp following a route of approx 40 miles through 14 checkpoints.

The team of 10 soldiers representing 39 Sig Regt all came from 57 Sig Sqn with the support team being made up from a combination of HQ and 57 Sig Sqns. The team with its support arrived at Cwrt-y-Gollen on Wednesday evening. After a quick kit check there was a team brief in the bar over a pint. Reveille was at 0300 hrs ready for the 0500 hrs staggered start. There were 17 teams of which 5 were TA.

As we assembled at the start, spirits within the team were high, all our kit was weighed and we were ready for the off at 0500 hrs. It was still dark so we needed torches. The weather, however, was at that point warm and dry. A recce of the first checkpoints a few weeks before by the team captain ensured a good start. It was inevitable, however, that the stronger Regular Army teams would overtake us, as they did. We did not allow this to dampen our spirits however and plodded on in the dark.

Once it started to get light the navigation became easier, but our biggest problem became the very steep climbs and the high winds on the mountain ridges. These gale force winds kept catching our Bergen's and taking us off balance resulting in additional hard work, this inevitably helped to slow us down. I personally could hardly stand up the wind was so strong! We were all glad to get out of the wind when the route took us down off the ridge but then of course the realisation we would only have to climb back up again. Groan!!

At the lunch stop we had hot pies and drinks to fortify us, medical problems were also attended by our Admin Team consisting of our PSAO **Capt** 'John' **Cullen, Cpl** 'Sue' **James** (a very experienced Para Medic in civilian life, who's services would be called for by more than one unit before the competition was over), **LCpl Tracey Smith** and **Sig Sarah Longworth** It was a slightly longer stop than at previous checkpoints but it enabled us to rest our leg muscles and to overdose on the Mars Bars and bananas and for **Cpl Sue James** to treat blisters and to strap up **Sgt Mike Whitels** knee which he had twisted when the wind caught him on top of a ridge, twisting him around. Suitably refreshed we continued on, only to see the weather deteriorate. The high winds had by now been joined by driving rain and cold, it also started to get dark early due to the low cloud cover. A unanimous decision was taken throughout the team that we would not continue, for safety reasons, past checkpoint 12. I was quite relieved by this as I felt at that point I was beginning to go down with a mild case of hypothermia.

We'd attempted a great challenge and had gone for it with true grit and determination, we didn't complete the event but had completed 30 miles over very difficult terrain carrying 501bs in weight on our backs. We were very proud of that and our feet were visible proof of our endeavours! Had the weather conditions been better I believe we would have finished the course, apart from the sore feet and a couple of minor knee injuries we were still quite strong and the team's spirits were still high.

This type of event requires an exceptional amount of fitness and stamina. This can only really be achieved through training which we had tried to arrange every available weekend in the months leading up to the event. A team also needs good admin support and perhaps most of all enthusiasm. We had all three. Until Next Year.

'The Lanyard Trophy Team with it's Admin Support Group' Missing, the author LCpl Bob 'Elephant' Tusk (in hospital with Hypothermia!), Sig Kevin May (already on his way to China) and Capt John Cullen (taking the photograph)!

The Queens Gurkha Sig Regt
Hong Kong

OPERATION MERCURY 96

Operation Mercury this year was held at Lo Wu range on 21/22 September 1996. This year was significant because it was a Silver Anniversary and the last one to be co-ordinated by QG Signals in Hong Kong.

The historical background of Operation Mercury goes way back to 1970. Like many traditions in Armies throughout the world, Operation Mercury was planned initially as a social gathering. In 1970 **General Honneger**, together with a number of officers from the Swiss Army Signal Corps, visited Hong Kong on route to the World Trade Fair in Osaka. Whilst in Hong Kong they were hosted by the Gurkha Signals and 27 Sig Regt. In 1971 the first of a series of international shooting matches were held between Hong Kong and the Swiss Army Signal Rifle Association in the 'Auslandschweizer Fernschiessen', a Non Central Rifle Match based upon the Swiss Annual Rifle Classification Test.

Ever since, this has been a special event that has both communities enjoying the weekend out on the ranges. Last year Operation Mercury was conducted in Switzerland on 9 November 1995, with **Brig J. E. Neeve**, Comd 2(NC) Sig Bde. The results of the Hong Kong leg were sent to Switzerland after our own competition on 7/8 October 1995 by HF Radio. This year's results will again be exchanged between Hong Kong and Switzerland.

To make the event historical many VIPs were invited to the Silver Anniversary celebration. **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, Col of the Regt, QG Signals was invited from the United Kingdom. **Brig Lee** was with the Regiment when the first Operation Mercury was held in 1971. Swiss Rifle Association of Hong Kong had also invited their VIPS. **Brig Hanspeter Alioth, Col Beck** and **Col Gerschwiler** were amongst them.

The Silver Anniversary dinner night was organised in the Officers' Mess, Prince of Wales Barracks on 21 September 1996. The majority of 'serious' shooting events were held on 21 September 1996. 22 September 1996 was mainly a families day with ceremonial parade and events like VIPs Crossbow, Ladies .22 shoot and Falling plates competitions. One of the day's main attractions was the Band from the Royal Engineers who played not only English music but also Nepali music. The Regimental parade was held for the Official Commissioning of **Lt (QGO) Rajendraman Gurung** which was carried out by **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE. Lt (QGO) Rajendraman Gurung** is the last QGO to be commissioned in Hong Kong prior to the handover and he will attend the Tp Comd Course in February 1997 prior to serving in UK.

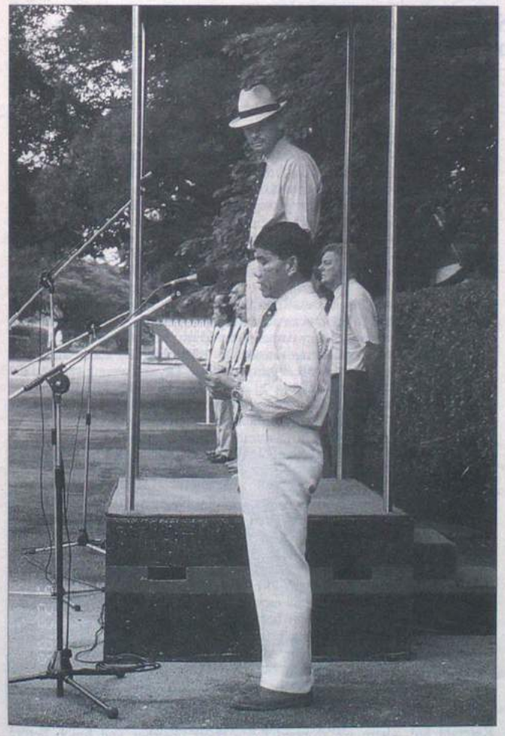
The event ended in true Gurkha Kaida with a superb Gurkha Bhat.

QG SIGNALS 47TH BIRTHDAY PARADE CELEBRATIONS IN HONG KONG

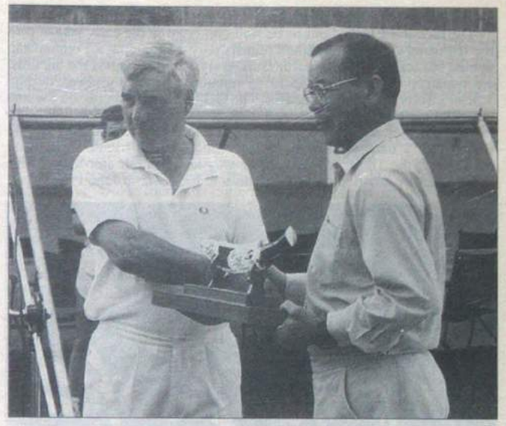
QG Signals 47th Regimental Birthday celebrations, the final Birthday parade in Hong Kong, was held at Borneo Lines, Sek Kong, on 23 September 1996. To celebrate the event all members of the Regt and some 'BURHOS' paraded in front of the old Officers' Mess in Borneo Lines. The traditional speeches were read by **Lt Col (Retd) Mike Barrett OBE** and the Gurkha Major **Maj (QGO) Silajit Gurung MVO**. Comd QG Signals **Lt Col R. J. J. Ellis** addressed the parade and read out to the Regt all the Birthday greetings received from around the globe. Colonel of the Regiment **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE** was present to witness this historic event with his wife.

Lt (QGO) Rajendraman Gurung being commissioned by the Regimental Col Brig S.M.A. Lee OBE at Operation Mercury

Following the parade all the Regimental personnel went on a Regimental hill walk culminating in the cutting of the Regimental cake and customary barbecue. The Regimental Birthday was also the opportunity to bid farewell to **Maj (GCO) Lilbahadur Gurung** the 2IC Regt before his departure on pension.



Maj (QGO) Silajit Gurung MVO, Gurkha Major, reading the Regimental Birthday Speech



Brig S.M.A. Lee OBE, presents Maj (QGO) Lilbahadur Gurung with a Kotamori Kukri on his farewell

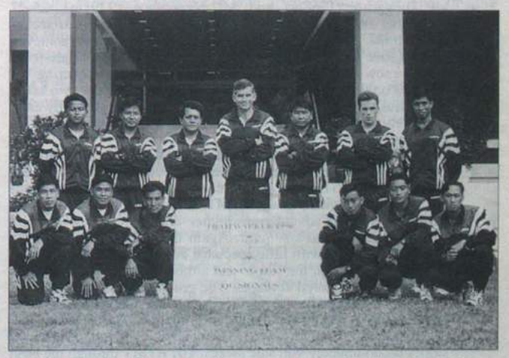
GURKHA MAJOR'S FAREWELL

Thursday 12 December 1996 saw the end of 33 years service for **Maj (QGO) Silajit Gurung MVO**. After a long and distinguished career with numerous accolades to his name especially the mantle of being a Queen's Gurkha Orderly Officer the Gurkha Major was ceremoniously towed from barracks by all the Regimental Officers and Senior Ranks. Earlier in the week at the traditional Gurkha Major walk the Regiment presented the traditional Kotamori Kukri as a memento of his service to the Regiment.

Maj (QGO) Silajit Gurung, MVO being towed out of the Regt

TRAILWALKER 1996

29 November 1996 saw the start of the last Trailwalker event to take place in Hong Kong. With the pride of the Regt at stake and Olympic class runners being brought into the Territory by local civilian firms, 100km from one side of Hong Kong to the other, taking into account the vertical distance of Everest to be contended with in between we knew this years race would be no easy event. 2800 runners competed in the event, with the majority participating to raise money for charity. The main charities to benefit from Trailwalker 96 are Oxfam, the coorganisers with QG Signals,



The winning Team and the support team Trailwalker 1996

and The Gurkha Welfare Trust and local Hong Kong Charities.

The race itself turned out to be well contested in the early stages with the Ultra and Olympic Marathon runners only maintaining a 5 minute gap behind our team, however in true Gurkha style as we climbed the big hills, we managed to open the gap to 45 minutes which they never, despite valiant efforts managed to recover. The QG Signals team crossed the line in a winning time of 13 hours and 28 minutes. The Ultra Marathon team leader addressed the crowds, on receipt of his certificate, and thanked QG Signals for a hard yet keenly fought race and paid tribute to the true 'Masters of the Trail'. It was a fitting way to finish our association with Trailwalker by securing the last title prior to handover in June 1997!

L-R: Sigs Naresh, Danbir, Tirtha and Dev 'Masters of The Trail'

ROYAL VISIT
By Sgt Nirmalkumar Brattachan

Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal the Colonel-in-Chief of Queen's Gurkha Signals paid a visit to the Regiment in Hong Kong on Thursday 30 January 1997.

The **Princess** arrived at the Officers' Mess in the Prince of Wales Barracks where **Her Royal Highness** was received by **Lt Col R. J. J. Ellis**, Comd Queen's Gurkha Signals Hong Kong. **Her Royal Highness** then joined the members of this uniquely tri-service and tri-national Regiment for the Regimental Photograph. (See the back cover of this edition).

The **Princess** then met members of the Regiment serving in Hong Kong during a buffet lunch before departing on other Royal duties about the territory.

FAREWELL TO MAJ M. A. STEVENSON MBE

The Regiment bade farewell to **Maj Mike Stevenson MBE** on promotion to the heady heights of Lt Col governing LE Officer careers in PB11. We wish both him and mother to be **Sally** all the best in the future.

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

Royal Signals Squadron, Army Apprentices College Arborfield

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING EXPEDITION
EXERCISE COPLAND IRON
21 NOVEMBER-18 DECEMBER 1996

Here are details of Ex Copland Iron which was a 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) mountaineering expedition which took place in New Zealand. It also had an initially unplanned sea-kayaking phase. The OIC Exercise and Chief Instructor for the Exercise was myself, **Capt G. P. Newell** R Signals of the Army Apprentices College, Arborfield. All other members were from 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)). The aim of the expedition was to complete a number of arduous mountain walks including reaching the summits of at least four substantial peaks and volcanoes in New Zealand. The secondary objective was to celebrate the proud relationship that 249 Sig Sqn has with New Zealand in the 20th anniversary year of reforming into it's current AMF(L) role. All these aims were achieved.

The adventurous training took place primarily in four separate areas on the North and South Island. This in summary was:

a. Mt Tongariro (1968m) and Mt Ngauruhoe (2291m), 25-27 November 96. This hard climb was achieved at the extreme of safety limits. Although in summer these summits could be achieved with relative ease, the late winter weather consisting of gale-force winds, snow and fog, prevented the group from conquering the summits on the first day. The weather improved and day two saw a successful assault on these volcanoes. The going is generally easy, the climb up to the plateau extreme. The various huts are ideal for access on potential escape routes.

b. Mt Egmont/Taranaki (2518m) and Fanthams Peak (1966m). 28 November-1 December 96. Again the weather proved to be the deciding factor to the success of this walk. The relatively mundane Round The Mountain Trail (RTMT) was abandoned at an early stage for a more adventurous higher altitude climb eventually reaching the volcano's summit. Again the group operated at the extremes of safety with little specialist equipment. The late snows were still evident on the slopes and although at best avoided were inevitably encountered at stages. The group successfully achieved both peaks and made use of the excellently placed Symes Hut. Upon return to the RTMT the group found the walking incidental. The going on all paths was extremely challenging, the higher slopes predominately volcanic screes. The RTMT through the bush proved to be less of a challenge than expected.

c. Mt Crichton(1871m). 6 December 96. A relatively simple mountain climb, in wonderfully scenic conditions. The Southern Alps differ considerable from the volcanic mountains on the North Island and this was immediately evident. The climb was achieved in a day although the group descended the mountain later than expected. The going was steep but steady to the summit. A fine day did not impose any weather challenges.

d. Abel Tasman coastal trek and sea-kayaking. 8-11 Dec ember 96. The Abel Tasman coastal trail was accessed from the north and culminated in a turnaround at the southernmost point and a return leg at sea. The trail was dominated by low level coastal and bush trails although upon occasions very steep climbs were encountered. The extremely hot weather proved to make this walk into a considerable challenge and a considerable success. Upon completion of the walk a guide and sea-kayaks were hired and the same route followed but at sea. This was the highlight ofthe expedition, the weather was wonderful and the kayaking a thrilling experience. Camping overnight on lonely beaches and exploring hidden lagoons were but a number of the highlights.

What follows are extracts from the diary, relating to the key days:

25 November

Unfortunately it certainly was not summer. We woke up to a torrent of rain being hurled down from heaven above. The weather was not on our side and we left Waiouru to head up to our first walk, Mount Tongariro. Initially **The Boss** took us to the Sir Edmund Hillary outdoor pursuits centre near Taurewa where we dropped off all our important going-out gear for safe keeping. Then we drove the Previas down to Ketetahi car park on the northem edge of the mountains that we were about to conquer.

Soon we had left the vehicles behind and began our progress up through the dense bush, a sub-tropical forest. We passed many streams and waterfalls before we found the dreaded steps. They seemed to go on forever. At first it was a novelty, but after a good 500 we had had enough. Thankfully we soon got above the bush and found ourselves on the lower mountain slopes. To start with the weather was better than it had been that morning, but things were soon to change. It was a hard climb up to the Ketetahi hut where we stopped for a short breather and lunch before continuing the climb to the summit of the first mountain, the volcano Tongario. The rain and wind picked up so we donned our goretex waterproofs and headed on. The climb continued to be difficult until we found ourselves on the top plateau. We made our way up to the Blue Lake, across the central crater, beyond the Emerald Lakes and red crater and finally up the slope from hell. A 700 metre slope of shale at an extreme angle; very hard work. But with winds blowing at about 70 miles an hour it became increasingly more dangerous. At this point The Boss decided onwards progress was too risky. The wind and rain problem was compounded by atrocious visibility of not more than 20 metres; not an ideal situation! The wind forced the rain through our goretex and we were all soaked to the bone. We turned around and headed back to the Ketetahi hut where we settled down for the night. We were the only people in the hut except for two Hungarians. We ate our dinner and dried our clothes as best as we could. Exhausted everyone was soon asleep.

Tongariro National Park

26 November

We woke up early to find that the sun had arrived. We were all very pleased following breakfast **Capt Newell** took us back up the mountain but by a different route. Soon we stood on top of the Northern Crater and although the wind was still very strong the brilliant sunlight and views across to Lake Taupo compensated for this. We climbed to the summit of the volcano, Mount Tongariro, this time making it without problems although the clouds swirled passed us ominously upon occasions. The view was spectacular across the volcanoes and we could see where we had climbed the previous day. We then continued on to the South Crater before ascending Mount Ngauruhoe up to 2291m. It was very hard work and the descent back down proved almost as difficult. We camped in South Crater that night.

27 November

Following an early rise we then retraced our track past the Red Crater, Blue Lake and Emerald Lakes to the Ketetahi hut. We continued our way back to the transport and from there we collected our belongings and drove on to New Plymouth. **The Boss** soon found a motel, which was very good, it was five minutes from the town centre. We hung our kit out to dry and disappeared into town for a meal.

28 NOVEMBER

Thursday started quite dull but the sun appeared to be trying to break through. We cleared our kit from the motel, paid, had a MacDonalds breakfast and left New Plymouth heading towards Mount Egmont. This was another volcano, sometimes referred to by its Maori name, Taranaki. **The Boss** had done his homework again and we left our excess kit at an outward bound centre on route before arriving at the car park of the visitors centre below Mount Egmont itself. By this time the sun was hot and the air clear. It was going to be another hot one. We locked the vehicles, **Capt Newell** pointed up the mountain towards the snow-covered summit and off we went.

The track we took was called 'The Puffer Track' and we all soon realised why. It was hard going, but once we got to the top of the track we had a substantial breather before setting off clockwise on the Round The Mountain Track (RTMT). Mount Taranaki is shaped like a child's image of a mountain. A lone mountain rising perfectly symmetrically up to a wonderfully snow covered peak at 2500m. However, the mountain is as dangerous as it is wonderful; every year there are dozens of fatalities. When people slip on the top of this mountain they don't stop; they keep falling until they hit the bottom. It was very clear to us all that this mountain required respect.

The slopes of Mt Egmont
Cpl Chandler and Sig McDiarmid pause for a drink before the assault on the summit

As we traversed around the slopes **Capt Newell** stopped the group and decided to make a detour and route change. We made our way up the mountain to a large outcrop called Warwick Castle. The views were absolutely exhilarating. We continued upwards and over a saddle to find a multitude of scree ridges interspersed by melting snow and ice fields. The going became quite extreme and stable ground became a novelty. **Capt Newell** decided the group should continue it's progress and so we headed on, this is where our adventure training really did begin.

The ridges became extremely unstable, which **Cpl Mick Robjant** and **Sig** 'Popeye' **Doyle** found out quite suddenly. 'Popeye' slid down the ice before coming to an abrupt halt. Cuts and grazes were sustained, but nothing too serious. The rest of the group patched him up, including a badly scarred bottom! We continued on, it seemed that we were going higher each time we crossed another ridge. **Capt Newell** was taking the group to Fanthams Peak where there was a hut and route off the top of the mountain, but this was still over 2km away. The sun was still hot but the winds became much stronger, time to make haste.

Cpl Mike Chandler did the trail breaking across the snow fields before we arrived at the last snow slope to cross. The fall below was something else; if we fell crossing this area we would slide over a cliff and most certainly to our deaths. This was real adventure training. **The Boss** receed the area with **Mike** before retuming to brief us on the consequences of failing to get across the slope. With much apprehension and adrenaline we headed onto the area and carefully carved out footholds in the snow as we made our way across. But we all made it across safely, and from there it was plain sailing across Rangitoto Flats up to the hut at the peak. Looking back on the mountain we were astounded at our achievement. Already 2000 hours we made our way into the hut and made our evening meals, told each other how great we were and eventually got our heads down.

29 November

The wind had been very noisy and through the night had become much stronger. By morning it soon became apparent that we could not move from the hut safely as the snow showers and low cloud complicated the problem. Forced to stay in the hut until the weather improved, we tried to keep ourselves amused. Fortunately by mid morning there was a break in the weather and **The Boss** decided to take the group to the summit of Taranaki itself. Taking minimum kit we hauled ourselves up to the top quickly but were not blessed with any good views due to the extreme cloud cover. Descending to the hut before the weather turned again, we only just made it in time as the winds and cloud were around us within minutes of our return. It was obvious we could not move from the hut.

During the day the winds kept getting worse and by now ice was forming over the windows. On the radio we heard the winds were in excess of 80 miles per hour. **Mick** decided to spend the remainder of the day in bed, **Mike** decided to nearly be blown off the mountain whist attempting to go to the loo, and the rest of us listened to the radio. To our amusement The Lemon Tree song, Wannamackay Wannabike advert and a multitude of other garbage kept us suitably going. We ended up staying overnight in the hut, keeping ourselves amused by verbal jousting. **Sgt Steve McRostie** lamented over leaving his playing cards in the vehicle. He'll remember them next time!

30 November

We woke up after another noisy night to find that the wind had calmed down but there was a lot of ice over the ground surrounding the hut. We were above the cloud level which sat down at 1600m. We had breakfast and filled in the Symes hut logbook with a few amusing comments before descending off the summit before the weather turned again. We made our way off the peak and down several gorges and again, (will it ever end?), had to cross one last piece of snow which had a rather long drop (to certain death) at the end of it. We progressed down to the RTMT where **The Boss** pointed us back on course around the mountain.

Following much eventful traversing we soon descended under a cliff area and into the bush forested area. It was very muddy, there were dangerous drops into gorges everywhere and it seemed to take forever to get through it. It became extremely boring too. There was little to see until we came to a very steep gorge with a wonderfully clear river flowing through it. This was Brames Fall and Gorge. We sampled the water and then climbed up a ladder up a cliff face out of the gorge. Eventually we reached Waiaua Gorge hut where we had a good break and had a very late lunch.

All the group was very tired but we progressed on. As we hiked on through the bush it began to rain, and rain it did. This did not improve the group's morale but a few choice jokes from **Phil** and a few dry responses from **Steve** seemed to help the situation. The remainder of the day was spent going up and down valleys until we eventually found a campsite for the night at Kahui. All the group were exhausted.

6 December

Very early in the morning we left Christchurch and following a scenic drive arrived at Queenstown on Lake Wakatipu for lunch. The trip from Christchurch had been long and a very hot journey so we relaxed in a cafe whilst **The Boss** and **Steve** liaised with the adventure centre.

Upon their return we all went to the booking centre and chose which activities we wished to do the following day. As it was on our own budget this required an element of caution would you pay fifty pounds to throw yourself from a 71m bridge over a raging torrent? We did. We made our plans to start early in the morning with river-surfing followed by bungy jumping.

Soon we were underway, up towards Mount Crichton (1871m) and climbed up to summit before settling down for the night back at the camp site. We all looked forward to the next day's activities.

7 December

Cpl 'Chalky' **White** did not sleep one bh due to his apprehension at the forthcoming days events. Half of the group were up early getting ready to go river-surfing. Once down into the town centre we were collected by the company which ran the show, called serious fun river-surfing. We were taken down to the Kawarau River were we given plenty of instruction before paddling out on our boards into the rapids. The instructors were good, the rapids magnificent. We did not make the instructors life any easier by telling him we were all called Horatio and all SBS frogmen with a phobia of open water. We went under the 34m bungy jump bridge and on down the river for over 7km. The final rapids section was amazing. Especially dangerous and exciting, it was only upon completion and looking back at what we had achieved did it put things in perspective. The last rapid section had to be done again so we walked back a good ten minutes and threw ourselves into the river from a 8m high precipice. White water rafting will never be the same: white water rafting can be left for the wimps. It really had turned out to be a big scream as **John** put it.

The Expedition goes River Surfing on the Kawarau River, near Queenstown (*L-R*): Capt Newell, Sgt McRostie, Cpl Chandler, Sig McDiarmid, Cpl Hilton and Sig Shore

Following a frantic lunch, nobody had a real appetite with a 71m jump looming, we went to a place called Skippers Canyon on the Shotover river. It took about an hour to get there and the transport was with an AJHackett old army one tonne truck with an open top. Ten of us all together, we drove up the winding canyon roads and at some points we were very close to the edge with a very long way to fall. The rock formations were of slate which seemed to have a tendency to slide down onto the road, blocking it completely. We had to leave the vehicle on one side of a bad slip area and continue the short distance to Skippers Canyon suspension bridge on foot. We got to the bridge but had a long wait for the group in front to finish.

Watching them throw themselves from the bridge and listening to their screams was almost too much to bear. Eventually we fell asleep and slumbered in the sun waiting for our turn. Most of us felt a little bit daunted. All the pep talks from **The Boss** about mind over matter and enjoying the experience were quickly forgotten as were called forward and stood on the bridge looking down. All of us were coping with the problem of jumping from a bridge above a raging torrent in our own way. The moment of truth came for us all, each in turn. 'Chalky' first, jumping backwards silently. There were mixed reactions from the group, some of which were more noisier than others. **The Boss** and **Steve** jumped off silently too, as we had been told, it really does blow your mind. The tension on the platform as the AJ Hackett instructor ties the bungy onto your legs, and the pure tension and terror as your toes peer over the platform into nothingness is a unique experience. Once airborne it is the worst moment of your life and the best together, and boy, does it blow your mind! Some of us were addicted–others never want to see a bungy again in their lives. A couple of people went twice before we retumed to the vehicles and headed back to Queenstown. That rounded off a great day, one which none of us will ever, ever forget. Back in town we watched our filmed jumps, collected our certificates and T-shirts and sadly bid the adventure training capital of the world goodbye. We had a long journey back to Christchurch that evening and were soon underway.

8 December

We spent little time at Burnham Camp as we had to travel hundreds of miles north to The Able Tasman National Park. **The Boss** settled up the last admin with **Jason Healee** before we bid him goodbye and set off with a new driver. It was a long trip, again very scenic but not much fun cramped in a minibus. The drive took over seven hours before we eventually arrived in Motueka. The Lemon Tree song must have been on the radio at least five times.

Again, (how does he do it?), **The Boss** promptly pulled up outside some accommodation and before long we were settled in for the evening. **The Boss** then got on the phone and made some confirmatory plans for a surprise sea-kayaking phase of the expedition. We went out for food in the evening and made it an early night ready for the next day.

9 December

Following a drop off higher up the coast at Awarou by our driver we descended into the sub-tropical bush which dominates The Abel Tasman National Park. The weather was very hot, the hottest we had experienced.

As the day progressed we could see that the Kiwis really do have an ozone layer problem. Even **The Boss** and **Phil**, the resident dark skinned member of the team, struggled to keep up. That day we covered a considerable distance south, the beaches were beautiful and unspoilt, the trekking through the bush not tremendously exciting. That evening we free camped on watering cove beach and watched the sun go down. It was something else.

10 December

Having risen early, the hot sun on our bivvi bags gave us little choice, by 0900 hours we arrived at the end of the walk at Marahou and the beginning of the next stage of our adventure. We were at The Ocean River Adventure Company and were introduced to **Todd**, our kayaking guide, who would be looking after us. He showed us how to pack the kayaks correctly and also how to arrange the rudder and so on. Once he had fully briefed us and issued the safety equipment we made our way down a river inlet to the sea. We drove down there in an old dilapidated land-rover which made us feel quite at home.

Packing Kayaks with the dilapidated Land Rover in the background

We launched ourselves into the water, setting off up the coast with **Todd**. The sea was fairly calm but at times we hit rough water which proved to be slightly unnerving. Again the weather was tropical, it was a wonderfully free experience to paddle at your own speed taking in the sights. Soon **Todd** left us to return to the landrover and we continued on our mission. We stopped at the first beach that we came to, Apple Tree Bay. The sand was a sparkling golden white colour and very warm. We alighted from our crafts and told each other how good we were. The suns rays continued to brown and burn peoples bodies.

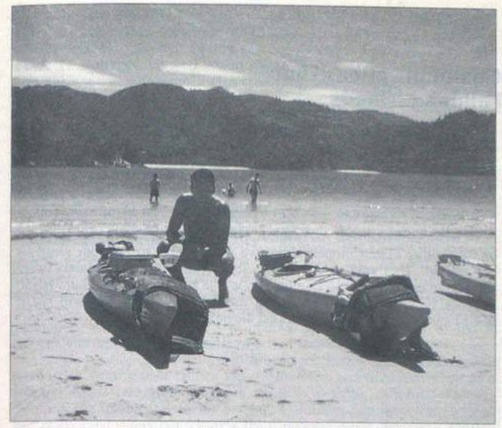
Following a light New Zealand Army ration lunch, we made our way in our own time up the mad mile and along the headland to the main beach at Anchorage Bay. It was late in the day, and as **The Boss** said, in between his singing, we had worked hard. This was the place to moor up for the night. The beach was a different world, the ocean an amazing blue; it only lacked the obligatory babes to qualify for paradise. We relaxed and later on we set up camp but we were sadly soon surrounded by lots of school kids and Germans. Regardless, we decided to build a big fire and had a laugh through the night. **The Boss** slept in an odd looking poncho affair, we wondered if he would survive the night.

11 December

We woke up to find that it had been raining in the night but the weather was very hot again which dried the ground and tents and bashas (it had survived!). Quickly, we had breakfast and packed up. It was then decided to explore some more of the lagoons and beaches to the north around the coast line.

Catching the early tide we were soon underway. It was very hot and **The Boss** told us to take the pace easy as we did not want to go down with heat stroke in the middle of the ocean. We visited two beaches, everyone successfully capsizing at Sandfly Bay.

A number of lagoons were visited and eventually we pointed our kayaks South and started paddling. The going was tough, we had to get through the Mad Mile whilst it was still calm. We did it quickly and then proceeded back to the main shore, it was hard work going back and by this time factor 20 sun block was just not good enough. Several of the guys were suffering from sunburn. Another short but well earned rest was spent



Sea-Kayaking on the Tasman Sea
Capt Newell enjoys a relaxing moment in the sun

on Observation Beach before we raced the last few km to the finish. We arrived back right on time much to **Todd**'s surprise, and when he heard what we had done he too uttered those memorable words, 'Strike a light!' We took the boats back and unpacked kit, loaded up the trailer and set off for Nelson with all our thanks to the staff at Ocean River.

We arrived at Nelson by 2000 hrs. The military camp was in the city centre and it was very small and conditions tight. It was only for one night so we managed. We went out for a meal at a recommended restaurant where the portions were notoriously large. When **The Boss** and **Duncan** received their meals we were all amazed. Their barbecued ribs spilled over the sides of the plate. The plates were about the size of dustbin lids. The meal was truly massive. Although extremely tired we all moved onto a karaoke bar as the temptation was too strong. We all sang a few tunes each, some better than others. Following a group effort at ABBA's Dancing Queen, **The Boss** was forced to sing a song alone. He replied to this by nominating Lady Marmalade for **Mike** and **Duncan**. Maybe their French is not that good after all! It was good to relax after our busy couple of days.

In summary it is clear that the adventure training opportunities in New Zealand are endless. Although we were primarily a mountaineering expedition we took the chance to go sea-kayaking which turned out to be a highlight of the exercise. Many other adrenaline based pursuits exist which cannot be ignored such as some of the highest bungy jumps in the world and activities such as extreme white-water rafting and river-surfing. I feel it shows off some of the opportunities in the Army in the best possible light. A good expedition was achieved and I would like to think that others in the future could repeat these challenges having seen this article.

1 Trg Sqn Royal Signals
Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn

SHQ

Sqn Comd	**Maj S. J. Vickery**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. Anderson**

1 Trg Sqn has not been in *The Wire* for a long time now and in order to catch up with the Corps personnel who have served here there are but a few mentions required to set the records straight.

Farewells aplenty in the Squadron in the last few months have resulted in a complete change around of the Squadron hierarchy from Tp Comd upwards (with the exception of the 2IC). The female recruits at Bassingbourn were distraught to hear of the departure of the outgoing OC Sqn, **Maj Gary** 'sexiest legs on the pitch' **Hearn** to RAF Strike Command and we wish him and **Faye** all the best in their new post. In keeping with the tradition of the OC 1 Sqn the new OC is of course a football mad airborne warrior.

Welcome to **Maj S. J. Vickery** and **Michelle** who join us from the dizzy heights of CIS Branch in HQ British Forces Cyprus. Farewell to **SSM** 'Scotty' **Sherrard** who leaves us on promotion to WO1 for Bristol UOTC and welcome to his replacement SSM, **WO2 Paul Anderson** who at the time of writing is in hospital recovering from a bad fall while ice climbing. We wish him a speedy and safe recovery.

ALPHA TROOP

Hello to **Capt Tom Crapper**.

BRAVO TROOP

Farewells to **Lt Reynolds** who goes to 14 Sigs, **Sgt Welch** to 3 Div and congratulations to **Sgt Coats** on his recent promotion who now goes to 14 Sigs to keep an eye on **Lt Reynolds**. Welcome to **Lt Lisa Taylor** and **Cpl Mark** 'Budgie' **Brenen** who is attached from the Army Air Corps.

CHARLIE TROOP

Farewells to **Lt Duncan** 'mountain goat' **Parkinson** who has been backed trooped to the Regiment's AFS (to command it so he says), **Sgt Paul Anderson** to 3 Div, **Cpl Steve Joyce** to 21 Sigs, **Cpl Tina Whalen** to 16 Sigs and **Cpl Billy Lilburn** to 220 Sig Sqn. Welcome to . . . er . . . well . . . **SSgt Andy West** on loan from the Regiment's QM . . . er . . . that's it.

DELTA TROOP

Farewells to **Capt Andy** 'shandy' **Lucas** to 14 Sigs, **Cpls Neil Hunt** to 8 Inf Bde and **Ian** 'Taff' **John** to 7 Sigs. Welcome to **Lt Mark Harrop** and **Cpl Nicki Coombs**. Special mention to **Cpl Jez Bromley** as he has quote not been in *The Wire* for years, unquote.

ECHO TROOP

Farewell and congratulations to **Sgt Read** on his recent promotion on his way to 3 Cdo Bde. Welcome to **Lt Kev Mosby**, **Cpl Flemming** and **Cpl Churchward**. Congratulations also to **Sgt Knight** on his promotion and new role as Tp Sgt.

ALSO RAN . . .

There are several Corps personnel at the ATR Bassingbourn who are not members of 1 Trg Sqn. In order that they should not be forgotten and to highlight their vital role within the Regiment they are listed as follows:

OC HQ Coy and Families Officer	**Maj W. N. White MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D. M. Stachini**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) A. C. Cox**
2IC Delta (Training) Sqn	**Capt John** 'Surf's up' **Coleman**
SSM Delta (Training) Sqn	**WO2 (SSM) Steve** 'Gongs' **Smoothy**

YANKEE TROOP–DELTA (TRAINING) SQUADRON

Tp Comd	**Capt Garreth Marsh**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Bob Wallace**

EXERCISE . . . EXERCISE . . . EXERCISE . . .

1 Trg Sqn is responsible for the training of 90% of all R Signals recruits. The recruits must pass all the 18 main subjects covered in the 526 periods of the Common Military Syllabus (Recruits) (CMS(R)) before moving to Blandford for their Special to Arm training. One of the main subjects is fieldcraft which culminates in the form of three field exercises spaced over the 11 weeks of the CMS(R).

Ex First Night is a 24hr exercise with the aim of introducing the recruits to living in the field. It takes place in week two of the CMS(R) and covers basic skills such as the construction of a basha, the 24hr ration pack, personal hygiene, duties of a sentry and observation at night. Primarily a teaching exercise the recruits performance on this exercise is wide ranging, as is to be expected at such an early stage of training, and overcomes aspects of soldiering such as fear of the dark, the joy of boil in the bag rations and how dirty can a rifle get. A good initial performance indicator, it occasionally leaves the permanent staff with a sense of bewilderment and amazement. 'Where's your webbing, helmet and rifle?' is a very common catch phrase.

Ex Night Hawk is the second teaching exercise and takes place in week six. A 48hr exercise which aims to confirm lessons taught on Ex First Night and introduce new lessons such as the occupation and use of a patrol harbour, target indication, fire control orders and pairs fire and manoeuvre. By now the recruits have adjusted to a military lifestyle and although the lessons are taught non tactically the remainder of the exercise is conducted as a tactical operation. Many a recruit has had a sleepless night awaiting a thunderflash alarm clock in the early hours. Seldom disappointed, they then have the joy of NBC conditions to boost their morale. The pairs fire and movement proves to be popular with a chance to fire blanks in anger and get thoroughly muddy. The ensuing weapon cleaning however seems to keep their enthusiasm in check.

Ex Final Fling is, as the name suggests, the final field exercise and is a 48hr exercise to confirm that the recruit's battle skills, tactical awareness and physical and mental endurance are sufficient to allow him or her to take their place in Special to Arm training. It takes place in week 10 of the course and is designed to be physically demanding. The recruits are tested on all they have covered during the CMS(R) during a fully tactical exercise. The exercise is a good indicator as to the recruit's ability as a field soldier.

All the troops run an 11 week course per intake consisting of up to as many as 46 recruits at any one time.

Joint Communications Unit
Falkland Islands

OC — **Maj Huw Jenkins**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Terry**

GENERAL

The bulk of the Army element supporting this last six month tour for JCUFI, has been made up by the members of 217 Sig Sqn from 2 Sig Regt. The Squadron arrived on 23 August 1996 and by the time this goes to print, we will hopefully be back in Dear Old Blighty, Damned TriStars willing.

VISITS

The Squadron has been kept busy by a plethora of visits throughout the tour including, the Second Sea Lord, the Air Officer Commander in Chief, the Chief of Staff PJHQ and more recently by the Regt's CO, **Lt Col Jo Fletcher**. **Lt James Murray**, an Australian Officer attached to the Regiment on Ex Long Look, also visited for a weeks 'swan' before going off to Bosnia. He dipped out coming when he did however, because his visit coincided with Ex Troopies' Folly. More on that later.

The visit of the Second Sea Lord

The visit of the CO 2 Sig Regt–taking it easy

ACHIEVEMENTS

JCUFI took up many challenges and indeed organised many ourselves, taking full advantage of the 'Summer' months down here in the Falklands.

MARCH AND SHOOT

Ex Penguins Hop was conducted by the Irish Guards in mid December consisting of various Command Task stands on a 10 mile tab followed by a Falling Plate Competition. JCUFI entered three, four-man teams. Some very devious and innovative tasks were dreamt up by the Micks. One of which was to cross a lake called Mocho Pond which is about 800m wide and 1.5km long. Our team, rather bravely only took off our combat jackets and took the plunge. However, far from the typical river crossing whereby we normally stripped down to a set of undies and threw everything inside a floatation pack to wade across, it turned out to be about two feet deep all the way. As we cleared the other side, we looked back to see the next group having arrived at the start, furiously tearing their clothes off and ramming them into their bergans! What we would have given to see their faces when they realised! All in all, JCUFI did very well but were let down on the Falling Plate Competition as we were unable to zero our weapons beforehand. That said, it seemed a little unfair that the Infantry were allowed to use their SUSAT sights and worse still that the Falkland Island Defence Force were allowed to use their sniper optics. We will see if JCUFI can use laser range finders on the next shoot!

'Ex Penguin Hop'–JCUFI Ist Team

ROAD RACES

The Squadron took to the roads in style, participating in numerous charity events, of most significance were, the Mount Pleasant Airstrip to Port Stanley Marathon Road Relay Race, the Cape Pembroke Lighthouse Half Marathon and the JCUFI organised Monster Marathon Challenge.

The Half Marathon was very well attended. 14 members of the Squadron entered and did very well indeed considering that the majority of runners had not had a proper chance to train for the event. The course started and finished in Port Stanley, taking the runners over road and cross country (and a fence!) and around the Cape Pembroke Lighthouse. Everyone who finished, received a very nicely hand painted commemorative plate. The results were as follows:

Sgt Clarke	1hr 23m 42s	10th
SSgt Wilson	1hr 28m 45s	17th
A/WO2 (USM) Chapman	1hr 28m 46s	18th
Chief Petty Officer Grant	1hr 28m 54s	19th
Maj Jenkins	1hr 29m 59s	20th
Lt Carroll	1hr 31m 31s	24th
Sgt Streeter	1hr 35m 46s	31st
Sgt Gordon	1hr 37m 15s	39th
Sgt White	1hr 41m 30s	44th
LCpl Dicken	1hr 48m 09s	53rd
SSgt King	1hr 50m 14s	55th
Sgt Brannon	1hr 50m 14s	55th
SSgt (FofS) Baldwin	1hr 52m 17s	60th
Sgt Meek	1hr 52m 18s	61st

The Monster Marathon Challenge was devised by OC JCUFI and OC C Tp, **Lt Andy Carroll** whilst out running (too far as usual) one day. On his next meeting with the USM, the OC's conversation ran, 'Sergeant Major, wouldn't it be a good idea to organise a run from here to Stanley?' The USM quickly recognised this as a rhetorical question and promptly went into the main corridor in Unit HQ to find the nearest SNCO. 'Ah! **Sgt Ament**. Just the man I was looking for, wouldn't it be a good idea to' . . . And so **Sgt Mark Ament** was dutifully well and truly 'had'. The task was not an easy one and called for a serious amount of co-ordination and planning. We worked out that the distance was going to be 37 miles long, almost one and a half marathons. It took five weeks to organise, Twelve foolhardy volunteers took up the challenge. The road between MPA and Stanley is very poor quality and it became painfully obvious that after about 20 miles, the runners were suffering when having to run on the strips of road that had yet to be tarmaced. The weather conditions were appalling and the wind reached high speeds, unrelenting for the entire time which quickly took its toll. It got to the stage where Land Rovers had to drive alongside the runners to stop them getting blown off the road. Nine of the runners survived the distance with the best time going to a member of the Resident Rapier Sqn in an incredible 4hrs 31mins!

The runners from the Squadron were: the OC, C Tp Comd **Lt Andy Carroll**, both USMs, incoming **WO2 (SSM) Andy Terry** and out-going **AWO2 (SSM)** 'Chippy' **Chapman**, **Sgt** 'Nobby' **Clark**, **LCpl Nicki Flatt**, **JT Roberts** and well done to **Sgt** 'Chalky' **Meek** who ran the last half marathon in with them. To his credit, **Sgt Mark Ament** did a fantastic job which included, a successful advertising campaign for the event, vehicular, medical and refreshment support for the run, organising shower and changing facilities and a disco and buffet in Port Stanley for the supporters. He even managed to get His Excellency, **Governor Ralph** to kindly agree to present the prizes at the end.

EXERCISES

As eluded to earlier, Ex Troopies' Folly was an exercise run over two day training sessions, consecutively over a three week period and organised by the OOPS Officer and C Tp Comd. The idea of the exercise was to familiarise members of the Royal Navy and the RAF with the workings of an infantry platoon, a chance which they were unlikely to repeat. All members of the exercise were volunteers and it was a good guess that there were just sufficient numbers available to make up a platoon's strength. Aided and instructed by eight members of the R Signals, the other two services familiarised themselves with their weapons (which they rarely get a chance to fire) in the first week. On the second week they were taught tactics from Pairs Fire and Manoeuvre up to a platoon attack and given basic instruction in firing different weapons found in the infantry platoon's arsenal. Confident that they were trained and ready (and safety conscious!), the following week they were airlifted and inserted onto the battle field, armed with 12,000 rounds of 5.56mm and 7.62mm, a grenade per man/woman, smoke and High Explosive mortar shells, 66mm and LAW anti-tank rocket launchers and bags of enthusiasm. They were not however, finished training. Kindly assisted by two members of the Argyll and Southern Highlanders, everyone was taught reaction shooting, Individual Close Quarter Battle firing and Pairs CQB. The first day culminated with a fire power demo, whereby a tri-service attempt was made to flatten a hill several hundred metres away with all types of munitions. An unexpected enthusiast turned out to be a little too enthusiastic on the ICQB range. The target popped up, the OC dropped down, hickery-dickery rock. Except that when his knee connected with the rock, he used different and more colourful adjectives than 'hickery' and 'dickery'. Thankfully that was the only injury of the day.

Lt Darren Offord with the unsuspecting Lt James Murray (Aus Sig), 'playing war'

Everyone retired as early as possible that night because they knew what was going to happen in the morning. The range safety staff got up at Stupid o'clock the next morning and made their way to the Line of Departure by driving in a BV. No such luck for the platoon who tabbed out with full kit and as much ammunition as they could take. The rolling attack was on six different enemy bunkers, all uphill. It was hard enough work running up as safety staff, so it was obvious to see that at the eventual end, the platoon was elated but exhausted. After 'debombing' and packing up, the platoon was extracted once again by Chinook helicopter to get back in time for tea and medals in the unit bar. It was a highly successful little exercise and although the idea was not to scrutinise the behaviour and abilities of the individuals, some interesting characters surfaced.

EXERCISE LUCKY GIT
by Lt Darren Offord

Having resigned myself to a six month sentence chasing penguins, it was with pleasant suprise that the Senior Communications Officer aboard HMS *Lancaster* kindly invited me to accompany her on a sailing to Montevideo in Uruguay between 22 November-6 December 1996. The hardest part of the journey was convincing **The Boss** that an essential communications recce was required and that I was the man for the job. So, with my big tick in the box, I started packing. Other than myself, eleven members of the Army were invited to join Ship on a rather grey day in November. Two Subalterns from the Royal Engineers and a Subaltern and seven of his men from the Irish Guards (a section of the Fife and Drums). I was accommodated with two other officers in the Towed Sonar Array room which had been converted into 'living' quarters, in the loosest possible sense of the word. The room measured 7 x 10 feet and was infested with pipes and ducts which not only hung dangerously down from the ceiling but also sporadically gurgled at a deafening level of noise. No sooner had we settled in, when we weighed anchor and set sail. The *Lancaster* made a half day stop over in Port San Carlos Bay and the Ship's Company were ferried ashore for a memorial service at the magnificent cemetery at San Carlos. This was filmed by Channel 4 and went out on Christmas Day in the UK as part of 'The Navy at Christmas'. After numerous retakes to allow for wandering sheep and the odd passing F3 Tornado drowning the Padre's voice out, it was back on board and off to Uruguay.

We were mercilessly taunted with tales of Force 11 gales from the Ship's recent sailing to South Georgia and expected the worst. In the event the weather was kind to us and only reached a maximum of Force Six. Over the five days sailing to South America, much time was spent being enthusiastically shown around the Ship by the assorted members of the Ship's Company. The *Lancaster* is a relatively new Type-23 Frigate with a displacement of 4000 tonnes. It's crew is approximately 180 and one foul mouthed parrot strong. She is an anti-submarine warfare vessel and has a variety of towed array and bow sonar devices. Her armaments are extensive consisting of vertically launched SeaWolf anti-missile missiles, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, torpedoes, a 4.5" gun, two twin 30mm cannons and the latest Type-8 fitted Lynx helicopter. The ship is powered by both diesel and jet propulsion turbines and can achieve speeds of up to 35 knots. Cavitation and noise in the water is low, that was until the Micks' Fife and Drums started playing on a nightly basis.

An unexpected bonus on the way was meeting up with some of the yachts competing in the BT Round the World Challenge. We had been tracking their progress for some time and occasionally speaking with them over HF means, when the 'Save The Children' yacht suddenly declared that they had a medical emergency on board. Their Navigator had developed a blood disorder and his condition was worsening. We diverted from our course and went 'full speed ahead'. We tore along for about 18 hours until we caught up with them. As the yacht came into view, 'Action Lynx' was piped by the Captain and minutes later the helicopter was airbourne. The speed boat was launched and quickly drew up beside the stricken vessel to take the sick crewman off the yacht, whilst the courageous Lynx pilot hovered within feet of the yacht's main mast so that the observer could take a few prize snap shots for posterity. All returned back in time for tea and medals and the crewman was attended to by the Ship's Doctor before being treated in hospital on our arrival in Montevideo.

'Sundowners' with the Captain, the Army Officers and Pimms, Lt Darren Offord–OOPS Officer for JCUFI

As we neared Montevideo the weather became hotter to the point whereby we were able to take Sundowners, the old Naval tradition of taking cocktails on the flight deck in the hope of seeing the green flash of the sun as it dips below the horizon in the Southern Hemisphere. It was a wonderful evening and the green flash does indeed exist, if only through the base of an emptied glass of Pimms. The arrival into Montevideo was done in fine Naval style with the entire crew lining the decks and a twenty one gun salute fired as we entered port. I personally did not feel that this was a good idea in South America and awaited the chattering reply of machine gun fire from the local drug barons but nothing was heard. After a few hours of making sure that everything was squared away on board, the men were allowed ashore. The Officers however, remained onboard and awaited the guests for the Captain's cocktail party. After some hours hosting to the incidental music of the Fife and Drums, we too went ashore. After a great night out, I caught a taxi back and pulled out a 1000 pesos note with which to pay the driver. He said that he could not change that kind of money. He drove me to a decidedly dodgy looking area to meet some of his big friends who thought that I might like to donate the 990 pesos change from the fare to some charity or other and they would obviously handle the finances for me. I convinced the driver in no uncertain terms that it would not be in his best interests to stop, whereupon he drove me to the nearest police station and ran out screaming bloody murder. Two armed officers came running out and incarcerated me for the rest of the evening. Later they released me and an apology was sent to the Captain of the *Lancaster*. That is my story and I have paid good money to ensure witnesses back me up on it should it ever go to court.

The following day, the Captain was mugged at gun point. So too were several others. Despite this, Montevideo is a wonderful place. Typically South American, it is a huge city which has a modern, well maintained centre that is predominantly surrounded by shanty town suburbs and a set aside secure area for the wealthy. Most people are content to sit outside a bar for the entire day watching the world go by. The Ship's Company was challenged to a rugby match by the local team and I was asked to play. We were well and truly slaughtered. This is a totally intended pun, as most of our players had been drinking until silly o'clock in the morning. At half time, the Officers of the Ship who came to watch did the honourable thing, by replacing the bottles of squash with Champagne to ease the suffering. We established an excellent rapport with the crew of the *Lancaster*. They were exceptional hosts who stopped at nothing to ensure that we all enjoyed our time on board. The voyage was a once in a lifetime experience and a refreshing change to see a completely different facet of service existence. Many cheap leather goods were bought, most of the sights and sounds seen and a good sun tan gained. Oh, and their comms work!

OPENING OF SAN CARLOS MUSEUM

On Wednesday 6 November in bright sunshine, before a crowd of nearly thirty people, **John Smith**, Curator of the Britannia House Museum in Stanley, used a pair of borrowed kitchen scissors to cut the blue ribbon across the door and the deed was done, bringing to a satisfactory culmination two years of planning and hard work by a number of people, including many past members of JCUFI and realising also a longer held dream of the owners of Blue Beach Lodge, **William** and **Lynda Anderson**.

The museum, situated close to the Blue Beach Tourist Lodge, is housed in two linked portakabins, originally from Kelly's Garden, which were donated by Jersey businessman, **Robert Gibbons**, a UK Trustee of Falklands Conservation. The first portakabin houses a section devoted jointly to the Agricultural and Natural History of the Falklands with extensive. and colourful displays by the Falklands Conservation, put together by **Fiona Didlick** and **Jeremy Smith**, and an as yet incomplete reconstruction of a Camp stable, or galpon, containing old agricultural equipment from the parent museum in Stanley.

San Carlos Museum

SOUTH GEORGIA DETACHMENT

'It's not the end of the world but you can see it from here!!

SNCO VC Det	**Sgt Scan** 'When I . . .' **Fairlield**
Det 2VC	**Cpl Andy** 'Muffy' **Moffat**
Det Tech	**LCpl Tony** 'Barny' **Raby**
Crew	**Sig Kev** 'Adolph' **Bausor**
	Sig Andy 'Stenchy' **Stenton**
Det Mascot	'Dorty Baz' the Bull Elephant Seal

Dorty Baz

Our journey to South Georgia started 9000 miles away on the 22 August 1996 where we departed Imphal Barracks in York. The first leg to RAF Brize Norton was hassle free and we were soon on the TriStar to Ascension Island. During the stopover on the hot volcanic island everyone enjoyed being able to stretch their legs before being herded into the sheep pen whilst the plane was refuelled. We arrived at Mount Pleasant Airport midmorning on the 23 August to be greeted with the smiling faces of Fig 1 (UK) ADSR personnel. After an intense meteorological course, we all became qualified weather observers (Spotters) and have the certificates to prove it.

Following our short stay in Mount Pleasant Airport and many card games to idle the time away, we set off on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship the *Grey Rover* for a four day cruise, Our lavish accommodation in the cargo hold made our journey much more bearable, although much time was spent leaning over the side of the ship, feeding ground bait to the fishes. Our first view of the island was a tiny white dot on the horizon. As we got closer we noticed that our new home King Edward Point was circled by mountains and the sea, giving it that not so reassuring effect that you might possibly get whilst in prison. The entire population turned out to greet us and **Sgt Sean Fairfield** said 'Hello' to his old friends the seals, penguins, deer etc, (he shrugged off the 'Oh my God, not him again', reply very well indeed'. On completion of the handover we quickly settled into our shifts and established a good routine. **Cpl Andy Moffat** and **Sig Kev Bausor** were sent to complete the Arctic Mountain Movement and Survival Course, which concluded with a night navigation exercise and night in a snow hole (if it did not collapse). The rest of us completed the course at a later stage. The snow melted signifying the end of Winter and the arrival of Spring, bringing with it the abundance of wildlife that inhabits the island. This is when the Det mascot arrived. 'Dorty Baz' is a 10 feet long, 4 tonne Bull Elephant Seal, with attitude. He has been Beach Master here since the start of the breeding season and has the scars to prove it. To maintain his status as Beach Master he has bitten off the odd nose or tongue here and there and spilt so much blood that during one fight, the surrounding sea looked red.

Sgt Sean Fairfield outside the signal shack, South Georgia September '96

Sgt Sean Fairfield pointed out that when he was here on the island last time (zzzz . . . the same two Skua birds nested near the Signals shack). Showing his affection for the birds, he tried to feed them whereupon the larger of the two proceeded to savage his hand causing him much pain and the rest of us much amusement. The birds have since been named **Denton** and **Doris**, aka 'Hard Bird and the Missus'. The occasional penguin pops up around the Point causing havoc as everyone attempts to reach for their cameras. For entertainment in our one and only boozer (not surprisingly, The Whaler's Arms) Toga Parties and games nights are arranged and well attended. It is at nights like these that the healthy, close working relationship between the R Signals and Royal Engineers is scrutinised. The Wedgeheads are only too glad to point out they booted the Scalies out of their Corps in 1920. In our defence we remind them that unless they wish to discontinue receiving Famgrams, they had best put the lid on it. We hope to be back in the UK some time next year after, we might add, the main party JCU FI and the rest of the South Georgia personnel down here have long been home . . .

GOODBYES, HELLOS AND THANK YOUS

This article would not be complete without 217 Sig Sqn giving our farewell thanks to those members of JCUFI who worked so hard and made the tour that much more bearable and who have now left before the end of our tour. Too numerous to mention by name, but those members of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force did a splendid job, as their replacements continue to do so now. To the Army members that have left us, special thanks must go to; **Capt Terry Crosby** as OC CDA **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman** for his time here as the AWO2 SSM, **Sgt** 'Taff' **Bryant** for his unending enthusiasm and dedication to his work, and for the TA element that supported us; **SSgt Jeff King** who always provided 'service with a smile', **SSgt Ron Hodgkinson** as the happy-go-lucky Chief Clerk and to **Sgt Mark Ament**. Good luck to you all!

Finally, we welcome the next roulement Signal Squadron who take over from us. We hope that 3 Div have an equally fulfilling and enjoyable six months down here as we all have.

ROYAL SIGNALS IN COMMANDO FORCES

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

A belated hello to **Sgt** 'Olly' **Reid** who has taken over as the 29 Cdo Regt RA Rear Link Sgt. Welcomes also to: **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan** fresh from 1 (UK) Armd Div and a wee tour in Bosnia (allegedly to recover from his Commando Course), **Cpl Lou Walker** bright eyed and bushy tailed from his TI and finally welcome (and congratulations on his recent promotion) to **Cpl Mark Jackson** from JCUNI.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

LOGEX 96

Elements of 3 Cdo Bde RM, mainly Cdo Log Regt RM and unit A and B Echelons, deployed on a major sea based logistic exercise along the South Coast from Portsmouth to Salisbury Plain. Enduring some atrocious weather conditions was **Sgt Rob Sear** trying to cram in deployments before civ div in the Summer.

COMMANDO SIGNALS CHRISTMAS PARTY

All the Royal Signals personnel along with a few select Royal Marine guests and wives/girlfriends assembled at a well known watering hole in Plymouth, under the organisation of **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge** for the now traditional Christmas Party. After a splendid festive feast the team entertained the local office parties with a fine dancing display accompanied by the hired band. The hardier members then moved one to a well known dancing establishment to continue the evening. A fitting and enjoyable end to a busy year.

WINTER DEPLOYMENT 97

This year's deployment was smaller than usual due to the commitment of large elements of 3 Cdo Bde RM to Ex Ocean Wave. Elements of 42 and 45 Cdo RM, Cdo Log Regt and HQ & Sigs Sqn deployed to Northern Norway. Before training commenced the grandly named COMMCEN Installation Team went to work. The team consisted of **WO2 (FofS) Bill McCreath** (IC pizza runs and navigation), **CSgt (YofS) Mark Smith RM** (IC crashing the van), **Sgt Rob Sear** (IC installation) and **Sgt Pete Hatton** (IC crypto and frightening the local wildlife). A quick 10 days saw the installation of a DUST COMMCEN setup as the lead into a new PC based ACP 127 system being introduced by the end of March.

The COMMCEN Installation Team on the road to Hell

ARCTIC WARFARE TRAINING

Carrying out their Novice Ski and Survival/Arctic warfare Course from 8 January-2 February were three R Signals Arctic Puppies who hoped to be Arctic Foxes a month later. We assembled at RM Barracks, Stonehouse at midnight for the first of many baggage checks and eventually piled onto a Tristar at RAF Brize Norton. A couple of hours later we were having to circle the airport for an hour before landing (to allow snow to be cleared). We all arrived at Aesgarden Camp (near Harstad, some 140 miles north of the Arctic Circle) to be told that a metre of snow had fallen the day before–the best snow for several years but carrying with it an avalanche danger.

After a few days of carbo-loading, revision lectures, basic skiing lessons and kit prep we set off into the field with our issue skis ('pussers planks') for the initial eight day package. **Capt Neil Fraser** and **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan** under the keen eye of their MSI ran 7 Section, whilst **Cpl Lou Walker** was in 6 Section. In total there were around 150 novices. The transition was made from 10 man tents to four man tents and then on to snowholes. Throughout that time the snowplough turns became pole plants and skiing improved (until the bergans appeared taking us right back to day one lesson one). The days passed by in a blur of demos, skimg to the next location, digging pits and erecting tents, cooking scran then night skiing till 2100, (to appreciate the Northern Lights of course), then into night routine. Temperatures hovered around -10 to -15 reaching, at worst -27 with wind chill. It was at that point, above the tree line after an emotional ascent which seemed to be an endless 'herring bone', that the BV206 support vehicles (at the time carrying our bergans and tentage) decided to be two hours late. Thankfully 7 Section managed to turn our attention to digging the largest tent pits ever seen by the Royal Marines. The next night involved the ritual, dig a snowhole for three hours, get

Range Day on the Arctic Warfare Course
(*L-R*): Sgt 'Taff' Morgan, Cpl Lou Walker and Capt Neil Fraser

On Watch: Sgt 'Taff' Morgan bravely leaves his sleeping bag to do a spell on Sentry

inside for four hours, then grab all your kit, lever your bergan onto your back and ski down a very steep hill and along a very long valley for five hours in the dark to arrive at the pick up point at first light. My what laughs we had as our faces made, yet again, contact with the white stuff aided by 80lbs of unbalanced bergan. Just back on our feet and in a ferocious snowplough it would be a matter of minutes till the old BV206 track, the moving tree or a previous 'yeti' imprint would alter our delicate balance and it would be back to the 'pushing bergan up with ski poles' routine.

There then followed a few days doing the duty ice breaking drills, more lectures, rangework, downhill practice on planks and the much talked about Novice Ski Race. 150 people desperately trying to stay upright, ski round corners, avoid getting in each others way and do it quickly proved an interesting day. The delicate balance between technique, fitness and determination saw some favourites slipping back down the pile. The Corps was well represented with **Capt Neil** 'faceplant' **Fraser** finishing 18th, **Sgt** 'Taff' 'Franz Klammer' **Norgan** coming in a closely fought 21st and **Cpl Lou** 'Eddie Edwards' **Walker** in a respectable 55th. Then it was a quick reorg and back into the field, split into 2 Tps to tackle the enemy Coy. Again the R Signals were well represented with 'Taff' and **Lou** both being chosen as Tp Sgts for the tactical phase. In full kit the course deployed again. The Coy snake weaved in very poor visibility into the harbour location. After two nights of serious digging, the odd recce and fighting patrol, plenty of sentry duties and more digging the course returned to camp.

Finally, after two days of servicing and returning stores, a run ashore in Harstad and a nights downhill skiing in Narvik it was time to head home. A C130 flight brought the terrible trio back to RAF Lyneham having deposited **Cpl Mark Jackson** in Norway to do his course.

Sgt Taff Morgan and Capt Neil Fraser
End of the Course after 1 Tp's Final Descent

FUTURE ACTIVITIES
EXERCISE OCEAN WAVE

Ex Ocean Wave will involve large elements of 3 Cdo Bde RM exercising in areas including Singapore, the Philippines, Malaya, Borneo and Brunei ultimately ending up at Hong Kong. R Signals involvement will include most personnel, along with elements from 30 Sig Regt, deploying to Brunei in March and April for a major FTX (Ex Setia Kawan).

EQUIPMENT UPDATE

3 Cdo Bde RM is equipped with a wide variety of communications systems. As well as the normal CLANSMAN radio found in an Army Bde, 3 Cdo Bde RM–due to it's highly mobile and independent role as an all arms, all weather, amphibious capable formation, has systems normally found at Div/Corps level in the Army but without the luxury of Ptarmigan. The small team thus is required to be extremely flexible and be able to turn their hands to tasks with little or no training. Systems currently utilised include: The Pilot Joint Operational Command System (PJOCS), ATRLCS (previously IARRCIS), the Pilot Flag Support System (PFSS), LOCE and JDISS.

In barracks and in the field each unit can deploy a secure fax/phone/data system that utilises landline or TACSAT where available. In the field use is made of KL43 and KIPLING equipment to pass secure data to and from units over vehicle borne and manpack HF VHF CLANSMAN.

Within the Brigade are also found manpack EW equipments in Y Tp RM as well as the Artillery/Air Defence systems deployed with 29 Cdo Regt RA, 20 Cdo AD Bty RA and AD Tp RM. Systems on order or programmed include: Specialist HF/VHF data capable radios to provide the ability to pass op orders and overlays to deployed units; two BV206D borne SATCOM detachments to anchor the increasing number of CIS equipments at the Bde HQ's and a BV206D borne advanced EW system for Y Tp RM.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Processing of all volunteers to serve with Commando Forces is through their unit chain of command to MRO/PB in Glasgow. Any prospective volunteers wishing to know more about the posts available or advice on how to prepare for the All Arms Commando Course may contact either the SO3 Comms/EW at HQ Royal Marines or the WO2 (FofS) at HQ 3 Cdo Bde RM directly. Contact details are in the R Signals Staff List held by units. Units will also hold the appropriate paperwork for volunteering for both postings and All Arms Commando Courses. Trades and ranks relevant are: Capt x 1, WO2 (FofS) x 1, Sgt/LCpl TTech (SYS) x 5, Sgt Top (TG) x 1, Cpl Top(TG) Crypto Trained x 3, Sgt Top(R) x 1.

POSTSCRIPT
by WO2 (Yofs) Dave Trevellion RM

Many thanks for the one line mention in the December 96 *Wire*. Despite the Corps wide invitation no one has dispelled the 'vicious rumour' so it must be true! Picture the scene–November 96, invited on a 'cultural' tour of Rotterdam and Amsterdam courtesy of the Royal Netherland Marine Corps (a bi-annual CIS meeting of course). One R Signals SO3, one R Signals FofS and one RM YofS travelling by car to Holland. Faced with this formidable invasion of CIS talent the cunning French decide to set light to the Channel Tunnel the very same day–not to be foiled we reach Rotterdam some 10 hours later. Despite having navigated to Rotterdam with ease we inevitably become inextricably lost in the suburbs. With impressive leadership qualities, SO3 takes charge, calms the situation down and starts directing the party from his european city maps (which he knew would come in handy). 'Left here, second right, next turnoff . . .' all with confidence, followed moments later by . . . Hang on! These roads don't seem to follow the map . . .' YofS, taking a glance away from the road ahead toward the SO3's finger quickly identifies that, apparently, we have just passed the Champs Elyssees!

After three days of intensive trials, meetings and UK/NL liaison in both Rotterdam and Amsterdam the intrepid trio managed to return to the UK, despite their best efforts at ruining the cars suspension with their bottled souvenirs. Non attributable tour quotes include: 'Just follow the tramlines and I'm sure we'll find the HQ'.

'It's only 30 quid and there's a free beer and banana included'.

4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204)
BFPO 538

Sqn Comd	**Maj E. A. Davis**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Evans**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

As the Squadron approaches Christmas stand down it has also been time for a few hellos and goodbyes – The Sqn 2IC **Capt Howard** 'I've escaped!' **Hughes** has left to get educated in Camberley before heading off to Cyprus. Our best wishes go with him and to his wife **Kath** and daughter **Charlotte**. In his place we welcome **Capt Andy Fallows** and his wife. Also off are **FofS** 'Citizen' **Dennis** and his wife **Sophie** and welcome to **FofS Lowenden** and wife. Oscar Tp welcomes **Sgt Gallagher** and also hello to **Sig Calderwood** in Papa Tp. Finally farewell and congratulations on his promotion to **Sgt** 'Soopersonic' **Sorely** and his family – watch out Ireland!

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt R. J. Anderton-Brown**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt N. Thomas**

The Troop has again had a busy few months. After a successful RSIT inspection the Troop then went down to Sennelager to provide operators and admin support for BBGT. This was the first exercise with the new Bde Comd which went extremely well. The Troop then also deployed on the Squadron exercise Ex Rising Rat which was the first time for a few of the new arrivals to see the HQ in the field and was also an opportunity to practice some new procedures. Most recently the Squadron Bar Committee led by **Cpl** 'Dinger' **Bell** organised another fabulous function and gave the Squadron a chance to relax after what has been an extremely busy but successful year.

BRITISH ARMY GERMANY MINOR UNIT CHAMPIONSHIPS

Wednesday 4 December was a triumphant day for the Squadron as they returned victorious from the BA(G) Minor Unit Rugby finals. This is the first time, since 1972, one of the Bde Sig Sqns has won this title and it was fitting that the CO 1 Sig Bde, **Brig J. N. Shaw MBE** was guest of honour and presented the winners trophy.

The final was against BMH Rinteln and held on neutral territory in Gutersloh. The opposition had a strong reputation and they played with determination. However, the training by coach **Sgt Stu Leadbeater** and team Captain **YofS Steve Firth** paid off with a hard earned 25–3 result. First to put the Squadron on the score board with a try just before half time was the 4 Bde DCOS, **Maj Simon Marr**. In the second half the lead was extended by further tries from **LCpl Si Launder** and **RQMS Vince** 'What a gift of a try' **McNaught**. All these were successfully converted by **LCpl** 'Woody' **Wood** who also added a penalty to his tally.

4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204) earned their place in the final by beating 14 Topo Sqn (RE) 24–7 and 3 AFA 19–12 in the semi and quarter finals. The team now goes on to play a UK based team yet to be determined in the semi-finals of the Army Cup.

VOXTRUP MARCHES 1996

On 7 December 1996 19 people from 4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn competed in the running category of the Voxtrup Marches. We were comprised of three male teams, one female team and one individual runner.

The 12km route was an excellent way to get to know the local countryside even if some of the views were obscured by thick fog. However, everybody completed the course successfully with two of the teams winning cups. **Sigs Penman, Walsh** and **Childs** came third in the men's competition; **2Lt Leamon** and **Sigs Calderwood** and **Gibson** (a guest from 16 Sig Regt) won the cup for the best women's team.

Other competitors were: **Capt Ayres, Sigs Turner, McLeod, Walsh, Angus, Rhodes, Henderson** and **Grills**.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (QM) G. Douglas**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) V. McNaught**

EXERCISE RISING RAT
by Cpl Kenny McIntosh

The Squadron deployed on Ex Rising Rat on Wednesday 20 November 1996, leaving the lean mean fighting machines of echelon (or so we thought) back in camp to provide any logistical support that was required. We did not stay for long, the RQMS **WO2 Vince McNaught** and **SSgt Dobbins** deciding that echelon would have their own little exercise.

Once in location, the Sect Sgt and Sect Comd got to work, but there was some confusion as to where the techs would like their ERV. **SSgt Dave** 'close the door I'm watching a video' **Hizzet** and **Sgt Steve** 'close the door I'm getting cold' **Colledge** decided that it would need to be on level ground, because they didn't want to sleep on a slope. **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Duncan** settled into the role as Sect Comd quite well. He specifically enjoyed putting the seniors on stag. Mind you, at about 2200hrs when the RSM **WO1 Frank Evans** and **Sgt Dicky Dyer** decided to throw a few thunder flashes in our direction all you could hear was 'Ginge' getting information from the four corners of the location. Words to the effect of 'Where the clucking bell are they?'

As our location had been compromised we had to move to the Dorbaum training area. New Sect Comd **LCpl Chris** 'route card' **Taylor** laid down the law. He was clearly not satisfied with the previous night's epics and did not want the same to happen today or else. OOOOOH! Unfortunately he was unable to show his class of military experience as all he had to do was the guard shifts, and there were a few grumps about that one.

That afternoon was spent setting up trip flares and a winch with a bit of NBC thrown in (in the snow), a fun way to spend a Saturday afternoon NOT! At about 1730 that night I was summoned to the CP tent for the briefing from hell, courtesy of the RQMS. Basically I had to prepare for an imminent chemical attack that night (so I knew it was definitely going to happen).

After a fine set of orders, it was a case of get your heads down for a few hours (for the first time that exercise). We were rudely awakened by the RSM and certain members of the Squadron who decided that it would be time to have some fun and try to break through our location. The RQMS 'Para Handy' and **SSgt** 'Diggin' **Dobbins** opened up first. They fired, God knows how many rounds but we knew it was a lot as **Cpl** 'Taff' **Phillips** was buried in a pile of empty cases and had to be dug free. **Sgt Kev Shipton** proved that rugby tackles are not only for the pitch, as **Sig** 'Suggy' **Nicol** was to find out not once but twice as **SSgt Dobbins** decided he wanted a piece as well. The techs weren't very happy as the kettle had just boiled and it was getting to the best part of the film. They had to take their slippers off and put on their boots. After 200m of fire and manoeuvre we were all called back for a debrief from the RQMS who decided that we would end our little exercise there. A lot of work went into the exercise and it was enjoyed by all who took part.

ARRIVALS

The Troop would like to welcome the following new members and their families, and hope that they have a successful tour: **Cpl Nimmo, LCpl Brown, Sig Fearon** and **Cfn Hawes**.

FAREWELLS

The following personnel are due to leave over the coming weeks, we wish them and their families all the best in their new unit: **Sgt Shipton** (RLC), **Cpl Tilling** on promotion to Sergeant, **Cpl Kingford-Smith** and **Cpl McDonald**.

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210)
Colchester

Sqn Comd	**Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) G. C. Pocock**

EXERCISE RISING PHEONIX/PARTHIAN SHOT–JAN/FEB 97

The exercise season in 1997 will be a busy one so the Squadron needed a 'warm-up' to get us firing on all cylinders. Ex Rising Pheonix and Parthian Shot would allow us to do this, though 'freeze' was a more apt word than 'warm' given the temperatures.

The Squadron lined up as per the new SOI's–whatever that means? The cooks and POL eventually graced us with their presence and we were off to that little used haven of 24 Bde–STANTA. The first move allowed A Tp to set up as Main, and B Tp to be Step-up. **Cpl** 'Trotts' **Thompson** amused B Tp by going down with a nasty bout of gastro-enteritis (aka 'Where's the ******* porta-loo!') and had to be taken to the MRS, where a Zippo crew had the dubious pleasure of guarding him–nice job!

The following day saw another move to new locations. Following instructions to move tactically, **Capt** 'X-Country' **Worden** decide to bog CV2 up to it's axles in mud, and **LCpl Dave** 'RAC Rally' **Weatherstone** had to be deployed to pull him out. Rumours are that the extra 7 Bellies in CV2's driver seat didn't help. Once in the new location, we had an outstanding 'noise and light' demo by the Echelon boys, who then managed to take their own advice too seriously and no-one found the replen that night. Diamond 3 required remedial 'Stand-to' lessons, and during the darkest night in memory **SSgt Kev** 'Mountain Goat' **Shelmerdine** came out with the quote 'That, Sir, is a log,' while practising gymnastics in the field.

The third day saw another move with a swift (NOT) recce and A Tp in and working by mid afternoon. B Tp moved in and set-up at dusk, then, when it was nice and dark, we all took the HQ's down. Top tips–cam nets + woods + dark = NIGHTMARE!!! At the O Group that night **Lt Andy** 'Swiss Precision Movement with Twelve Jewels' **Parfitt** turned up on time in the wrong grid square, and kept everyone else waiting 47 minutes. Thank God that the OC, RSM and QM were there to keep everyone fascinated with stories of the good old days or we would all have been REALLY bored! That night we moved into hide locations (second time lucky B Tp!) and sent out foot patrols to CTR some recruits who were training nearby. No-one saw anything; the tactic of going to sleep and not snoring worked very well. Back in the hides, **LCpl McNally** fought off an advancing infantry platoon single handed using the 'power of reason' on single shot.

The morning saw a move to the Mecca of EXCON–Lynford Home Farm. It was here we discovered that **Sig** 'Chappie' **Chapman** was becoming pale and thin. Allegedly sharing a det with **LCpl Vish** 'The Count' **Reid** doesn't do your blood pressure any good. **2Lt Dan** 'Golden Blanket' **Ashton** managed a massive 17 hrs kip in one day!! **Sig Foster** spent the day searching for a pineapple, and was written into the SOP's (changed from SOI because no-one knew what it meant) since he would be seeing the OC after exercise–again.

On the Saturday we were graced with the presence of the girls from Cambridge UOTC. They had a look round the HQ's and played around on

a GPMG before trying to burn down the tents with 200 rounds of mini-flares. That evening we all settled in to watch the rugby which the RQ had kindly videod.

On Sunday we drove to SPTA for the second part of the ex Parthian Shot. A Tp showed some real speed at a massive 28mph on the M3. We spent the night on Netheravon Airfield where the Ops Officer **Capt Brian** 'Fartypants' **Elliott** trialed the new poncho for a full three minutes before moving to the RSM's heated tent. By morning the tents were so frozen they stood up without needing poles.

We deployed into the field to a nice dry location called Beeches Barn. Well, it was dry until the perma-frost melted and it turned into the Somme Mark II. This did not deter the ERV from moving four times to find THE perfect location. **Sgt** 'Anorexic sense of humour' **Davis** really had fun!! The Staff then arrived looking extremely professional and on-the-ball. Being out in the field has become a bit of a novelty for them. After looking round B Tp's HQ they had a quick look at A Tp's cam net. The Foreman and **Sgt Evans** spent the next 36 hours having fun with Ptarmigan (a new toy for the Squadron and OC), and with absolutely NO help from the Trunk Node eventually managed to get us in and working. **Sig** 'Stretch' **Stevens** was so depressed by moving the Radio Relay 150 metres that he tried to pull out his right eye with some barbed wire. Once Ptarmigan had been proved, A Tp moved to the Somme Mark III to allow a change of control, and B Tp made a final move to test Ptarmigan just one last time. **LCpl** 'Sig' **McNally** forgot a vital lead and we all cried! Still, once everything was working ENDEX was called, and we all headed back to Colchester. This time A Tp managed to keep up the speed, and we were all home by 0100.

A final point: if the SPTA managers require their training area back, it can be found spread along the M3, M25, A12 and at the washdown point in Colchester.

5AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para) Aldershot

216 Para Sig Sqn conducting an strategic insert into RAF Goose Bay, Canada

EXERCISE FROZEN GRIFFIN–3/9 JANUARY 1997

Ex Frozen Griffin involved three C-130 aircraft from 70 Sqn RAF plus their crews and 130 Army personnel. The aim was for the aircrews to practise in long range insertions and low level flying and the troops in parachuting into arduous conditions, arctic survival and adventure training. The exercise was carried out in and around RAF Goose Bay on the North East coast of Canada with parachuting onto the nearby frozen Gosling Lake Drop Zone.

At 19.00 personnel paraded at Arnhem Barracks Aldershot, home to 216 Para Sig Sqn, who were the lead unit for the exercise. The Troops were drawn from units throughout 5 AB Bde but also included Para Trained personnel from outside units such as 289 Commando Battery Royal Artillery TA. After an initial brief came the issue of specialist kit for survival in the expected extreme cold of Goose Bay where daytime temperatures of below -30 degrees centigrade are not uncommon. This included arctic smocks, gloves, socks, goggles, facemask and snowshoes.

Only 90 of the personnel would be parachuting on first arriving in Canada with the rest Air Landing. Each man had with him his container, a grip which would stay with the C-130, and a carrier bag containing warm kit to be put on prior to jumping. The flight which departed at 06.30 would take almost 10 hours including a stop in Keflavik, Iceland to refuel. The flight was apparently 'ordinary' for the RAF despite a window breaking in the cockpit and the port wing icing up which necessitated the turning off of the autopilot to prevent the plane from flying around in circles. The temperature on exiting the aircraft was expected to be about -50°C, taking into account the wind chill caused by the plane's airspeed. Most of the troops therefore placed on as much of their arctic kit as possible.

P-Hour 17.00-13.00 Local. Three aircraft, Sim 15 sticks and wind at five knots gusting eight knots. The view during the descent was spectacular with bright sunshine, blue sky, snow-covered landscape and the Gosling Lake DZ ringed by mountains. A nine inch covering of snow provided a cushioned landing onto the ice of the frozen lake and was undoubtedly a factor in there being no casualties among the 90 men who parachuted into Canada. It was said that any jump where both the RSM and the Ops Officer walk off the DZ must have been a success. This was the last jump for the QM, **Capt Fred Payet**, and the Admin Officer, **Capt Dave Wilson** before they leave the Squadron later this year.

The reception on the DZ was most unusual with local Park Rangers and members of the rescue services collecting the men and their equipment and ferrying them to the RV on the back of Skidoos. One of the skidoo riders was actually a local hunter who just happened to be passing by and came over to see what was going on. He then started collecting men from the DZ also. A bus ride into Goose Bay was followed, somewhat strangely, by the filling in of customs forms just in case we were smuggling goods in to Canada by Parachute.

08:00 DFC 08:30 Enplane 09:00 Brakes Monday morning saw the second jump of the exercise in somewhat less sunny conditions. Two hours of low level flying preceded P-Hour at 11:00 and provided views of the country around Goose Bay. The 4 Div Media Ops team and the SSVC crew were on the DZ to film the descent and to interview the troops afterwards. Again everything went well, though **Cpl Mick Westbrook** and **LCpl Bain** began the descent side by side in the air, and the media were given a good show. There was also interest from the Canadian press with the **2IC Capt Bennett** making his debut on CBC Radio. The afternoon saw the troops broken down into groups to begin the round robin of adventure training that would take place over the next few days.

The activities available were Nordic skiing, downhill skiing and survival training with the local Canadian Rangers. Survival Training took place about half an hour from Goose Bay. We were met by the Rangers who had brought with them a half dozen skidoos and what could only with the utmost generosity be called sleds. These devices for towing us behind the skidoos were actually more like MFO boxes attached to wooden runners and came sans shock absorbers. After a wild ride across the ice and snow in the WO sleds, less those who bagged places on the back of the skidoos, including the OC and 2IC, we stopped by a wooded area for the lessons in building a lean to and a fire.

The reward for building our shelters in such quick time was another ride on the sleds to the frozen lake for a spot of fishing. After about 15 minutes of catching nothing the RSM, among others, was becoming restless when he let out a shout that he had a big one. This was in response to the strong tug he had felt on the line but it quickly went slack again. A few seconds later he caught another 'Big One' which again slipped away and as he looked up he realised that something was afoot due to the laughing from his fellow fishermen. The RSM's fish was in fact one of the Canadian Rangers who was occasionally creeping up on him and tugging the line, and we thought they had no sense of humour! The last part of the training was skidoo familiarisation which involved us riding them in all directions at as high a speed as possible, surprisingly nobody was injured.

The Downhill skiing proved to be an eye opener for the RAF PTIs as they looked on in horror at the Squadron's 'Banzai' ski style. Provided you managed to negotiate the T bar lift without falling off there was a range of different slopes on which to ski, many of them quite uneven and rocky as they were all unprepared. Leading proponents of the Banzai style included **SSgt Gaz Smith**, **Sgt** 'Lightbeer' **Scott**, **Cpl Dom Anderson** and **Sig** 'Dogsy' **Barker**. Some didn't even know how to stop or turn and just pointed themselves downhill, stopping achieved as and when the ground dictated.

Both the Parachute and Adventure Training programmes were a great success and were enjoyed by all. Many thanks to our RAF hosts at Goose Bay who provided support and facilities for all parts of Ex Frozen Griffin.

ARMY CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS–5 FEBRUARY 97

This year's Championships were held at Longmoor Training Area 5 February 1997. The team was made up from both the HQ and the Sig Sqn these being:-

Maj Herring RLC, Headquarters
Maj Wildish RE, Headquarters
WO1 Turnbull R Signals, 216 Para Sig Sqn
WO2 Rollins RLC, 216 Para Sig Sqn
SSgt Buckley AGC, 216 Para Sig Sqn
SSgt Needham R Signals, 216 Para Sig Sqn
SSgt Smith R Signals, 216 Para Sig Sqn
LCpl Fisher R Signals, 216 Para Sig Sqn
Sig Shaw R Signals, 216 Para Sig Sqn

As usual for the Signal Squadron, with the busy programme that we are involved in four members of the team, **WO1 Turnbull**, **SSgt Needham**, **LCpl Fisher** and **Sig Shaw**, had been withdrawn from an exercise the night before the competition. They had to call on physical reserves in order to produce the standard that had been achieved earlier in the season. Having been briefed on who had turned up for the event we knew that there were going to be some difficult teams to beat. Those teams being 2 Sig Regt and HQ 4 Div, especially as most of us train with members of HQ 4 Div quite regularly.

The course was going to be three laps of a hard route with two notable hills and a long stretch of strength sapping sandy ground, the start was full with 170 runners turning up for the event, our team with the different abilities never starts the same but gradually build up through the race, **Maj Herring** and **WO2 Rollins** always being close to the front with the remainder of us being middle field runners, working together over the latter stages of the race. The result was the surprise of the day, having beaten HQ 4 Div into second place by 15 points and 2 Sig Regt by 40 points, however, the team were pleased as punch as winning the Army Championships at Minor Unit Level rounds the season off nicely and two of the team have been picked for the Corps Cross Country Squad for the Inter Corps Championships 12 February 1997.

241 Sig Sqn

Sqn Comd	**Maj Cowen**
YofS/SSM	**WO2 Wedge**

BRIEFLY

241 Sig Sqn is a Fixed Communications Sig Sqn which is part of 2 (NC) Sig Bde. We support 5th Division by staffing six main Commcens, four Operator Assistance Centres (OACs) and service a large number of other units from the ADA. Support is provided by Comms Tp who provide cover to the Commcens and OAC's (exchanges),Tech Tp provide a wide scope of technical assistance from 1st Line faults at Commcens, OACs and Unit Manned Terminals to installation work for CIS at 5th Division HQ in Shrewsbury. The Signals Works Services support the communications of Army ranges in the Divisional area. The Squadron is lean on military personnel as we only have 12 members including officers. The other 120 in the Squadron are made up of civil service personnel dotted around the country.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

December saw the farewell of the OC **Maj** 'Garth' **Letori** who leaves us to start his RO's post six months early in sunny Blandford, good luck in your new post. In his place **Maj** 'Jack' **Cowen** takes over the reins as OC until the new OC arrives in six months. December also saw the fond farewell of our chief clerk **Mrs Joan Mapp** who leaves us after 25 years in the civil service and 11 years in the Squadron to travel on the buses free of charge courtesy of the much sought after Bus Pass. September said goodbye to **Cpl Kev Ashfield** and his wife **Kay** who left us for civvy street and a job in Bristol, good luck to you both. Another addition to the rabble in civvy street is **LCpl Paul** 'Scouse' **Parry** who left us in November to bum around Liverpool.

From 16 Sig Regt come **LCpl Paula** 'I am Gorgeous' **Kelson** who joined us in September to work in the ADA, 241's loss 16 Sigs' gain I think, only joking. Straight from the factory came **Sig Lee** 'I don't speak much' **Banks** and soon to join us also from 16 Sig's is **LCpl Zoe Aldridge** and her husband **Rodney**, we hope you all enjoy it here.

OTHER NEWS

The Squadron HQ gave up work for a day so we could all go hill walking in the Malvern Hills, the hills looked very daunting to some of the civvies but the pub lunch halfway round was a welcome rest. An enjoyable day was had by all. The Squadron resettlement cell is headed by **SSgt Steve Brennan** who will be leaving the army after 22 years in February. Also joining him soon in civvy street will be **Cpl** 'Harry' **Harrington** and **LCpl Kerry Low**.

Congratulations to **SSgt Brennan** who won the UK Army Matchplay 10 Pin Bowling Championships Singles and UK Army Doubles with **Sgt Les Colhoun** from the School of Signals.

In November 1996 a quarter of the Squadron strength deployed on Ex Blazing Bruno which was organised by 243 Sig Sqn on the Sennybridge Training Area in South Wales. **Sgt Scott Margison** helped out by acting as Directing Staff and **LCpl Paula** 'I'm even more gorgeous in combats' **Kelson** took part in one of the sections. We welcome back **Cpl Marie McChesney** from her six month stint in ODA Split but unfortunately also say goodbye soon after, due to her posting to N.I.

251 Signal Squadron

PERSONALITIES

Sqn Comd — **Maj (TOT) David Ellis**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Kev Jenkins**

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **SSgt Joy Phipps** who gave birth to a baby girl **Sian Danielle** weighing 51b 13oz at 1222 hrs 5 February 1997. **Joy**, husband **John** and Baby all doing well. Congratulations to **Cpl Helen Jackson** on her recent marriage.

HAIL AND FAREWELLS

Welcome to **SSgt Whiting** from NI, farewells, to **Cpl Lee**, **LCpl Donaghy**, **LCpl Hill** and **LCpl Hill** who are all off to civilian life.

VISIT BY BRIG S. M. A. LEE OBE, COMD 2 (NC) SIG BDE

During his busy schedule of visiting units **Brig Lee** took time out to visit the Squadron and present a UN medal to **WO2 Kelly** and a LS & GC to **Sgt Renison**, the event was well attended by all the Squadron and organised in the Warrant Officers & Sergeants' Mess by **WO2 (SSM) Jenkins**.

Brig Lee meets Yeoman Kelly's family and presents his wife Jenny with flowers

1 (Royal Buckinghamshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn (Special Communications)

Sqn Comd — **Maj Gordon Duncan**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Pete Charles**

DETACHMENT DEPLOYMENT TO NORWAY

On the 11 January 1997 a five man det deployed to Hafjell Norway, to practice communications in an Arctic environment. The journey consisted of a six hour drive from the Sqn HQ in Bletchley to the ferry port at Newcastle. A 27 hour crossing was followed by a relaxing evening in Bergen, The det then drove to the exercise location. Whilst driving over the 'Hardangavida' Plateau, **LCpl Luke** 'it could happen to anyone' **Stanley** decided to show off his driving skills and ditched the Landrover and trailer into a snowdrift at 40mph, violently waking **LCpl Jase** 'Big Hair' **Broome**, his passenger. After a 13 hour drive, the det finally arrived at the location and promptly set up comms.

Sgt Tony Smith, Cpl 'Jas' Drimmer, Cpl Rory O'Neil and LCpl 'Jase' Broome–take a break

The first day consisted of a 24 hour HF comms. For the next two weeks the det received instruction on 'Living in an Arctic Environment' and practised cross country skiing techniques. There was also plenty of time Spent on the excellent downhill slopes, gaining confidence on piste as well as off. At the beginning of week three, all that was taught was put into practice as the det enjoyed a full two day excursion on skis with an overnight stop under canvas.

The R 'n' R phase of the exercise fell during the middle of the last week and was a visit to Oslo, the capital of Norway. A total of two days were spent there, 'soaking up the culture' and of course sampling the nightlife.

LCpl 'Jase' Broome, Cpl 'Jas' Drimmer and Sgt Tony Smith at 3000ft

REGULAR ASSESSMENT COURSE

In January a group of Regular operators joined the Squadron for a two week course designed to test their suitability for service in the Squardron and their attendance on the four month Special Communications Course starting at the end of February. For the first time the course included some people nominated by APO Glasgow as in the past service in the unit had been on a volunteer basis.

The emphasis on the course was placed on trade skills and numerous other tests which include character assessment. For example students were required to conduct an appreciation which would normally be undertaken by potential Yeoman as well as giving a 10 minute lecture to all the Regular personnel in the unit.

In addition students took part in Ex Capital Endeavour–a two day initiative exercise. The exercise marked the midway point of the course and by now all students were aware that tasks would be presented to them at short notice and would be unique to this course. Prior to the final skills test, Ex Saddle Sore was conducted over an eight hour period. All students were given opportunities along the way to demonstrate their leadership, orienteering and initiative skills.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy must be received six weeks before the publication date

2 (City of Dundee) Sig Sqn (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj Bryan Gilfether MBE, TD**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Max McGilivray**

FIBUA TRAINING

Ever eager for a slice of the action, the Squadron heavy mob responded gang handed, to an invitation from 76 RE (V) to co-use the FIBUA training facility in Catterick during December of 1996. This brought a demanding and varied year to a close with a bang and ensured a stock of 'war stories' to take home. **SSgt Rod Mains'** enthusiasm for the 'Rubble Run' assault was so great that he continued well beyond the tactical objective and was last seen without his platoon looking lost and geographically embarrassed but ready to take on the world, several streets away. **Sgt Bruce** 'make my day' **Singers** took a break from building sandbagged defences to file his teeth to sharp points and declare that FIBUA would make the ideal venue for Squadron recruit selection. The SPSI raised some doubts before discovering that **Sig Albert Henderson** had sneaked out of Recruit Tp with **Bruce** and performed admirably. Depot recruit trg will seem quite tame now.

TRADE TRAINING

The current BSS, Radio Op and Telegraphist Class 2 training continues a pace with monthly outings to Cultybraggan, Stirling and Whitburn. The latest friendly invasion was to Whitburn in January by over 50 potential tradesmen and upgraders. It is a never ending source of entertainment to witness broad Dundonian accents meeting even broader Geordies after training, this truly is 'communicators in action'.

For some considerable time the Squadron has hosted evening radio schedules to similarly equipped units in England. This has proved such a useful and popular event that we have opened the schedules to the remainder of 2 (NC) Sig Bde and the uptake looks good. The schedules have changed in title from Ex Bald Dee to Ex Apollo Dundee and we would welcome participants in this HF training link. Details are available from Dundee Mil (774) 4652.

BOUNTY TRAINING WEEKEND

The latest range training weekend was held in February at Barry Buddon Training Area during high winds and rain typical of ranges familiar to every Corps reader. **Lt Andy Thompson** developed his relay procedures whilst controlling the details but no amount of control would keep the targetry in check as the figure elevens breezed off into the Tay estuary! The SPSI, **SSgt** 'Spielberg' **Doherty** decided to cheer up the waiting detail by producing cam cream and introducing patrol techniques into the concurrent activities. He said it was all for a Squadron training video but as soon as **Cpl Billy** 'no shoes' **Morris** said that Staff reminded him of Kate Aidie, NBCD was back on the menu. First aid ATD testing was conducted by **Sgt Andy** 'smiler' **Waterston** and NBCD by **LCpl Dave** 'the face' **Garland**, which makes a change from starring in TAVRA's latest bus shelter advertising campaign covering all of Scotland.

SOCIAL

Work hard, play hard is one of many mottoes bandied about here in Dundee and this is in evidence as the party season has gripped the Squadron of recent times. As an independent squadron we run our own Officers and WOs and Sgts Messes, these being the first to kick off the winter social season in December with a ball and prize draw. The compere has signed up for BSS lessons, however after announcing the OC, **Maj Gilfether** as 'OSCAR COCONUT'. The All Ranks Dance was next and even managed to sport more kilts than both Messes. This function traditionally provides a focus for the award of the Harry Meakins Trophy for the best improved soldier in the year. The award for 1996 went to **LCpl Bruce** 'wobbly legs' **Tarbet**, our pet ex-matelot. Well done **Bruce**. The permanent staff lunch and bar room dancing session followed which includes **Maj Gilfether**'s traditional donation of a case of wine. No-one told the OC that the lunch venue was the most select in Dundee and wine £10 a bottle. The word is that he is doing overtime in his civilian sphere until the Spring.

After the mist of the social battle we call Hogmanay settled, the event to which others are merely a precursor took it's turn. Burns Night is the one occasion when all Scots turn poet, singer and haggis stabber. The guest of honour was Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Leek**, who savours the four legged highland haggis which pasture locally. This may explain why the Deputy Commander ended up with this two legged lowland haggis with 32 Sig Regt the same evening!

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS

604 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Richard Spencer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Phil Lord**

It has been a rather quiet few months within the Troop. The Christmas function, a combined HQ and Sig Tp fancy dress event complete with all the trimmings, was a great success. However, some of the costumes left a lot to be desired. We would like to thank the committee for organising such an extravaganza to finish the year. Christmas leave was then upon us and up popped a parade for the changing of the HQ and Tp's emblem.

CHANGE OF FORMATION INSIGNIA PARADE

This was the main event of the previous months, the CSSG (UK) HQ which the Tp supports changed its insignia to the one used in the Gulf war by the 3rd Line Logistic set-up. This insignia is the 'Blackadder' or Sammy the Snake as it is more frequently known. The Troop were heavily involved with the parade which marked the change of insignia with **LCpls Sid Owen** and **Mick Roberts** being the flag carriers and keeping **Maj Gen White**, Director General Log Sp, company in the photographs!! The

parade was followed by many Blackadder and Baldrick jokes and a Curry Lunch for all. Unfortunately Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie had to pull out at the last minute or else it would have really been a Blackadder Day!

CONGRATULATIONS

This goes to **Sgt Pete Mullen** who has now been appointed the honoury title of Sergeant of the Snake, also to **LCpl** 'Simo' **Simpson** on taking the plunge and getting married.

ARRIVALS

Hello to **Cpl Pete Byrne**, **Cpl Scott Rickett** and **LCpl** 'Simo' **Simpson**. We all hope you enjoy your tour with the Troop and the delights of Aldershot, then again **Cpl Pete Byrne** already knows what can happen to you at night in downtown Aldershot

DEPARTURES

Goodbye to **LCpl Dougie Douglas** who is now working in Grantham and all the best to **Cpl** 'Tommo' **Thompson** and **Sig Tom Slaney** who are off to pastures new in Civ Div.

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

OC **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**
Y of S **SSgt (YofS)** 'Pete' **Van den Broek**

The months of December and January have been a quiet period for the team in terms of deployments on exercise. However, the Boss, **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**, has been able to keep us occupied with all kinds of activities.

Among these was a chance to escape to Colditz for a day. This followed a presentation on the Castle and it's intrepid inmates by **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon**. After a long drive down for **SSgt (YofS)** 'D licence' **Van den Broek**, we entered the village, whose skyline, is dominated by the castle atop it's hill. After a brief look around a local museum, which had very little to do with the Castle itself, we were taken to the Castle.

Our guide, who sounded like a German version of Manuel from Fawlty Towers, made the tour an interesting one and at times, humorous. The blacker than black humour displayed on the walls of the solitary confinement cells was an insight into what kept these men sane in captivity. Another tribute to the British character was on a 'league' table outside the main gate. This showed the total amount of prisoners to break out to safety, a 'Home Run', and the total number of attempts made by the different contingents of prisoners. Although Britain came a close second on the home runs, 12 to Frances' 14, it wasn't through lack of trying as the 119 unsuccessful attempts show, the nearest contenders were Belgium with 12 unsuccessful attempts!

Another fun event was a day on the ranges! No, not taking pot shots at figure 11's at 300 metres in respirators, but blasting clay pigeons to smithereens with shotguns. Well trying to anyway! Both four-man teams, named 'Gareth's Glitters' and 'Yuill's Tide', did well and were confident of winning and coming in a close second. Until the resident crack shot of our parent unit, the Combined Arms Field Training Group (Germany) (CAFTG(G)), an ex-sniper, leading an all stars team came out and won! Spoil Sports. Never the less the day wasn't a complete loss! Much Gluewien was guzzled and mince pies munched around hobo style fires burning in oil drums. As in all CAFTG(G) competitions it's not the winning that matters, it's the ridiculing of the other competitors as they take their attempts at the activity! With choice phrases such as, 'You couldn't hit a bus if you were on it!', 'Are you blind!' or 'Shame you missed it! Snigger!' As well as reminding some of the less familiar, that shotguns have safety catches too!

With leave looming on the horizon, but never getting any closer, it was time to do some work, (after all that's what they pay us for!) The offending activity in question was a presentation to the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers on COMSEC and the dangers of EW. The Team were on top form answering the queries of the Fusiliers, which comprised mainly of the, 'What does this do?' and 'How much does this cost?' variety. Our new equipment didn't let us down either, crashing for no apparent reason, these things are sent to try us! With leave getting even closer still, we still had the final hurdle of the year. A curry lunch in CAFTG(G)'s Blue room. With much merrymaking, until the end, and of course living up to our Corps's maxim 'First In, Last Out' the team thinned out for the last time in 96.

After a refreshing leave the Team returned livelier than ever to push forward in the 21st Century and to promote COMSEC everywhere. After a week of running up the vehicles, CES checks, painting and other important matters the Troop was fast returning to it's usual high state of readiness, when our vehicles aren't in our workshop 34 km from here, that is!

The Troop was left in **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** and **LCpl** 'Andy' **Johnstone**'s capable hands. While **LCpl** 'Auz' **Gambles** was able to get away on his det commanders course and the three singlies, **Sigs** 'Andy 2' **Powell**, 'Vic' **Vernon** and 'Scott' **Yuill** were forced to go on Basic Winter Training in Bavaria. All came away with various levels of competency in skiing not to mention suntans, from the neck up, and various tales of 'piling in' on the slopes. Whilst away they were able to attempt Nordic skiing, downhill and the best part, ski touring off the piste. A night in a mountain hut was also undertaken.

All in all the Team is looking forward to 1997, especially the total of eight weeks in Poland (no, really we are, honest).

SUSSEX ARMY CADET FORCE
TRI-COUNTY 4 STAR WEEKEND–7-9 FEBRUARY 1997

WEEKEND RUN FOR ALL SENIOR CADETS IN SUSSEX, KENT, SURREY AND HANTS FOR THE 2ND YEAR

Kent ran the first weekend of this type in 1996. The 1997 weekend took place at Crowborough over the weekend 7/9 February. 35 Army Cadets from Sussex, Surrey, Kent, Hampshire & IOW took part.

The following events made up the interesting programme: Syndicate projects, Assault course with lots and lots of mud! GP shooting competition, Army presentations on, 'The role of the Military Pioneers', by **Capt R. C. White** RLC, 'Sport in the Army', by **Capt S. C. Hazlit**. 'Caribbean Cadet Camp 1996', by **Maj M. Andrews** Kent ACF. Our Commandant **Col Chris Blessington JP** gave a very interesting presentation on the Wilderness Trail. This is a three week expedition for Army Cadets taking place in South Africa this July. One of the many great opportunities for Army Cadets to take part in.

Sussex Cadet RSM Simon Newton

One of the many highlights of the weekend was an excellent Regimental Dinner with many distinguished guests including the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, **Hon Nicholas Soames MP**, (Guest speaker), **Brig R. B. MacGregor-Oakford CBE, MC**. Army Cadet Force Assoc. **Brig D. H. Godsal, MBE**, Commander 2 (South East) Brigade.

All the Cadets had a great time together as a team, they worked very hard and had a great deal of fun and many laughs during the two days. Roll on, 1998 for a Star weekend.

Cdt SSgt Lee Edwardson

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col J. E. F. Kirby OBE**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt I. Gray** Glasgow Mil
Secretaries:	
General	**Capt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2849
Dinghy & Dayboats	**SSgt Bungay** Blandford Mil 2409
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	**SSgt N. Finnegan** Osnabruck Mill 2225
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster** Bulford Mil
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** York Mil 2346
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney** Bulford Mil

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club. If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

OFFSHORE AND KEEL BOATS
SALE OF *SKYWAVE*

Many who have sailed on the RSYC Yacht *Skywave* over the past 17 years will be saddened to hear that, on the 28th December 1996, she sailed out of Haslar Creek for the last time in her own name. On that cold Saturday morning, **Lt Col Jack Amberton**, the Rear Commodore Offshore, and **Maj Graeham Neal**, the Yachtmaster, were present on behalf of the Royal Corps of Signals to wish her and the purchaser well and 'Bon chance', and hopes to see her on the high seas for many years to come. The Royal Corps of Signals has retained the name for use on its new yacht, the erstwhile *Skywave* now residing in Southampton under the new name *Rival Quest*.

PURCHASE OF THE NEW HULL, *SKYWAVE*

For some months now, a Sub-Committee of the RSYC has been actively scouring the 'Ads' columns of yachting magazines and brokerage lists along the South coast, looking for a new hull that would fulfil the requirements of the RSYC by providing a yacht to complement the Victoria 34, *Petasus III* well into the next millennium. There have been a number of prospective hulls viewed for this task, but sadly, the Sub-Committee has nothing further to report. However, it will keep on searching, and will, hopefully have something to report for the next edition of *The Wire*.

FUTURE EVENTS

There are a number of events on the horizon in Offshore Sailing for the coming year:

The Offshore Rally–This is the weekend 6-8 June 1997, and is an excellent opportunity for sailing members of the Corps, Past and Present, to get together for an excellent weekend of socialising and sailing. After visiting Cowes on Friday evening, all crafts are invited to gather for lunch in Newtown Creek, experience the liquid hospitality of other crews, before retreating to the safety of Lymington for dinner. Sunday morning usually brings headaches and the problem of finding someone who is well enough to skipper the short trip back to Gosport. Without doubt, an excellent weekend, and thoroughly, enjoyed by all participants.

The ASA Regatta Training week–This year the Corps is fortunate in having successfully bid for 2 JSASTC Vic 34 to use as run-up training to the ASA Regatta. The Vics are available between 13 and 19 June 1997, and it is proposed, if numbers demand, to combine this selection week as a qualification course for RYA Competent Crew and Day Skippers.

The RSYC Offshore Regatta–This is the culmination of the RSYC Offshore sailing calendar, as again, the Corps is very fortunate indeed to have successfully bid for 6 JSASTC Vic 34', for the week 6-13 October '97. This event is still in the planning stages, but it is hoped that it will consist of long range racing, across the channel and taking in a number of different ports in the process. This event, above all other things, will be demanding and a challenge (and the author is planning to retain the Offshore Regatta Trophy that his Squadron won three years ago, the last time this event was staged).

For further information on any of the above events, or indeed any matter regarding Offshore sailing, personnel should contact **Maj Graham Neal**, Yachtmaster RSYC (Keelboats) LTK, on Bulford Mil 2616 or 01980 672616.

DINGHY & DAYBOATS

The season is fast approaching and once again the appeal is going out for all of you budding sailors to make yourselves known. There has been a noticeable reduction in the quantity and quality of Dinghy Sailors that have been available for the Corps Team and this resulted in a very poor season last year. We should now be determined to reverse this trend and once more place ourselves as the No 1 Corps in the Dinghy Sailing world.

So don't delay call today !!!

Contact **SSgt Bungay** on Blandford Mil (737) 2409 Phone/Fax.
Maj Ellis on Aldershot Mil (722) 2196 Phone

WINDSURFING

We are just about to kick off with the new Windsurfing season, and we hope to make it at least as successful and just as much fun as last year. All we need is your support. Vaguely interested? If so, even if you have never windsurfed before, then read on . . .

The 1997 Windsurfing Newsletter is now out. It contains lots of info about events (service and civilian), equipment, training and courses for all abilities. If you have not received a copy and would like one, contact the Corps Windsurfing secretary on Colchester Mil (765) 4220.

A summary of the service competition dates for 1997 are shown below. This list is by no means exhaustive, but does include all of the major events for which we need your support. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A HOTSHOT IN ORDER TO COMPETE (you just need a sense of humour and maybe the odd beer token in your pocket). Why not get a couple of friends together and enter a unit team in the Corps Championships this year? If you've got no friends (sob! sob!) then enter as an individual and come along to meet people. There is a free T-shirt (boasting a picture of a dead cool Windsurfing dude) available for anyone who takes part in the Corps-Wide Championships this year (pre-entries must be received by 15 August to qualify for a T-shirt).

Last year's Corps training was such a huge success that we intend to repeat it again this year (**Mr Guy Cribb** the National Coach and Olympic 2000 candidate gave us two superb days of racing technique and personal coaching). Such high calibre coaches must be booked well in advance, so if you intend to join in (again all abilities are welcome) please contact the Windsurfing secretary as soon as possible as numbers are limited.

The plan to purchase six all singing all dancing brand new raceboards, each complete with 7½m² sail and 6.8m² changedown sail is still on schedule–they should be available for use from the beginning of March this year. Some of the current fleet of Mistral Boards would be sold to Corps members, others will remain available for use by members of the club as before. Further details on how to apply for a board, either for a season's hire at very reasonable rates, or to buy, can be found in the 1997 Corps Windsurfing Newsletter.

Don't forget the Corps also has a top of the range 15 board Windsurfing trailers (with large lockable box) available for hire to units for adventure training, or to individuals, at the very reasonable rate of only £2.50 per day–bookings through the Windsurfing secretary please.

Hope to see you all on the water . . .

Dinghy Sailing 1997

BLANDFORD CAMP SAILING CLUB
HAVE NOW INCREASED THEIR
HIRE FLEET SIZE FOR 1997.

WE NOW HAVE A FLEET OF
12 TOPPER DINGHIES
(ON 2 ROAD TRAILERS),
COMPLETE WITH BUOYANCY AIDS.

For Further Details Contact
SSGT STEVE BUNGAY ON
BLANDFORD MIL (737) 2409 PHONE/FAX.

SPORT

ALPINE SKIING

ROYAL SIGNALS
ALPINE SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS–4-15 JAN 1997

Chief of Race	**Capt S. C. Glover**
Chief of Course/Course setter	**SSgt A. Brown**
Start Referee	**Sgt J. Driver**
Finish Referee	**Sig S. Massey**
Chief of Gates	**Sgt G. Roberts**

After a two year absence due to operational commitments the Championships returned to Kaprun in Austria. Once again the considerable Corps deployment in FRY meant that attendance was down on previous years. Nevertheless many thanks go to those teams and various individuals that managed to attend. Many competitors, including most of the race commitee, had only recently returned from Bosnia.

Competition between the teams was close with the overall team combination result going right down to the wire. The adrenalin addicts from 7 Sig Regt led the way with some impressive performances (and crashes!) from **Lt Darren Saul** and **LCpl Rotherforth**. **Capt Roger** 'Dobber' **Ayers** and **LCpl Stu Foster** led the pursuit by 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn but were ultimately pipped for second place by the team from 16 Sig Regt, led by **Sgt Oz** 'face plant' **Hewson**. The Corps Team from 1 (UK) ADSR were ineligible for any team prizes by virtue of the Army Squad members in their ranks. They still managed to collect some silverware by virtue of an extremely impressive performance by **Cpl** 'Chalky' **White** who swept the board in the individual events and won the Individual Combined Event .

Congratulations should also go to the gallant 2 Sig Regt whose novice team battled snow and blizzards in four countries just to attend. Apparently the worst conditions were in Yorkshire! Now the Championships are firmly back on the map it is hoped that next years' event will prove equally successful and that further teams will participate in this challenging but enjoyable event.

1997 Results:

Individual Slalom:

1st	Cpl S. White	1 (UK) ADSR
2nd	Lt D. Saul	7 Sig Regt
3rd	LCpl Foster	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

Individual Giant Slalom:

1st	Cpl S. White	1 (UK) ADSR
2nd	LCpl Foster	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
3rd	LCpl Rotherforth	7 Sig Regt

Individual Combination:

1st	Cpl S White	1 (UK) ADSR

Novice Combination:

1st	Sig Jupp	2 Sig Regt

Team Slalom:

1st	7 Sig Regt
2nd	16 Sig Regt

Team Giant Slalom:

1st	7 Sig Regt
2nd	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

Team Combination:

1st	7 Sig Regt

1 (UK) ARMD DIV SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fresh from their exploits in Kaprun many of the teams moved on to Les Contamines in France for the Divisional Championships. This proved to be an extremely tough event with over 20 teams attending. The Corps Team from 1 (UK) ADSR qualified for the Army Championships in style, with second place in the Team Giant Slalom and third in the Team Downhill Event. These performances helped push them to an overall placing of second in the Team Combination.

The individual performance of the Championships was that of **SSgt Andy Brown** of 1 (UK) ADSR who, in his final year of competition (so he claims!) won the Downhill Event and the Individual Combination prize following his excellent performances in the other events.

AWSA 50 ST MORITZ–ARMY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Having qualified for AWSA 50 the team from 1 (UK) ADSR comprising **SSgt Andy Brown**, **Cpl** 'Chalky' **White** and **Sig Steve Massey**, accompanied by **LCpl Foster** from 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, set off for St Moritz. As might well be expected of the largest winter sports event ever held outside the Olympic Games, the level of competition was extremely high. Once again the team from 1 (UK) ADSR achieved some excellent results including third places in both the Team Slalom and Team Downhill events. These results helped the team to an excellent fourth place overall in the Team Combination.

Once again **SSgt Andy Brown** proved that he is on top form with some outstanding individual performances. His victory in the individual slalom was followed up with an outstanding second place in the Individual Combination Standings.

SSgt Andy Brown in action at the Army Championships (Giant Slalom)

CANOEING

R SIGNALS CANOE CLUB END OF SEASON REPORT

Royal Signals have continued to lead Army canoeing this year, despite the absence of several personnel on operations. The Corps team convincingly won the Inter-Corps Slalom Championships, **WO2 (YofS) Dobson** is the current Army Whitewater Racing Champion and a total of 12 individuals have represented the Army this year.

The season began as usual with the Army Whitewater Racing Championship in January on the river Dee in Llangollen, North Wales. Sadly operational commitments in Bosnia meant that 16 Sig Regt were unable to defend the unit team title which they won in 1995. The Corps usually high profile at this event was maintained when **WO2 (YofS) Dobson** (COMSEC Monitoring Team Germany) won the individual title and **Sgt Pavier** (15 Sig Regt) finished second. **Sgt Pavier**, **SSgt Wright** and **Sig Shaw** represented the Army at the Inter-Service Whitewater Race February. It is with deep regret that I report the death of **Sig Shaw** (COMSEC Monitoring Team Germany) in a tragic accident on 3 May 1996. He was an extremely promising young canoeist.

The Inter Corps Slalom Championship was held in conjunction with the Land Command Slalom. A rather senior team of **Maj Bunce**, **Capt Hinsley** and **SSgt Wright** paddled very well in testing conditions to win the event, despite strong challenges from RA, RE, APTC and Infantry. **Maj Bunce** finished second in the individual event (and is looking forward to paddling as a veteran next year!) Our domination of Army Slalom continued with AAC Harrogate winning the Junior Championship, both team and individual which was a fitting tribute to work of their coach **Mr Archie Miles**.

The Army Slalom Championship was held at the Teesside artificial course in June. The defending Army champion, **Yeoman Dobson** was unfortunately unable to retain the title, being well beaten by a young Officer Cadet from RMAS. **Maj Bunce**, **Yeoman Dobson** and **SSgt Wright** all represented the Army at the Inter Service slalom held in Scotland in September, the Corps providing 2/3 of the Army A team (**Bunce/Dobson**).

A strong team from 11 Sig Regt has been competing at sprint and marathon canoeing this year, led by **Capt Drinkall**. A total of six represented the Army at the Inter-Service Championship. Another indication of future potential was **OCdt Taylor** (sponsored by R Signals) from RMAS who won the women's marathon.

In summary the Corps has enjoyed another excellent year, continuing to set the standards in Army canoeing despite the absence of several key individuals and unit teams on operations. 1997 is eagerly awaited.

ORIENTEERING

THE INTER CORPS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 1996

The Corps Orienteering teams, suffering from the absence of several superstars deployed on Operations, were dusted down and brought out of the shadows to do their annual battle against the other Arms and Services. This years' Championships were hosted by the Royal Artillery in the Larkhill area and consisted of the format of previous years. A night event followed by a day event. As with most years it was the 'old and bold' who were able or willing to give up a weekend to represent the Corps. Inevitably it is hoped that over the coming season we will be able to increase the interest of both the Junior Orienteers, who are hiding out there somewhere, and the Ladies who are potential winners if only we could get a complete team together! Now where have I read this before.

The night event was held at Perham Down. To get us off to a good start, **Lt Duncan Parkinson** having a great season in the 2 Div South League, was our first man away with high hopes. This was due mainly to an invitation to a party in Blandford immediately after his run! However, with his mind obviously on the 'Aprés O', **Lt Parkinson** managed to run into a metal spike early on the course, was forced to retire, and ended up spending the night in hospital. At least he made it early to bed! **Duncan** is now fully fit and back on the road. **Maj Nick Bateson**, **Maj** 'Rollo' **Rumford** and **2Lt Katie Caie** had very good runs all finishing 2nd in their respective age groups. At the other end of the scale, **Sgt Ted Whichelo**, having his first night run ever managed to successfully evade the finish for over three hours. **SSgt Peter Ridlington** and **Capt Steve Palfreyman** (The Bluff Brothers) managed to struggle around the course using the low intensity headtorches having watched the head torch frenzy, similar to sharks at feeding time, as team members frantically seized the super zoom all singing all dancing halogen head lamps.

The day event took place on a relatively new map, Knighton Down, which runs off the back of Larkhill. The majority of the Corps runners did much better with the aid of daylight, putting in reasonable times over a long, but not particularly technical course. Early mistakes prevented **Maj Bateson** from improving his overall seventh placing, and good runs from **2Lt Kale** and **SSgt Walker** gained them fifth and seventh respectively overall in the Ladies event. **Maj** 'Rollo' **Rumford** was his usual reliable self and finished up as the second placed M50 overall. That well known 'Night Owl', **Lt Col Peter Richards**, The Corps Orienteering President, was there for the Day Event and left the car park and his good lady wife, **Pauline** with only the paté sandwiches for company on a particularly wet and windy morning. Predictably he had a faultless run, and **Pauline** only had to brave the cold for about 80 minutes.

Overall, an enjoyable weekend, but the team desperately needs young blood to firstly represent the Juniors and to progress to the Senior Team. If you are a keen Orienteerer and would like to be considered for the Corps selection phase please contact, **Maj Nick Bateson** on Aldershot 2449, HQ 4 Div or **Capt Steve Palfreyman** on RAF Digby 7256. We are always short of female runners, and **Capt Deb Sunderland** of 30 Sig Regt is the contact here. We have the pleasure of holding the 1997 Event with the new Harris relay and cross-country combination, all in daylight thank goodness!

See you at the Corps Championships in May.

RUGBY

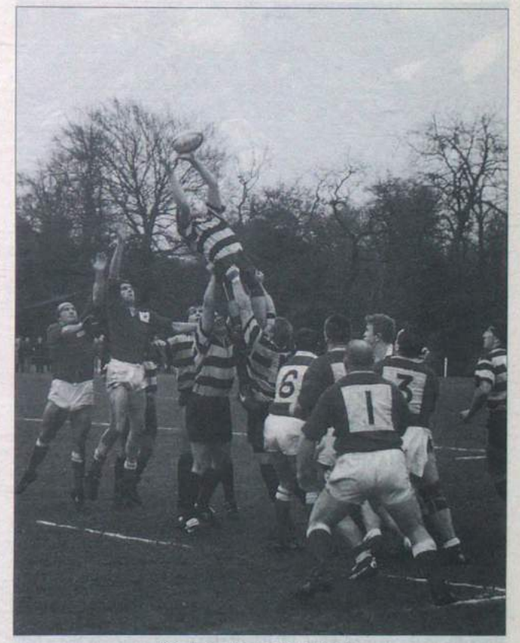
MATCH REPORT ARMY MAJOR UNITS FINAL
2 Sig Regt 31 Pts - 1 RWF 11 Pts

Neither side had won the Army Cup before. Having beaten the top two seeds, 7 RHA and 3 RIR, on their way to the final 2 Sig Regt were quietly confident. However, from the kick off they soon realised they were in for another tough match.

The Welsh kicked off in front of an impressively large crowd at RMAS. A quick ruck and the Welsh winger went over in the corner for a well deserved try. The Signallers restarted with a vengeance, some fierce rucking and superb line-out, work from **Sgt Pete Curtis** and **Sig Lee Francis** saw **Chris Spowart** go over for a try which he duly converted.

The first half was very much tit for tat as the RWF scored two penalties and 2 Sig Regt scored another try. The half time score 12 - 11 in favour of the Signallers. The second half was very much one way traffic with excellent line kicking from **Spowart** giving the pack ample opportunity to display their superb line out skills. Ferocious tackling by the half backs, **Sgt Paul Gartside** and **Cpl Bill Haley** ensured that the Welsh were never allowed to release their back line, which had been threatening all match. A try and four penalties, by **Spowart** (taking his personal total to 26 pts), saw 2 Sig Regt ease away from their rivals who began to look jaded.

The final whistle blew with 2 Sig Regt, twice beaten finalists, achieving success on their third attempt.



Sig Francis reaching high

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST!
Publish in it *The Wire*
The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

FINAL–29 REGT RLC vs 216 PARA SIG SQN
by Cpl 'Polly' Poulson

Last seasons hard training sessions and challenging fixtures put the Squadron on line to achieve a high position in the Army Minor Units Championships.

The Team started out a little rusty, but after some hard training sessions **Sgt** 'Taff' **Jones** began to get together the makings of a good squad.

The run up to the final was very demanding with results as follows:

Royal Corps of Signals vs 22 Field Hospital	71-10 won
vs 14 Field Workshop	32-5 won
vs 42 Survey Group, RE	19-12 won
vs Air Bassingbourn	24-9 won

So on to the final against 29 Regt RLC, from South Cerney. The pre-match 'fire-up' was instigated by the team captain, **Capt Guy Bennett** who then passed on this arduous task to **Cpl** 'Brad' **Braddock** and by the time he had finished we were ready to perform at Twickenham!

The opening 10 minutes saw some handling mistakes brought on by nerves, but these were quickly rectified and the Squadron pulled back, calmed down and began to play some quality rugby. The opening try came from **Cpl** 'Polly' **Poulson** after some superb mauling by the forwards and then quick handling by the backs to put him into a space in the corner.

After some excellent attacking by the Squadron we scored again thanks to **LCpl Neil Allcock**. At half time we were leading by 10 points to nil. After a good talking to at half time by **Sgt** 'Taff, The Quaff' **Jones** we carried on playing some superb rugby. 29 Regt came back strongly after the break but due to some outstanding performances by the forwards notably, **Capt** 'Daisy' **May** and **Capt Jase Gunning** we notched up two more tries from **WO2** 'Daz' **Carrick** who used some excellent pace and strength to battle through.

Two penalties and a conversion were added to the score by **WO1 Dave Morrell** who fortunately had his kicking boots on to provide some excellently placed balls throughout the game. An excellent performance came from the Squadron with pure guts and determination aided by the Airborne Spirit.

SWIMMING

INTERNAL AND INTER CORPS SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS
Report by Capt Langford

INTERNAL CHAMPIONSHIPS–COLERNE 13 NOVEMBER 1996

The Internal Championships are contested between Royal Signals Teams from UK, Germany and ITO and are designed to select a Corps Team to compete in the Inter Corps event.

The Swimming event was expected to be closer than previous years with the majority of the Germany Team still in Bosnia. In the first event, the 100m Freestyle, **2Lt Owen Finnie (ITO)** won by nearly two seconds in a time of 61.41 seconds. The second event was the 50m Freestyle and **Sig Jack Homer** won by a clear second for Germany. **Cpl Kenny Kenyon** won the next event, the 50m Breaststroke, by three seconds for UK and the Germany swimmer, **LCpl Andy Carnegie** won the 50m Butterfly in the next race but **AT Berry (ITO)** was only one and a half seconds behind in second place which is commendable as **Andy** is Combined Services standard. In the 50m Backstroke **Lt Ian Hargreaves** won comfortably for UK in 34.27 seconds. As we entered the Relays the scores were Germany 11 points, UK 10 and ITO 9. In the first of the Relays (4 x 50m Freestyle) ITO proved too strong with their 'young' team, UK finished a creditable second with the 'old' ones of **SSgt Graham Weavers, WO2** 'Gaz' **Johnson** and **Capt Tim Langford** making the average age around the 34 year mark! Next on the blocks was the 4 x 50m Breaststroke where the UK team of **Sgt Paul Beame, SSgt** 'Doz' **Day, Cpl Tim Williams** and **Cpl Kenny Kenyon** won by over two seconds; Germany were second and ITO finished some distance behind. The eighth event, 4 x 100m Freestyle, was an easy victory (by 10 seconds) for the Germany quartet of **LCpl Lance Barr, Sig Jack Homer, Sig Ollie Oliver** and **LCpl Andy Carnegie**. Going into the final event, the 4 x 50m Medley Relay, UK were leading with 24 points with Germany in second on 23 and ITO on 19. UK won the race with a six second margin over ITO and Germany finished in third. The final scores were UK 30 points, Germany 25 and ITO 23.

The Water Polo Tournament was fiercely contested with the UK team beating ITO in the first game by nine goals to one. The goals were scored by six players with **Capt Tim Langford, WO2** 'Gaz' **Jolmson** and **SSgt Graham Weavers** managing two each. The second game saw UK and Germany battling away in the pool. The game was always close with UK taking a 1–0 lead at the end ofthe first quarter with a goal from **Capt Tim Langford**. The second quarter saw UK build a 3–0 lead with funher goals from **SSgt Graham Weavers** and **Cpl Tim Williams**. **LCpl Andy Carneigne** in the Germany goal was excellent and kept his team in the game. (Watch out **Griff**!) At the end of the third quarter the score was 5–2 and in the final quarter **Cpl Tim Williams** added one more goal to ensure a UK victory by six goals to two. In the last league game Germany beat ITO by a comfortable 8–1 margin. ITO played the majority of the game with six players after one of the old and the bold was a little to bold!! This set up an excellent final between UK and Germany. It was always going to be a tight game and at the end of the second quarter both teams were tied on three goals apiece. The third quarter saw UK, through **SSgt Graham Weavers** and **Cpl Tim Williams**, open up a 5–3 lead. With UK defending the deep in the last quarter Germany were far from finished. However, a final goal each for both **WO2 'Gaz' Johnson** and **Tim Williams** secured a UK 7–3 victory.

The Commanding Officer 21 Sig Regt (AS), **Lt Col D. M. Steele MBE**, kindly presented the prizes with UK winning both the Swimming and Water Polo Competitions.

8th INTER CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS–ARBORFIELD
21 NOVEMBER 96

The teams stayed together to train and prepare for the Inter Corps. This included a Water Polo fixture against the Hereford Civilian Club. The Corps managed a creditable 9–4 victory, the first time we've beaten Hereford. With this excellent result behind us and some intense training organised by **WO2** 'Gaz' **Johnson** and **Cpl Tim Williams** we moved to Arborfield feeling confident of some good results.

The Swimming events are all relays; the Male Competition is four relays and the Females three. The Male relays proved to be very close with REME, AGC and ourselves all winning one race each out of the first three. Going into the final event any team was capable of winning the Cup. AGC managed to win this event with REME in second and ourselves finishing third. REME were Champions on 9pts, AGC second with 8pts and finally ourselves third with 7pts. A very closely fought Competition where the discovery by REME of a GB swimmer (having just joined Arborfield as an AT) making the difference. In the Female relays we proved far too strong for the REME and the AGC. We finished second in the first event, the 4 x 50m Freestyle, and won the other two relays. In the 4 x 50m Breaststroke the team of **LCpl Sarah Lee, LCpl Lucy Mason, Sig Nicola Fallows** and **Sig Emma Baines** broke the previous record by over 14 seconds recording a time of 2 mins 43.62 secs. Going into the final event, 4 x 50m Medley, any team was capable of becoming Champions. However, our team of **LCpl Lucy Mason** (Backstroke), **Sig Helen Stanyer** (Butterfly), **LCpl Sarah Lee** (Breaststroke) and **Sig Nicola Fallows** (Freestyle) won by over a length; a massacre! Additionally, they broke the previous record by 1.8 secs.

ROYAL SIGNALS LADIES SWIMMING TEAM

Back Row *(L to R):* Sig Helen Stanyer, LCpl Sarah Lee, Sig Louise Magill, LCpl Lucy Mason
Front Row *(L to R):* Sig Kristina Tilley, Sig Nicola Fallows, Sig Melissa Fortune, Sig Emma Baines

In the Water Polo it was obvious that three teams were very evenly matched; REME, APTC and ourselves. In our first game we beat the outsiders, the AGC, by 11–2. **WO2** 'Gaz' **Johnson** scoring four goals and **Cpl Dave Robins** three. Our next game was against the APTC who had lost their first match 10–6 to REME. The game proved to be exciting, very physical and end to end. Neither team ever managed to dictate the game and consequently the margin was never more than one goal.

Unfortunately the APTC managed to pull off a victory against us with a score line of 9–8. **Cpl Tim Williams** blasted in three goals with **Dave Robins** and **Sgt Andy Roberts** both scoring two each. In our final game we played last years Champions, REME. Again this was a close encounter but they managed to beat us 8–6. This was another hard fought game with some excellent Water Polo played by both teams. REME finished as Champions again with the APTC in second and ourselves in third. An additional presentation this year was a Trophy to our best Water Polo player in this intense Championship. This years winner was our 'outstanding' goalkeeper, **SSgt** 'Doz' **Day**, whose amazing skills often kept us in with a chance against the APTC and REME.

My thanks go the **SSgt Bruce Ibbotson** and **Sgt Mick Keeble** for organising the Germany Team, **SSgt Paul Gorman** the ITO Team Manager and **WO2** 'Gaz' **Johnson** the UK Team. Additionally, **LCpl Sara Lee** for training our victorious Female Swimming Team (Inter-Corps Champions for the second year) and **WO2** 'Gaz' **Johnson** and **Cpl Tim Williams** for training the Male Swimming Team and the Water Polo Squad.

The Inter Corps are scheduled for 21 November 1997 so keep this date free. The Internal Corps will be about one week earlier–date TBA. Finally, the School of Physical Training at Bulford are conducting a Water Polo Referee and Skills course during the week 5-9 May 1997. This is an ideal opportunity to improve individual skills, course organiser is on Bulford 2209; be there!

The Royal Signals Tennis Championships

are to be held at 21 Sig Regt at Colerne during the period 18-21 June 1997.

Events are as follows:

Men's Singles — Ladies Singles
Open Doubles — Regimental Doubles
Mixed Doubles

Contact **Capt W. V. Miles** for entry form on 738 3051 (01225 755551), HQ Sqn (V) 21 Sig Regt (AS), Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wilts

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THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.
All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Mince Pie Night was a welcome start to the year. This we hold in January when hopefully there can be no lingering effects of excesses attributed to seasonal festivities. Our evening was enlivened by a talk by **Mrs Jean Parratt** demonstrating her 'Museum on a Shoestring' which she brought along with her. This consisted of varied and long forgotten items in everyday use yesterday and included many amusing anecdotes.

On another occasion we were fortunate in having **Lt Col Rob Symmonds** talk to us on Saudi Arabia, with accompanying slides. He drew us a picture from the very considerable experience gained on his tour of duty in a country of which many of us know only what the media tells us.

We look forward now to our Spring Curry Luncheon which will be held at our usual venue of the Army Golf Club in Aldershot on Sunday 20 April at 12.30 for 1pm. The cost will be £9.50 and there will be a pay bar. Names with cheques payable to the Aldershot Branch of the RSA to be sent to **Lt Col D. Crookes OBE**, 110 Field Way, Aldershot, Hants. GU12 4UL. We hope again to see Members from other Branches and their friends.

CATTERICK AND DISTRICT BRANCH

The Branch was well represented at the Remembrance Service held in the Garrison Church on Sunday 10 November 1996. The Branch Standard, along with Royal British Legion Standard, was paraded and laid on the alter during the service. Wreaths were laid by the Garrison Commander and Commander 19 Mech Bde, **Brig A. D. A. Duncan DSO OBE**, The Royal British Legion and The Royal Signals Association.

At November's meeting of the Branch on the 22 November 1996 the Chairman **Maj Bill Barnes** presented the 50 year badge and certificate to **Mr Ernie Izod**.

Mr Ernie Izod and the Chairman Maj (Retd) W. A. Barnes

A well earned reward. **Ernie** is the Liaison Officer for the Branch and Royal British Legion with the Duchess of Kent Military Hospital, and Royal British Legion and SSAFA case worker for Richmond and Catterick.

With the kind permission of **WO1 (RSM) Dave Showell** the Branch held their Annual Dinner in the Sergeants' Mess, 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, Gaza Barracks on Friday 13 December 1996. Not a particularly auspicious date. However, a very successful and enjoyable evening was had by all.

Over eighty members and their ladies sat down to an excellent, well prepared and well presented four course dinner. Our guests were **Col Neil Donaldson OBE**, Dep. Comd. 19 Mech Bde, **Maj** and **Mrs Paul Towers**, OC 209 Sig Sqn and Branch President, **WO1 (RSM)** and **Mrs Dave Showell** and **WO2 (RQMS) John Gibson**. The Branch Social Secretary, who organised the function did admit to a certain degree of trepidation, his fears were groundless, as the Mess Manageress and her staff did a first class job of looking after everyone. We look forward to 1997 **Stan**!!

Thanks to **Mrs Jenny Todd** for her most generous donation of a Raffle prize.

Sadly we said our farewells to **Maj Paul** and **Susan Towers** and welcome **Maj Nick** and **Jo Pope** as our new President. The Branch also said farewell to **Maj Vic Prees** and **Stephanie**, stalwart members who leave Richmond for 'Foreign Climes' in Cornwall. We wish you all that you wish yourselves and look forward to visiting the Cornwall Branch when it is up and running.

COTSWOLDS BRANCH

As is usual, our December Branch Meeting was treated as a Social Evening when Members' Wives and the Widows of Member's joined us for a friendly evening of paper games and bingo organised by our Secretary **Mrs Marjorie Cropp** and including a wonderful Buffet prepared by the wife of the new Steward of the Victory Club, Cheltenham. Our grateful thanks to all of them.

We did have a short break during the evening from our socialising to hear our Chairman, **Maj Arthur Cropp** report on the new organisation for Blandford 1997.

The weekend programme follows very closely the suggestions we had put to the Central Committee in the general questionnaire and we are sure that there will be a good attendance from our Branch this year.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Sunday 8 December we held our 5th Annual Xmas Dinner and Dance at the Westgate Hall Canterbury. 87 members and wives attended. There were two innovations. Firstly, the city council were persuaded to reserve 30 places in the adjoining car park. These had to be 'defended' against marauders from 0800 hrs and three members of the committee took post in succession. **Gordon Alexander** preceding **John Ballantyne** who had drawn the short straw and was in the thick of it for the last stag. The second innovation, was to engage a musical group to play during the festive lunch and afterwards so that members could dance and shake it down. The group was unusual in that they played and sang not only in harmony, many of the favourites of the sixties such as the Seekers, but in such a way that both their music and conversations across the table could be enjoyed. Together with the high standard of food and service it made for a very enjoyable occasion to mark our fifth Year. **Eadie Thomas** and her team ran yet another successful raffle with many prizes being donated on the day by generous members. This was augmented by a subsidiary raffle for a cushion with the Corps Crest embroidered on it, donated by **Elisabeth Woodrow**.

Annual General Meeting–Sunday 12 January

The Chairman **Mr Roy Andrews** opened the meeting by welcoming all those members present including the new members. One of whom was **Mrs Marjorie Riggs** who needed little introduction, since she was the Assistant Editor of *The Wire* from 1982 to 1995 at RHQ, before it's move to Blandford. Someone was heard to say, 'Thank heavens–now we shall have a decent newsletter! Only joking **John'. Gerry** and **Marguerite Savage** were also welcomed. **Roy** then asked everyone to give **Maj Gen Yeoman**, Chairman of the RSA and **Mrs Yeoman** a warm welcome and thanked **Maj Gen Yeoman** for coming all the way from Dorset to speak to the Branch at the end of the AGM.

We were all very sad to see **Roy Andrews** vacate the Chair. He was a founder member of the committee, serving in succession as Social Secretary, Vice Chairman and Chairman. He is now the Area Representative on the RSA Central Committee so he is not done with us yet. A warm welcome was given to the new Chairman **Mr Trevor Allison**.

At the end of the meeting we had the pleasure of an address from the Chairman of the RSA. Sadly there is not the space to record the many hilarious anecdotes and jokes which punctuated the main theme, which was the Regular Corps, the Association and the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund. The Branch presented him with a tie and **Barbara** with a scarf. **Eadie Thomas** presented a cheque for The Benevolent Fund for £100. Lunch was well up to Westgate Hall Standard.

Lunch after the AGM

EAST LONDON BRANCH

1996 was for the Branch somewhat of an eventful year. We started off by reaffirming the Branch membership. This required all hands to the pump. It was a very large task but by the Branch's AGM we had established that we had some 80 active members, and the Branch is still growing, by November 8 more had joined our ranks. The Annual Dinner/ Dance was held in March, although numbers were low, much merry making was had by all.

Many thanks to **Rob Dyball** and **Linda May** for all their hard work. Some of the members attended Blandford and other Corps events last year, but who knows this year we might even fill a bus for the Reunion!!

At our pre Christmas bash, which was well attended by 150 members and friends, a very special event took place at the end of the evening. Our Standard Bearer paraded our Standard for the last time. Ex-**Sgt Fred Backhouse** had reluctantly hung up his gloves for the last time, after 30 years service to the Branch as Standard Bearer. This sterling service was recognised by the presentation of a tankard from all the Branch members. **Fred** is seen in the photograph handing over the standard to **Rob Dyball** the Branch Social Secretary, who will try to emulate **Fred**'s outstanding work as Standard Bearer. Well done **Fred** and thank you.

Ted Oliver would be delighted to hear from his old comrades in the 75th AA Bde Sig Sect, who were in Normandy and Belgium during 1944 to 1945. Please telephone him on 01843 593906.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH

The Liverpool Branch RSA held their annual buffet evening on Thursday 12 December 1996 at the Merseyside Garrison WOs and Sergeants Mess, Daysbrook Lane, Liverpool, with the kind permission of **WO1 Dale Ikin**.

The Branch guests for the evening were, **Maj (Rtd) Chris Reynold-Jones** and his wife **Bridget**, **Chris** being the RSA Representative for area two. Also invited was the **Rev John William**, Padre of 33 Sig Regt (V). There were some 46 attendees and a most enjoyable evening was had by all. The food was of the most excellent standard and our thanks must be extended to **Mrs Maureen Bennet**, Mess Manager and her staff.

Branch Chairman George Power presenting a bouquet to Bridget with Chris looking on

NORFOLK BRANCH

The Norfolk Branch continues to hold well attended monthly meetings on the second Saturday every month except August, at the TA Centre on the Aylsham Road, Norwich, 10.30 hrs. If any Members from other Branches would like to visit us they would be made most welcome and regaled. We recently held a social evening for Members, Wives and Families, entertainment and a buffet was laid on and it all made for a enjoyable evening. The buffet was prepared by **Kevin** and **Nancy Barnard** who are the Stewards of the TA Centre and they do a really excellent job for the Branch which is much appreciated by the Members.

President, **Don Ellingworth** and Parade Marshal, **Gordon Royall** were recently presented with sashes of office suitably embellished with 'Corps' insignia. The sashes were presented by Secretary, **Brian C. Gibbs**. The two recipients said that they would wear them with pride.

The Branch has been lucky lately in having some excellent speakers at meetings. Recent speakers were **Mr Norman Batey** who had been a Member of the famous Dam Busters Squadron and spoke of his days at Bomber Command, and a **Mr John Miller** who spoke on the enigmatic events that took place at a small Hamlet in Suffolk during the last war called Shingle Street when a lot of bodies were supposedly washed up on the beach (British and German). It is still covered by the Official Secrets Act and won't be released until some time after the year 2000. However, the speaker was of the opinion that it was all a propaganda exercise. At our last meeting due to a lack of a speaker our Vice Chairman, **Frank Mortlock**, introduced a sort of round robin whereby about six Members stood up and related some short stories of their service days, this proved to be hilarious and had the Branch in stitches.

With our A.G.M. coming on the 8 March, it looks like it's going to be a very busy year. Several outings have been planned and the Branch will attend the reunion at Blandford along with it's Standard which will be carried by our Deputy Standard bearer **Peter Basted** who stands in for our regular Standard bearer **Barry Robinson**.

Our Branch Dinner takes place this year on the 26 April when the Guest of Honour will be Member **Richard Phelan** who is also Chairman of the Norfolk County Council. All enquiries to Secretary **Brian C. Gibbs**, 01263 720827.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED
Copy must be received six weeks before the publication date

POOLE BRANCH

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Fifty-five diners celebrated Poole Branch's Christmas festivities at a dinner held at the Royal British Legion Club in Broadstone during December. Association Members and their ladies from Dorset Branch were welcomed and the principal guests were **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman**, (Association Chairman) and **Mrs Yeoman** and the Corps RSM, **WOI Derek Deegan** and **Mrs Deegan** also **Brig** 'Paddy' **Evans**.

Poole Branch President, presented a £50 cheque to **Gen Yeoman** as a contribution to the Corps Benevolence Fund. A vote of thanks was given to **Mr Jimmy Logan** for organising the very successful event.

(*L to R*) Brig Evans, Maj Gen Yeoman and Mr Logan

SWINDON BRANCH

The Swindon Branch recently held two Social Evenings. These were the first social events since we were formed in May.

The first was a Branch Social Evening with skittles and a fiendish Quiz thought up by the organisers. Everyone is looking forward to the next. We then had an informal get together with the local branch of the RE Association, which proved very helpful with offers of help and assistance if needed.

Our President **Lt Col (Retd) D. Gent** welcomed the guests and recalled Joint Mess Nights of days gone by. The photograph is of Members and Partners at the recent Social Evening.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

You will have heard all about our annual church parade at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and the success of the curry lunch afterwards, this from **Maj Ron Miller** in his notes from 31 Sig Regt, his last Regiment prior to retiring. **Dusty** was also our late Chairman (always pushed but never late, another in-house joke).

Our Christmas Party was most enjoyable, with music and dancing and an excellent buffet produced by our Ladies Section, to whom we owe a great deal for the success of the occasion.

Our Annual Dinner & Dance will be held on Friday 25 April 1997 at the Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow at 7 for 7.30pm. The cost will be £18 exclusive of drinks. Names and cheques payable to the W. London Branch of the RSA to **Mr J. E. Carsons**, 19b Warwick Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 9BZ.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON (TRIPOLITANIA) OCA

There has been no scheduled meeting of the branch since September, but it is accepted within 219 that any two members with a foot on the bar rail constitutes a quorum. With this in mind, **Terry** and **Muriel** ventured North of the Border to stay with **Tom** and **Effie Leslie**, for a quiet couple of days, accompanied by a whisky or two. The sore heads can be blamed on something in the water. Tom has a collection of military memorabilia second to none. I'm sure he would like to hear from interested members regards swops etc.

Congratulations to **Pat Andrews** on receiving her honorary life membership, and a triple celebration for **Muriel Hearldon** on receiving life membership, pension book and bus pass.

A reminder to all to book accommodation for the September reunion. Please contact **Terry** regarding Blandford reunion in June.

NEWS FROM THE AO's DESK

NEWS FOR APR 1997

Corps Carol Service. Last December seems like long ago now, but on the 19th around 90 Corps members, past and present enjoyed the annual Carol Service at Westminster. The choir was especially formed for the occasion from members of the Corps, Regular, Territorial and Retired, their families and friends, you would have thought that they had been together for years, such was the superb result. The readings were given by **Sig L. K. McLeay** (71 Sig Regt), **WO2 (RQMS) T. Singleton** (238 Sig Sqn), **Maj T. E. M. Bradley** (31 Sig Regt), **Col D. A. Lynam MBE** (MoD), **Brig N. F. Wood** (SOinC(A)) and the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle CB CBE DL**. Special thanks go to **Lt Col John Chambers**, (as Director of Music and Master of the Choristers) and the Vicar of St Stephen's, **Rev Ralph Godsall**, for their efforts in putting the whole event together. Anyone who attended could not have failed to be impressed by the fine organ playing of 17 year old **Tom Williamson**, doesn't it make you sick–so young and so gifted! There were several new faces there, but old faithfuls, like **Alan Foot, Pauline Tennant, Tom Seddon, Dave Greenbrook** and **John Templeton** made an appearance. **Ida Harvey** couldn't be kept from helping out afterwards in the kitchen with the sherry and mince pies. Make a note, this year's Carol Service (the 10th at St Stephens) will be on Thursday 18 December. The Church is only 15 minutes walk from Victoria Station.

BRANCH NEWS

The dialling code for READING has changed–the Hon Secretary, **Pauline Tennant**, can now be contacted on 0118-9861130. Congratulations to the Lincoln Branch who celebrate their 21st Anniversary in May. Anyone who attended the inaugural meeting, and is currently not an active branch member, might like to give the Hon Secretary, **Frank Robinson**, a call on 01522-543020. Congratulations to **Frank Mitchell** of the Langeleben Reunion Branch for getting eight entries (at the same time) in January, on the teletext 'Service Pals' pages.

ATTENTION SECRETARIES

Could those branches who have yet to forward a list of members (as per rule 30) please get theirs to RHQ soonest.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting for 1997 will be held at Venning Barracks, Donnington on Saturday 19 April. Pre meeting coffee from 1000 hrs, and the meeting starts at 1100 hours. All RSA members are welcome to attend and to enjoy an after meeting pint and buffet.

BRITISH FORCES GERMANY COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

The Royal British Legion has struck this medal to commemorate service with British Forces in Germany between 1945 and 1989, and it is available to all servicemen and women. The German national colours rest between equal vertical bands of NATO blue on the 32mm standard ribbon. The medal will be engraved with the owners number, rank, name and initials, and should be worn after or below official awards. Proceeds of the sale will go to RBL to assist their work with disabled ex-service personnel. The BFG medal costs £27.95 and the miniature medal £15.50 (includes p&p). Application forms can be obtained from; The Royal British Legion Supplies, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL.

A POTTED HISTORY OF RSA BRANCHES.

In the wake of recent research into which branches are entitled to parade a '50 Year' pennant on it's standard, the following potted history of The Association's early years, may be of interest to members.

Introduction: Although the minutes of the very first meeting of the Central Committee in 1920 are still archived, the records of the meetings from then until 1960 have been lost. In an attempt to record the history of the branches a precis of information has been taken from *The Wire*. It is recorded as faithfully as possible, but it must be appreciated that many of the earlier entries were haphazard. For example, a branch would publish a report on it's monthly meeting, but there would be no previous mention of the branch ever being formed. Additionally, there is rarely a mention of a branch's demise. Any disagreements with the details should be taken up with the author of the original article in *The Wire*, not yours truly.

'The Beginning': The Association came into being in June 1920 as the 'Royal Engineers Old Comrades Association Signals Branch'. The inaugural meeting of the 'Signals Association' was held on 14th December 1920 at Elverton Street, Westminster. **W. Butler** was secretary.

1921: March, Representatives from the following areas were invited to form branches; Exeter, Liverpool, Derby, Glasgow, Bulford, Belfast, Taunton, Rhine Army, London, Maresfield Park Camp and Crowborough. 9 April, first reunion concert for 'All Signals past and present' held in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, Ludgate Circus. June, Chingford Branch opened with 200 members. As at August, branch membership figures were:–

HQ - 192	Maresfield - 113
Crowborough - 63	Belfast - 23
Liverpool - 20	Colchester - 5
3rd London Corps Signals - 63	2nd Cavalry Div Signals - 57
Aldershot - 15	Cairo - 13
56th London Div Signals - 12	Ex Signal Service Assoc - 92

Three new branches formed in December–Liverpool Post Office, Cork and District, 47th (London) Div Signals.

1922: September, List of branches formed:

Aldershot, Belfast, Birmingham, Cork, Crowborough, Chelsea SW, Colchester, Chiswick W, London W, Fulham, Edinburgh, Bulford, Westminster, Constantinople, Cairo, Peshawar, STC Maresfield, Liverpool.

Prospective branches, not yet formed:

Nottingham, Manchester, Exeter, Cardiff, Leeds, Derby, Jubbulpore, Bristol, Rhine Signals, Sunderland.

1923: February, Nottingham Branch held it's first annual dinner at the Albert Hotel. March, Jubbulpore Branch sanctioned and boasts over 200 members. September, Constantinople Branch disbands on account of evacuation of the British Forces in Turkey. Rawalpindi Branch opened with 124 members.

1924: July, Bannu (India) branch formed. **Sig F. Cole** is Hon Secretary, **Cpl J. T. Parsons** is Hon Treasurer, President is **CSM Chitty DCM.** September Belfast Branch renamed the Northern Ireland Branch.

1925: January, India, Rhine, Egypt, Singapore, Malta Branches reported as 'going strong'. March, Manchester Branch formed at 42 Div Sigs TA HQ, Burlington Street, Manchester. Hon Secretary was **Sgt J. McVittie**.

1926: January, The newly formed 'East London Branch' is welcomed into the Association. They are connected with the 54 (EA) Div Sigs at Stratford E15. First meeting held on 1 December 1925. President–**Lt Col E. A. Edwards**, Hon Sec–**CSM C. J. Sharp**, Hon Treasurer–**Capt J. McConville**. Manchester Branch reports around 200 members. Hong Kong Branch formed with 11 members. February, The newly formed Baghdad Branch was welcomed. The whole of the Signal Training Centre at Catterick (1300 ORs) pay 9d per man per month to become RSA members–the first reported case of automatic stoppages from each man's account. April, Edinburgh Branch elects **Lt Col J. S. Muirhead DSO MC** as President and **Sgt Ross** as Secretary/Treasurer. June, B Cavalry Brigade Sig Tp Branch, Sialkot, formed. **Capt Neale** as President and **Sig Mayson** as Hon Secretary/Treasurer. The November *Wire* listed the following branches and reps:

STC Catterick	Capt S. C. R. Usher MC
A Corps Sigs, Ewshott	Capt C. K. Thursby-Pelham MC
Aldershot Command Signals	Capt A. C. Sykes DSO OBE
Manchester	Sgt J. McVittie
Edinburgh	Sgt W. Ross
Fulham	Sgt L. F. Moorse
Chiswick	Mr J. Horner
Dover	Mr C. C. Cronin
Belfast	L/Sgt Hall
Brighton	CSM P. Brown
Westminster	RSM E. Shepherd
Newcastle	Lt L. V. Younie
Chatham	Lt F. A. S. Atterton
1 Div Signals, Aldershot	CSM R. Keevil
2 Div Signals, Aldershot	Sgt N. Grant
3 Div Signals, Bulford	Lt C. A. Oliver MC
4 Div Signals, Colchester	LCpl L. F. Andrews
Larkhill	Sgt W. Nicks
Cardiff	Capt L. C. Bell MC
Stratford, East London	CSM C. J. Sharpe
Blackdown	CSM A. Hunt
A Div Signals, Peshawar	Cpl F. G. Smithers
B Div Signals, Quetta	Sgt S. Dolbear
C Div Signals, Dera Ismail Khan	Sig H. W. Hutchinson
Rawalpindi	Lt E. Levett
E Div Signals, Meerut	Cpl D. McMillan
F Div Signals, Kohat	Sgt W. D. Peerless
G Div Signals & STC, Jubbulpore	Sgt H. P. Bell
A Corps Signals, Karachi	LSgt A. R. Godbold
Egypt	Sgt W. Markham
Malta	Sig W. Vise
Sarafind & Palestine	Capt T. B. Ferriday
Rhine	Cpl A. McDowell
B Cavalry Tp, Sialkot	Sig B. O. Mayson
Singapore	Sig Bond
Sierra Leone	CQMS G. E. Sweeney
Burmuda	CQMS Simmonds
Baghdad	LCpl F. Brudenell
Hong Kong	Sig A. Durand.

1927: 5 October, the first AGM of the Signals Association was held at 95 Belgrave Rd, Victoria, London at 2.30pm.

1928: May, new Branch 'C Cavalry brigade Signal Troop' in Meerut, India formed. Hon Secretary was **Sig E. Hatcher**. June: New branch 'Cavalry Div Signals', Assaye Bks, Tidworth formed by **Capt C. A. Oliver**. September, 1st Indian Div Signals, Rawalpindi Branch formed.

1930: March , the following branches and secretaries were listed:

STC Catterick	Capt J. H. Brown MM
Aldershot	RSM J. Wigglesworth
Bulford	Capt T. H .L. Turner
Colchester	Sgt F .S. Andrews
Cavalry Div Signals, Tidworth	Lt C. G. Moore
E Tp Cavalry Div Signals, Tidworth	'OC Tp'
Belfast	'OC Victoria Bks'
South Irish Coast Defence Signals	OC Spike Island, Queenstown
Malta Signals Section	Sgt White, Valletta
Hong Kong Signal Section	OC Wellington Bks
Malaya Signal Section	Sgt A. Keane, Pulau Brani
Jamaica Signal Section	CQMS A. White, Up Park Camp
Palestine	Capt R.C. Instrall, Sarafind
Egypt Signals	Sgt A.E. Bawden, Cairo
Shanhai Signal Section	L/Sgt W. Church
North China Signal Section	CQMS C. Goodridge, Tientsin
A Corps Signals, Karachi	L/Sgt J.G. Smithers
B Corps Signals, Rawalpindi	Sgt R.H. Collyer
1st Indian Div Signals, Rawalpindi	Sgt A.E. Lawson
2nd Indian Div Signals, Quetta	L/Sgt L.C. Jarvis
3rd Indian Div Signals, Meerut	Cpl Gibson
4th Indian Div Signals, Trimulgherry	LCpl W.C. Ede
STC, Jubbulpore	Sgt R. Hunt
Peshawar District Signals	Cpl A. Grant MM
Kohat District Signals	Sgt W.D. Peerless
Waziristan District Signals	OC Dera Ismail Khan
No 1 Cavalry Bde Signal Tp, Risalpur	L/Sgt Manning
No 2 Cavalry Bde Signal Tp, Sialkot	Sig W. Hodge
No 3 Cavalry Bde Signal Tp, Meerut	OC Meerut
Rhine Signals	Sgt W.S. Crockford
No 4 Arty Sect	OC Piershill Bks, Edinburgh
Chatham Area Signal Section	Lt F.A.S. Atterton RE
Dover Signal Squadron	Mr C.C. Cronin, HQ Gun Wharf

A meeting was held on 15 December 1930 in the London Hotel, Fisherton Street, Salisbury, where some 20 old pals met to bring into being an OCA. The following committee were elected; Chairman **Col R.H. Willan DSO MC**, Hon Treasurer **Capt L. C. Bell MC**, Hon Secretary **Mr Frederick Cole**.

1931: 18/19 July, Aldershot Branch held their first official reunion at Mons Bks, Aldershot. November: Glasgow Branch formed. Hon Secretary **CSM S. T. Cozens**. First meeting held at 21 Jardine Street on Friday 16 October 1931. 75 members attended and **Col J. S. Muirhead DSO MC TD** was chairman. July, 5 Div Sigs OCA opened in 'the North of England'.

1935: Birmingham Branch hold their first meeting on 30 January, at the Crown Hotel, Corporation Street, Birmingham. Secretary was **Lt B. J. Rowe MM**, Chairman was **Col W. Martineau MC TD**. The first meeting of the Southampton-Portsmouth branch was held on 19th January. In March, Exeter Branch held their second meeting, in the chair was **Col W. G. Michelmore DSO MC TD**. 6 March: Southampton-Portsmouth Branch held it's introductory dinner at the Imperial Restaurant, Portsmouth. Birmingham Branch held its first reunion parade on May 6, with 62 members marching past the Lord Mayor and the GOC 48th (SM) Division. July, The Chester Branch was reported as having been recently opened. Chairman **Lt Col F. R. Cobb MC**, Secretary **Sgt H. Ring**.

1936: 150 members attended a meeting on 20 February, when the Leeds Branch elected **Lt Col C. Campbell MBE** as Vice President and **Mr C. W. Green** as Secretary. Provisional sanction was given in October for the formation of a branch at Darlington.

1937: In January the 'Northern Command Branch' appears as 'Northern Command (Leeds) Branch'. In May first mention of 2nd Cavalry Division Signals TA (Middlesex Yeomanry).

1938: In February Bournemouth Branch inaugurated. Secretary **Mr S. J. Rouse**, Chairman & Treasurer **Maj J. C. Bray OBE**. Meetings held in the Drill Hall, Holdenhurst Rd. March, 'York and Northern Counties' listed as being an active branch. July, Leeds Branch reported as being 'firmly established with 65 members. Meetings held in the canteen, Gibraltar Bks. **Capt J. G. Parry** 'at the helm'.

1939: March, Aberdeen branch formed under chairmanship of **Col R. J. Nichol**, with 51 members. Secretary **Mr C. F. Andrews**. The Glossop and District OCA was born of 46 NM Divisional Signals when **Lt Col G. J. Underwood** 'raised his standard (the Corps Flag)' on the steps of Glossop Town Hall. They meet in the Rutland Arms in Bakewell.

Details of Branch News throughout the war years was not recorded. It is hoped to publish the post war history in a later issue.

The National Ex-Services Association Newspaper (NESA). The author, publisher and ex-serviceman **Arthur Lane**, has formed the National Ex-Services Association, which is open to all ex-service and serving personnel, together with the relatives of those who are no longer with us. The Association aims to give support to ex-servicemen and women who seek redress, compensation, or service pensions from the state, through it's legal department. It also aims to publish details of reunions and similar events and to help in resettlement and assist in finding suitable employment. For further details, send an A5 size SAE to **Arthur Lane**, 61 Charles Street, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3JR.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following former signallers, who have joined The Association as life members since the last *Wire*. (The old

and bold should note that the 'W' preceding the rank is not for 'War', but stands for 'Woman'). Hopefully, those under 'RHQ Branch' have joined, or will join, their local branch. The Association could not run without the valuable support of the branches. If you are not already a member of your local branch, why not make contact, a warm welcome is assured.

Former rank	Name	Branch	Served
Sig	F. R. Dykes	RHQ	1948-49
Dvr	J. F. Baxter	RHQ	1942-46
Sig	J. Hickey	RHQ	1948-49
WSi	C. S. Robinson	East London	1992-96
WSig	I. M. Gibson	RHQ	1988-96
Sig	G. Oldfield	RHQ	1942-47
Sig	J. F. White	RHQ	1944-48
Cpl	E. H. Stubbings	RHQ	1947-49
WPte	M. P. Evans(neé Armstrong)	RHQ	1948-40
Sgt	K. H. Hind	RHQ	1942-47
Sig	J. A. Freeman	RHQ	1947-49
Lt	P. C. Blake	RHQ	1993-96
Lt Col	I. O. Robertson	RHQ	1973-96
Maj	E. J. Banham	RHQ	1982-96
Sig	A. H. Crittell	RHQ	1939-46
WO2	J. H. Lancaster	RHQ	1939-52
Cpl	T. Hughes	12/15/18 AFSR	1954-60
Sig	A. E. Oakley	RHQ	1951-53
Capt	C. Wareing	RHQ	1940-46
LCpl	K. J. Brace	Reading	1989-date
Sig	D. A. Cavey	RHQ	1945-48
Cpl	L. N. Coles	RHQ	1984-96
LCpl	S. R. Richardson	RHQ	1987-96
Lt Co	J. H. Lowe	RHQ	1962-97
Sgt	J. E. Rush	Southampton	1938-46
Sig	D. C. Ward	RHQ	1942-46
WPte	P. Ward(neé Ibbetson)	RHQ	1942-45
Lt	J. Blacker	Cardiff	1942-48
Cpl	F. A. Turner	RHQ	1944-51
Sgt	M. McCafferty	Dorset	1969-94
Sgt	D. J. Dummett	Dorset	1968-92
Sig	L. J. Fitzpatrick	Bournemouth	1941-46
Maj	M. J. Cartwright	RHQ	1962-97
Lt Col	D. Strong	RHQ	1962-97
Cpl	J. M. Douglas	RHQ	1974-97
Sig	T. P. Davis	West London	1955-57
LCpl	D. C. Muggeridge	West London	1945-48
Sgt	S. V. Harcourt	RHQ	1942-46
Cpl	R. D. Barton	RHQ	1986-97
LCpl	T. J. Baldwin	RHQ	1986-97
Lt Col	A. F. Browne	RHQ	1962-97

REUNIONS

602 ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

Last year on 20th April the AOF met once again for our tenth reunion which took place at Puckrup Hall Hotel and Golf Club, Tewkesbury. Eighty plus members and their ladies attended the reunion at this excellent hotel. In the morning those who could played a round of golf In the meanwhile the rest of us used the Health Centre facilities and either swam or melted away in the steam room.

2000hrs arrived far too quickly and it was time to sit down to dinner and of course the speeches. Our Chairman, **Ken Purnell** straight away informed us that after ten years in office he and **Dave Hay**, our Treasurer, were handing over their posts to **Mike Hope**, as new Chairman, and **Jim Mullen** was taking over as Treasurer. We then had an update by **Maj Gorden Duncan** of how the Ex Troop is coping with it's new role in life as 1 Sig Sqn (SC).

As usual the war stories and drinking went on until the early hours of the morning with us all agreeing that we would meet again next year ; wherever it might be. I am pleased to report that the next reunion will be held at Waterton Park Hotel, Walton, Wakefield, W. Yorks, Tel: 01924 257911. All members who wish to attend the next reunion which will be held on Saturday 19 April are, as usual, asked to book their own accommodation direct with the hotel, so please don't delay and book early for the dinner. For further information please contact either our new Chairman, **Mike Hope** on 01226 762410 or our Secretary, **Jim Brown** on 01425 506002. We look forward to seeing both old and new faces at Wakefield.

We are sorry to report the death of one of our members ex **Capt George Stubbings** who died suddenly on the 5 November 1996. **George** was a giant of a man and known throughout to all the old and bold of the Troop. Our dearest thoughts and condolences go out to his wife **Else** and the family.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of **Sam Kennard** (also R Signals 'Ham'). Please contact our Chairman, on 01226 762510 URGENTLY.

GET IN TOUCH

Ex/WO L. C. Hall would like, if possible, to contact **Sig** 'Tommy' **Thomas** who served with him in Bannu and Razmak, 1937-1940. Please contact him at 2 Linthorpe Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2EE.

Mr William L. Wrightson of 237 Brookwood Avenue, Easton, Maryland 21601, USA, would like to hear from any of his former pals from his time at 2 Wireless Regiment (later 9 Sig Regt) at Farmagusta, Cyprus in the late 1950s. **Bill** was an American, attached to the staff.

ROYAL SIGNALS WHITE HELMETS DISPLAY TEAM 70th ANNIVERSARY REUNION BLANDFORD JUNE 1997

A reunion of all serving/ex members of
THE WHITE HELMETS
is to be held at Blandford on Saturday 28th June 1997.

The reunion will mark the 70th Anniversary of the team and will be open to wives/girlfriends.

For further details write/fax:

Officer Commanding White Helmets
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 8RH
Fax 01258 482770 Tel: 01258 482365
Mil: Blandford Mil 2770 Blandford Mil 2365

JUNIOR LEADERS' REGIMENT

ROYAL SIGNALS DENBURY, NEWTON ABBOT

It is proposed to hold the triennial reunion in and around Newton Abbot on 26 and 27 September 1997. The form of the reunion to regular attendees will be much the same as before with two or three events:

Friday 26 September (evening)–buffet and social evening at the Newton Abbot Conservative Club, Union Street, Newton Abbot.

Saturday 27 September (lunchtime)–to be arranged.

Saturday 27 September (evening)–visit to Channings Wood Prison (ex Denbury Camp) which will include a tour of the camp, Church Service and evening in the Prison Warder's Mess.

Full details will be circulated to those on the mailing list in early April. If anyone else is interested would they please contact:
Sam Ward, Egwood, 56 Seymour Road
Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2PU.
Tel: 01626-52101 or 01392-51056.

Accommodation can normally be arranged at reasonable prices.

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Mrs Valerie Waters is trying to contact anybody who served in 2 Squadron, HQ BOAR, Signals Regiment, Bad Oeynhausen BAOR 1, from 1949 to 1950.
She can be contacted at: Tan Hinon, Old Hall, Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6PR. Tel: 01686 413355

56 DIV (CITY OF LONDON SIGNALS) OCA BRANCH

The Branch has kept up a steady pace of reunions and events during 1996, the last of which was the Annual Dinner. This was held at the Union Jack Club in Waterloo on Friday 29 November and was attended by 56 Members and guests. Our guest of honour was the SOinC, **Brig N. F. Wood**. Another notable guest was **Lt Col Weston**, CO of 31 Sig Regt (V), the successor Regt to 56 Div Signals.

Lt Col Ralph Lewin, the Branch President, welcomed the guests. **Brig Wood**, in responding, gave the assembled company an update on the state of the Corps which, despite manning difficulties, was performing well in trouble spots throughout the world. In particular he mentioned the TA involvement in Bosnia where some of 31 Regt are currently serving. The place name raffle, won by **Lt Col Don Grocott**, raised £34 for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

The next event is the AGM to be held at 83 Sig Sqn (V) in Mercury House at the Duke of York's HQ, Chelsea, on 2 March. This will be closely followed by the Dispatch Officers' Section Dinner/Dance at Eastbourne on 12 April. This will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the first performance of the display team. Their last, or most recent, performance was at the Royal Tournament in July 1996.

The Branch is just over 100 strong and would welcome enquiries from potential members, especially any ex-City of London Signals (including 332 (City of London) Signals Squadron which used to be based in Atkins Road, Balham), about membership or Branch events. Enquiries please to **Steve Bland**, Hon Sec, 56 Div (City of London Signals) OCA Branch, 222 Wickham Road, Croydon, CRO 8BJ.

CATTERICK 1938 SQUAD 22 DI Cpl Carr (RamRod)

Is there anybody out there?

If there is, please contact **Donald Ellingworth**
15 Spindle Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 6JR
Tel: 01603 405487
I can't be the only one left. Can I?

Mr Kenneth Dawe is seeking contact with his former signaller pals from ME8 GSI, (part of SOE) where they worked in the radio station at the Pyramids. The period was April 1942 to March 1945. They worked in Ruston Building and lived at 86 Kast-el-Eini. Some of the names **Kenneth** recalls are: **Ken Marshall, Lt Fild, Sampson** and **Haskell**. Please contact **Kenneth** at 35 Saxville Road, Orpington, Kent BR5 3AN.

COMMUNICATIONS QUALIFYING COURSE 11 REUNION

CQ 11 formed up in Blandford on 7 November 1977. It is proposed to hold a reunion at Blandford over the weekend of 1 - 2 November 1997. By the time this issue of *The Wire* hits the streets most members of the Course should have already had a letter, but there are five whose addresses are a mystery.

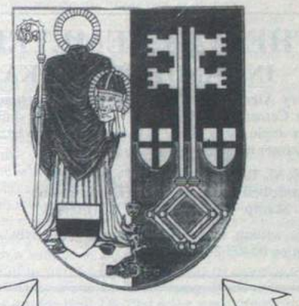
Does anyone know where any of the following may be found:

C.E. Cox (Chris) A.J.R. Kite (Alan)
S. Lockie (Stuart) C. Owen(Chris)
N.A. Swainson (Neil).

Lt Col Bernard Barton-Ancliffe is coordinating the event and would be grateful to receive news of the vanished, and any other Course member. He can be found at:
Comms Branch
HQ ARRC
BFPO 40
Tel: JHQ Mil 5653 (0049 2161 5655653)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW??

Are there any ex-Members of: 1 Company, 8 Army Signals 1945/47 still about? 175 and 10 Linr Troops in Italy and Austria, Klagenfurt and Vienna.
If there are please contact: **Mr B. Harber**
32 Argyle Street, Swindon, Wilts SN2 6AR
Tel: 01793 523256



60s 16'ers
BRADBURY BARRACKS

Did you serve with **16 Sig Regt**, in **Krefeld** during the **60s** and would like to meet/contact old friends?
Send SAE to Chris Bartlett, 45 Whitehouse Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 5SR

From: **John McKenzie McKay**
Dear Sir,

I am trying to trace an old colleague of mine **John** 'Buck' **Ryan**, we served together in the Royal Corps of Signlas, in Palestine and Malta. We travelled together to Cairo in 1942, **John** went to OCTU and I believe he may have received his commission in 1943.

We did not meet again until late 1943 at Catterick Camp, on arrival from the Middle East via Cape Town and Glasgow. The Troop Ship was the *Strathaird* and at that time I was a Lt in the Royal Signals.

Details to hand:			
	Catterick Camp	1935/36	RCS No: 2324
	Palestine	1937/39	
	Malta	1939/42	
	Cairo	1942	to OTCU
	Commissioned	1943	
	Catterick Camp	1943	

Sorry the details are scarce but hope someone may be able to help in some way if they can please contact me at:
19 Deancourt Drive
New Duston
Northampton NN5 6PY
Many thanks, in hopeful anticipation.
Yours sincerely
John McKenzie McKay

From: **Dave Wheater**
Dear Editor,

I wonder if you could help me get in touch with a few pals who are still serving in the Corps? I served for four years at 28 (BR) Sig Regt, from 1990 to 1994, which is now 280 (UK) Sig Sqn BFPO 35 and for two years in 216 (Para) Sig Sqn. I am trying to get in touch with **LCpl Jase Dukes** of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, whom I believe is still there but may be attached to Sarajevo (BPLTN LSC Trans Coy), according to February's *Wire*. Also **Sig Peter Higgins** who served, at the BAOR Expedition Base Sardinia, with me in 1993. He was from 14 Sig Regt MT.

I would also like to congratulate **WO2 John Fisher**, 280 Sig Sqn, on his well deserved promotion and also **LCpl** 'Mozzie' **Collins** on his promotion.

I would appreciate it if you would publish this in the April *Wire*. Thank you very much.

Regards ex-**Cpl Dave Wheater**

CALLING ALL EX-BOY SOLDIERS

from Harrogate and Beverley

Would you please come to my assistance in compiling a history of the contribution that Boy Soldiers made to the Corps History in the past.

Needed: Photographs, stories and reminiscences of your time as a Boy Soldier.
Photographs will be returned after copying.

Please contact: **Harry Bishop**
27 Dent View, Egremont, Cumbria CA22 2ET
Tel: 01946 822839

CORRESPONDENCE

THE WAR CEMETERY
IN KANDY, SRI LANKA

Mr Garry Aird has sent to RHQ, some fine photographs of the Kandy War Cemetery in Sri Lanka. They include shots of the main gates, wider angle shots of the gardens, and of the headstones of the following former members of the Corps:

CQMS S. M. Taylor	**LCpl J. R. Hoyal**
Sig S. Campbell	**LCpl L. Jamieson**
Cpl E. J. Stamp	**Sig T. L. Mitchell**

Garry is willing to provide copies for relatives of the above. Contact him on 01403 261696.

15 Signal Regiment - ADEN - 1965/67

Would any officer who served in this Regiment and who possesses one of the "Cat" brooches made by Garrards please contact:

Maj (Retd) Keith Rothwell
Am Deich 16
D - 26676 BARSSEL
Germany

Mrs Else Graham, wife of the late **SSgt Gus Graham (Retd)**, would be pleased to hear from any of **Gus**'s friends and colleagues that he worked with during his time in the Corps.
Correspondence to: **Mrs Else Graham**
Stiftskamp 20
32049 Herford
GERMANY

PURCHASE of No: 4 DRESS UNIFORM

I urgently need to purchase a No: 4 Dress Uniform, size Jacket 40 chest and trousers 34 waist/34 inside leg. I already possess a pair of trousers, so if you have only the jacket to fit me this would still be most useful.
Please contact **Maj Stephen Croft** on Tel: 0032 2 7820977
Fax: 0032 2 7319265

From : **Norman Riley**
Dear Editor,

Catching sight of the K9 being hoisted into its display spot in the Museum, (*The Wire*, February page 13), reminded me of, not my first meeting with the K9 which was when we designed and installed some Radio-relay/ I+4s stations while operating with NATO, but later when the D11 stations were sent to our TA unit (49 Yorkshire Sig Regt TA) and I built a system to combat the earlier modification from double-current to single as we had several Creed printer stations and only the two, (inside the D11 station) Seimens. All good honest fun and proven to be overloaded, even then.

We had been instructed to hitch the power-unit to a separate prime-mover, but everyone concerned chickened out of driving the D11 back from camp (Scarborough to York) after apparently a troubled trip out. Flattery, gets some folk anywhere and I was coaxed with 'The old man says you're the only one he'll trust with it.' into taking the complete station home. I heard it took three drivers to get the other one back! Mine did not like the hold-ups caused by the usual Malton bottleneck, but a bottle of the cooling nectar set me to rights in York. I think Dick Turpin got there quicker.

Why did I succumb? The Foreman, they say–like *, my brother, Sylvest–I can do anything (Except type?).

Sorry I haven't the gadget I built up to put in the museum, but you can have an old and very much used Foreman. If you wish to date me (a la carbon 14!) I found my rifle on 3 September 1939 just in time to be in at the beginning. That was at Gandale camp–(Catterick.) I wonder who will remember that. In any case it is one of many stories there are to tell.

My best wishes with the museum project and to all at–well, anywhere; though perhaps especially the School. 'Tis a while since I taught at the old one!

From: **E. T. Oliver**
Dear Editor

I found the letter relating to 'Ships Signallers' in the February copy of *The Wire* fascinating. It just goes to show how service life proves useful later in life and in my case, saved my life.

Also trained as an Owl B3 in Catterick 1942 I went on to become an Owl B2 serving in Normandy, NW Europe and the Middle East and became proficient in many of the functions of the R Signals. Having had Morse crammed into me I've never forgotten it.

Many years later, in 1979, I was sailing around the South East coast when my yacht struck an obstruction and foundered. I had made sure that I had all safety equipment on board, including a hand held trigger operated Aldis Lamp. The radio was already submerged before we could send out an SOS but, standing on the boom, I was able to signal a distress call with the Aldis Lamp which was spotted by a keen eyed person on the Essex shore. He alerted the Southend RNLI and a lifeboat arrived in time to pick us both out of the sea.

It was a harrowing experience but if it were not for my Aldis Lamp and R Signals training, I would probably not be writing this letter. By the way, the yacht was lost.

From: **Ron Larby**
Dear Editor

Perhaps through the medium of *The Wire* some of your readers can answer the following query which stems from my borrowing from my local library, 'Go To It'. An illustrated history of the 6th Airborne Division by **Peter Harclerode**.

One photograph shows the officers and RSM of the Divisional Signals Regiment taken with the Princess Royal. An RSA colleague, **Arthur Stone**, formerly of the Regiment, believes that the photo was taken at Bulford Camp, September 1943. The interesting point of the photo is that whilst **RSM Carr** is wearing the old type badge, (ie: 'Mercury' in a ring), the officers are wearing the new, present day style of badge with Mercury and the Crown separate. I took this book to the last meeting of the West London Branch of the Association, to enquire of the other members whether officers, or anyone else for that matter, had worn the new style badge before the general changeover (1949?)

Our World War II and late forties members were adamant that nobody did–however, the camera cannot lie! Any thoughts that the photo was taken at a later date can easily be dispelled by the fact that two of the officers depicted, **Lt Royle** (6/6/44) and **Lt Col Smallman-Tew** (22/7/44) were later killed in action. My thoughts are that, these are cloth badges and may have been worn by Airborne Officers, who would have worn berets as opposed to the service caps worn by officers generally.

I would be most interested to hear from anyone who could give me further information on this subject. Contact me at: 178 Braemar Ave, Neasden, NW10 0DS, or Tel: 0181 450 6885.

From: **Roy C. Poulter**
Dear Editor

Here are a few memories I have of my old Section that I thought might be of interest to some of the people who subscribe to *The Wire*. I joined 2 Line of Communication at Raynes Park, Cambridge Road, Wimbledon in September 1943, after completing my Driver and Driver/Mechanic's Course at Catterick.

Our CO at Wimbledon was a **Maj Hamilton** and our Admin Officer was **Capt Wardle** whom I believe lived at Gt Leighs, Essex, not far from my own town. We had two Dvr Sections namely 62 and 110 and I was Dvr/Mech for 62, with my opposite number and friend one **Samuel Smith** of Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. (The last time that I saw **Sam** was at the Belle Vue Hotel near Ostend, where we were both on the way home for a short leave before being drafted to the Middle East).

62 DR Section Leader was **Sgt Smallman** (we had no officers) with **Lance/Sgt Mc Innes** and **Cpl Elliott** plus our cook, 'Chuck' **Peacock**. Some of the Dvrs I can remember are, **Big** 'Hammie' **Hamilton** (an ex-tram driver from Glasgow), **Ron Pearcy** (from Poole in Dorset), **Bill Griston** (from Richmond in Surrey), and **Stan Latham**.

But to get back to 2 Line of Communication which, as I mentioned earlier, I joined in September 1943, there were also Cypher Sections, Wireless Op Sections and I recall that their wireless vehicles were named after the Marx Brothers namely, Harpo, Groucho, Beppo and the fourth I cannot recall, was it Zappo? We also had Line Construction Sections for UG (Underground) and Overhead cables. I remember that they used miles of D8–seven strands of steel wire and one of copper.

During the month of March, 1944, **Sam Smith** and myself took our old Dodge 3 ton trucks to an Ordnance Depot at Shrewsbury, to exchange them for brand new Ford 4x4s and also to collect six new Matchless motor cycles each to bring our Drs up to strength and to prepare for our next move . . . D Day.

The whole of 2 L of C left Wimbledon on the 27 May 1944 and arrived in Brandon, near Newmarket, where we encamped in a wood overnight, myself having been on tow behind our REME breakdown truck (called Moby Dick) from soon after we passed through London, because my new V8 engine had blown a cylinder head gasket. I can tell you that it was a pretty hair raising experience travelling about sixty miles like that albeit on a straight tow. (For the uninformed a straight tow is a 3-4 inch tube clamped to the tow hook of the front vehicle and tied to the front wire carrying bracket of the vehicle to be towed.)

However, we stripped it down on arrival at Brandon that night and the next morning moved off once again to arrive at another wood which was a concentration area outside Ipswich (28th May). We now formed a part of 30 Corps with the Wild Boar insignia and another part of 21 Armd Gp.

On the 30 May the unit moved into Ipswich and onto the Felixstowe docks, where we embarked onto LSTs (Landing Ship Tanks), after changing our English money for French Francs. Now we knew we were off to France. Not for the first time for some of our lads who were wearing their 1939/43 ribbons, as veterans of Dunkirk. (This ribbon, or should I say medal, was later changed to 1939/45). My truck was first aboard our ship so I was right at the front on the top deck. All the trucks and bikes were on the top and the tanks below.

We moved away from the dockside and dropped anchor and just sat there for five days and finally sailed on the evening of the 5 June, to be awakened at early dawn by the deafening sound of a Bofors Gun immediately above my head.

D-Day had arrived. We did not start to disembark until about 9 a.m. amidst plenty of shells passing overhead. Thankfully from our Naval Guns and some gunfire coming the other way.

As I was first on board it was obvious that I was going to be last off and you can just imagine the depths of the channels in the sand, at the bottom of the ramp, after all the tanks had left plus all the other vehicles. Unfortunately I had to wait to disembark as the rear wheel drive truck in front of me descended the ramp too fast and broke its front axel beam. This meant that I had to wait for the recovery tank to tow it away. Well I got ashore eventually and met up with the rest of my Section on Gold Beach and was directed to Club Route and the Bayeaux Road. Somewhere along the road we turned into a cleared minefield where I spent my first night sleeping beneath my truck, protected from falling shrapnel.

I was with 62 DR in the Bayeaux–Caen area until unfortunately wounded on the 7th July and subsequently shipped back to England until I was fit enough to return. By this time, the war had advanced into Belgium and I was posted to 27 Construction Coy who were at that time in Brussels.

I lost touch with 62 DR and 2 L of C but would like to get in touch with any of the lads from 62 DR or my friend **Sam Smith** from Stoke-on-Trent who married a girl named **Dorothy**, who was working with the NAAFI. I wonder what happened to the section after I left and do any of the lads belong to the Royal Signals Association?

JOTTINGS FROM A FADING MEMORY
By Vic Prees
continued from The Wire, Feb 97, pp 80

By the middle of October we had acquired a GLO and two FAC officers. The GLO was **Maj Whittaker** of the Welsh Regiment and the FACs were **Lt Gautier** of the French Navy and **Flt Lt J. F. G. Howe** of the RAF. **Flt Lt Howe** was a fascinating character. He had been a Mustang pilot in the South African Airforce and had flown Ops in Korea in civvies due to the non arrival of his uniform. He later commanded the first front line Lightning Squadron No. 74 at Leuchars and went on to command the RAF's Phantom OCU at Conningsby. Even in 1956 he was an experienced combat pilot. We were to meet again, he as Squadron Commander RAF Guttersloh and me as RSM of 21 Sig Regt. This began to show in our exercises with the Fleet Air Arm in Malta. The Navy pilots were full of enthusiasm but lacked experience in ground attack. They tended to arrive over target with too much altitude, making accurate delivery of their weapons difficult. In desperation **Flt Lt Howe** 'borrowed' a Meteor from RAF Takali and laid on a breathtaking display of how it should be done. There was a little muttering from the Navy but I think the point was made. By now the tempo had increased and the lower deck had decided that the Operation was definitely on. Training increased and we could waterproof our sets blindfolded, should the need arise. Grand Harbour was now full of warships. Not since the 6th June 1944 had such an impressive fleet been gathered together by the Royal Navy. Three Fleet Carriers–*Eagle*, *Bulwark* and *Albion*. Assorted cruisers including *Jamaica* of *Sharnhorst* fame. *Manxman*, the fastest ship in the Navy and reputedly capable of 40 knots, carrying the flag of Flag Officer Flotillas. Several Destroyers of the Daring class and of course our old friends the Amphibious Warfare Squadron.

Suddenly it was on. We were driven down to Grand Harbour and began to load stores and vehicles. My crew embarked on HMS *Anzio* with HQ 40 Commando commanded by **Lt Col Tweed**. By now we were old hands at this game and in no time at all we were comfortably ensconced on the canopy of a four ton vehicle. The fact that the vehicle was loaded with mortar ammunition didn't seem to worry anyone unduly. We sailed on the 27 October, my 20th birthday. There have been many criticisms made over the years about the length of time it took to mount Musketeer. No doubt by today's standards it was too exciting and too much of a novelty to worry about the whys and wherefores. All we knew was that we had trained hard and perfected our operating techniques and now it looked as though we were going to be called upon to put them into practice. It took a week to make the passage from Malta to Suez. During this time we listened avidly to what news was available. Signals personnel became the focus of much attention because we were able to read the visual signalling between ships. This was mostly made up of tactical details and movements within the convoy but now and again a piece of information could be gleaned. Weapons were zeroed after a fashion over the stern using various items of gash ditched for the purpose. Another point of interest was a little ML that ran a form of SDS throughout the fleet. When not actively employed in these duties she was towed behind *Meon* to conserve fuel.

Early on the morning of the 3 November we heard that the Paras had landed at Gamel Airfield. This was borne out by the aircraft that had carried out the drop buzzing the fleet on their way back to Cyprus. I particularly remember one Hastings coming very low and a member of the crew flashing V signs with an Aldis Lamp. All very impressive, everyone now knew that we were committed to the landing. Preparations intensified, briefings with maps and aerial photographs, last minute checks on weapons, radios and the all important waterproofing. 40 Commando were scheduled to land on the beach just to the west of the Casino Hotel. As far as we were aware the landing would be opposed. Everyone in the world knew we were on the way, so no doubt the Egyptians had prepared a warm welcome. Concern was expressed over a mass of beach huts on the beach we were due to land on, but we were assured that these would be neutralised by air strikes prior to landing.

D-DAY

I can't remember any of us getting much sleep the night before the landing. Everyone was astir long before we were due to embark onto the LCAs. A large breakfast then the issue of the traditional 'Oggy', an enormous Cornish Pasty which was to last us until we were ashore and in a position to start on our compo. At last the LCAs were lowered to the deck level and we gingerly clambered aboard. My crew were in the CO's craft, the only one with a vehicle on board. This was the CO's Champ. It was made plain to all of us in the LCA that we had 10 seconds to get out and away before the Champ drove down the ramp. If we were not out of the way then that was just too bad! The first wave were already milling around and starting to form up in their Buffalo's or LVT. These were enormous tracked monstrosities, relics of World War II which were heavily armoured and gave some protection from small arms fire. Because of their weight they had to be 'swum' from the low doors of the LSTs, which took a great deal of time. We had all been instructed to walk in the LVTs tracks when we hit the beach as it was thought that the beach was mined.

Eventually we were lowered into a fairly smooth sea and set about the complicated process of lining up with the other craft for the second wave. By this time the Daring class ships, steaming slowly along in line were busy laying down fire, supposedly to explode any mines there were on the beach. It seems that a lot of 4.5" shells were going well over and doing considerable damage to buildings in the town. This, whilst no doubt being great fun, was not what was supposed to happen. The CO had the coxswain of our LCA go alongside one of the destroyers in an attempt to remonstrate with those on board. Apart from a few disdainful glances from the lordly beings in anti flash gear high on the bridge, I don't think much was achieved. Eventually we were lined up and set off for the beach.The Fleet Air Arm were keeping their part of the bargain and a succession of Wyverns were making low level passes along the beach and laying down 20mm cannon fire to detonate the mines. At last the comand 'Down Ramp, out Troop', and we were galvanised into action, spurred on by the sound of the CO's Champ revving hard behind us. A slight stumble by my first operator **Sig Winstanley** but we caught him and set him down well clear of the vehicle. The beach huts were well alight by now and there was a tremendous amount of small arms fire. We later discovered that this was ammunition left in the beach huts by the rapidly departing Egyptians.

Our instructions had been drummed into us, get clear of the beach as quickly as possible. Sprinting along the track marks of the LVTs our 100lb plus loads of ammunition, weapons, rations etc. seemed light as a feather when pitted against our desire to reach some form of cover. At last a large concrete breakwater, no more than 3ft high, it seemed at least 10ft in our hour of need. A pause to catch our breath and to watch the Wyverns and Seahawks as they moved their straffing operation beyond the bombline. Having congratulated ourselves on still being in one piece we then observed **Maj Whittaker** and my 2IC **LCpl John Grieve** way out in the open struggling with the infamous 'handcart' which contained the 300w Charging Engine and the 12V 170AH batteries. We left the friendly shelter of our breakwater to render what assistance we could, and finally we managed to get the whole detachment in one place.

The next hour or so passed in a blur. A lot of noise, smoke and shouting. Being shepherded across bullet swept streets with the shouts of 'This way Bleep,' from Marines who appeared to know exactly what was going on. Our objective was the Canal Police building, picked because it had a large flat roof and a tower. Ideal for the FAC to direct any strikes that may be required. We finally arrived there in a state of terminal exhaustion, narrowly avoiding extinction from a jerrican of water hurled from the engine plates of a Centurion Tank as it roared past us in a cloud of dust and fumes.

Once on the roof we were at last able to get on with our reason for being here. Contact with JOC was rapidly established on the 62 Set, the BE 201 switched on (how it survived it's undignified treatment is a compliment to it's makers Burn Dept) and tuned in to the common ground to air frequency. We were very vulnerable in our elevated position and had to keep our heads down to avoid the odd stray round that zipped across the roof. Suddenly we noticed a flight of Wyverns industriously attacking a target with 20mm cannon fire. Instantly we realised that whatever they were attacking was way behind the initial bombline set for the seaborne assault. It transpired that they had set upon the TAC HQ for 42 Cdo which included my mate **Cpl** 'Spud' **Hulse**. We immediately tried to raise the aircraft on the 201, calling on first the common frequency and then on that allocated to 42 Cdo. We received no reply but the aircraft veered off and returned to the carrier.

Across the basin from our location was the imposing building of the old Suez Canal Company. One of 40 Cdo's tasks was to clear this building. Opposition was quite fierce and 40 Cdo had taken some casualties. Suddenly we were in business, an air strike was requested on the Canal Building. The request cleared on the 62 Set and then in rapid succession the ETA and TOT was received . . . three Seahawks with rockets. **Flt Lt Howe** made contact with the aircraft on VHF and then gave instruction for the strike. The first aircraft came in too high and the rockets landed in the water. The second missed completely. The last aircraft had either done this sort of thing before or had taken in the demonstration laid on in Malta by

Flt Lt Howe. His projectiles went through the colonade that surrounded the first floor of the building and caused a large portion of the roof to collapse. Shortly after this strike the resistance ceased and 40 Cdo occupied the building which was later to become our HQ.

By now it was dusk, we had accomplished what we had set out to do. All the endless hours of training, beach landings and countless radio exercises had paid handsome dividends. We had been given a task and had carried it out to the letter. The night was lit by huge fires, mostly oil storage tanks in Port Fuad which had received the attentions of the French Navy Corsairs. The Russians had put down the Hungarian uprising in Budapest and made veiled threats about nuclear weapons. All this was way outside the scope of a very tired young Owl, who had the satisfaction of being able to put his training into practice. I began to wonder what the Corps had in store for my next posting...

DONATIONS

Mr N. E. Carter In memory of Mr Jowala Coffee	£5.00
Certo Cito Lodge	£10.00
42 Sig Regt Officers Club	£112.00
5 Ladies of 259 Sig Sqn	£23.00
Lt Col (Retd) B. A. Beattie	£10.00
Amy Watson (from the legacy of)	£4000.00
Poole Branch RSA	£50.00
Mrs M. H. Lea	£10.00
Mr J. Reaney	£5.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Maj E. D. Halton	£15.00
3 Div Reunion Club Col T. W. Baynes MBE	£10.00
Reading RSA In memory of Mr A. C. Carpenter	£25.00
From Friends In memory of Mrs R. Cathmuir	£130.00
Certo Cito Lodge	£35.00
HQ 11 Sig Bde	£51.49
56 Div OCA Branch	£150.00
Newark RSA	£10.00
E. D. Halton	£15.00

LAST POST

Baines	**–Sig J. C. Baines**	Served 1949/51	Died 29/09/96
Bibby	**–Lt Frank Bibby**	Served 1928/45	Died 28/01/97
Brewer	**–Cpl M. Brewer**	Joined Oct '87	Died 15/12/96
Carpenter	**–Mr A. C. Carpenter**	Served 1936/53	Died 28/01/97
Cobley	**–Cpl I. P. Cobley MM**		Died 11/12/96
Cook	**–Maj Gen R.F.L. Cook MSc, CEng**	Served 1957/92	Died 24/02/97
Creigh	**–Sgt C. Creigh**	Served 1934/65	Died 29/01/97
Davies	**–Col E. H. Davies**	Served 1941/73	Died 26/02/97
Diggle	**–Sgt E. D. Diggle**	Served 1935/45	Died 02/97
Exon	**–Sig Eric Exon**	Served 1944/47	Died 19/12/96
Fox	**–Dvr R. O. Fox**	Served 1940/47	Died 28/01/97
Galloway	**–Lt Col A. L. Galloway**	Served 1937/60	Died 19/02/97
Galloway	**–Dvr J. W. Galloway**		Died 24/09/90
Gaye	**–Mr. E. R. Gaye MBE, MFM**	Served 1927/61	Died 04/02/97
Haylock	**–LCpl G. Haylock**	Served 1940/46	Died 12/12/96
Hudson	**–Maj A. A. Hudson**	Served 1948/83	Died 10/02/97
Hughes	**–Maj E. P. Hughes**	Served 1935/69	Died 13/01/97
Mann	**–Mr T. Mann**	Served 1939/46	Died 30/01/97
McLaren	**–Mr D. McLaren**	Served 1939/44	Died 96
Palfrey	**–Maj J. W. Palfrey TD**	Served 1932/46	Died 96
Parkinson	**–Sig G. Parkinson**	Served 1974/82	Died 07/12/96
Ridley-Martin	**–Brig R. B. Ridley-Martin**	Served 1929/62	Died 17/01/97
Shoubridge	**–Maj O. G. B. Shoubridge**	Served 1936/62	Died 96
Unwin	**–SSgt V. Unwin**		Died 28/02/97
Wells	**–Mr A. C. Wells**	Served 1919/47	Died 05/12/96
Wyatt	**–Sig A. E. Wyatt**		Died 29/01/97

Cobley–Cpl Ivor P. T. Cobley MM, died at Kingston (Ontario) General Hospital, after a valiant fight with cancer, at the age of 75. A veteran of WW2 who emigrated to Canada after the war. He is survived by his dearest wife **Winifred**, son **Christopher** and daughter **Brenda** also grandchildren **Jason** and **Jamie Plumb**.

Bibby–Lt Frank Bibby died on the 28 January 1997 after an illness.

Frank joined the Signals in 1928 and spent several years in Egypt before returning to civilian life. He rejoined in 1939 and saw active service in France (he was evacuated from Dunkerque), East Africa (mentioned in Dispatches 30/12/41), and Burma.

He returned to civilian life in 1945 and worked until his retirement, in 1972, as a stocktaker and Hotel Controller for Trust Houses (later Trust House Forte).

He maintained his interest in the Army and attended several reunions at Blandford Camp. Some of his happiest memories were of the time he spent in the Signals. He will be remembered for many things–his integrity and sense of duty, his humour even in adversity and during his last illness, his generosity and his quiet gentle manner, his friendship and his loyalty.

He will be sadly missed by his son, his two grandsons and his daughter-in-law, as well as by his friends, in particular his lifelong friend and former Signals companion **Ben Jordan**.

Dibley–Maj (Retd) George Dibley, died of cancer at the age of 78 on 12 January, 1997. He devoted himself to a lifetime of military service, building up in later years a fine collection of pre-1914 military prints. The son of a master builder, **George Dibley** was born in Cobham, Surrey, on the 25 February 1918. On 23 March 1936, at the age of 18 he left his job as a butcher's assistant and enlisted with the Queen's Royal Regiment. He served on the Northwest Frontier in India from 1937 until 1944 before returning to Europe. As the war drew to a close, he joined the Army Air Corps in the fledgling Glider Pilot Regiment but his services as a pilot were never utilised and in 1947 he transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals with whom he served until his resignation from the Corps in 1963. He also fought in Burma, the Korean war, and the Malaya insurgency of 1954.

Decorations include the War Medal 1939/45, the Defence Medal, 1939/45 Star, Burma Star, France & Germany Star, Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal, Korea Medal, UN Services medal with clasp 'Korea', G.S.M. with clasp 'Malaya' and 'Arabian Peninsula' and the Long Service & Good Conduct medal. He joined Barclays Bank in 1964 as a cashier. In 1966 he joined Barclaycard at their inception in Northampton. In February 1970, he was appointed Assistant Manager of the Barclaycard Centre, and manager in December 1971. In July 1973 he moved to Liverpool and spent nine very happy years running the Dale Street and Kirkby centres. Following his retirement from the bank in June 1982 he continued to take an interest in many of his former staff keeping in touch with a number of them over the years.

During his time with the bank **George Dibley** continued to serve in the Territorial Army and Volunteer Reserve (TAVR) in Liverpool, Sheffield, Leicester and London and was a regional secretary with SSAFA for a number of years. Advancing years forced his retirement in 1973 but he continued to take an interest in his regimental associations and joined the Victorian Military Society for whom he served as treasurer for some eight years until he was forced to relinquish his tasks a few months before his death.

George lived a full and active life and will be missed by his family. He married once and is survived by his widow, **Peggy**, a son and two daughters.

Dolan–SSgt T. M. Dolan served with the R Signals 1951 to 1972. It is with regret that I have to inform you of the recent death of ex-**SSgt Tommy** 'Wee Jock' **Dolan**, after a long illness. In a career spanning 22 years in the R Signals, **Tommy** served in various parts of the world including Germany, the Middle East and the Far East. His last overseas posting was 21 Sig Regt in RAF Wildenrath (1968 to 1972). **Tommy** leaves his wife, **Anne**, four daughters and nine grandchildren.

Tommy would speak of being one of the team which established a World Record by scoring 1,000,001 up in darts in RAF Changi in 1963. He also helped to build the telephone link between Ma'an and Amman in the early 1950s. A Drill Instructor in the 60's, **Tommy** was one of the first NCO's to learn the drill for the then new SLR. He was subsequently delighted to find himself 'drilling' his own RSM (to the equal delight of a number of onlookers).

Suckling–Mrs Marie Suckling, died on 13 January 1997. She served as S/Sgt in the office of Southern Signal Company, Bangalore. Her name was then **Vint**, she married **LCpl Suckling** of that Unit in 1944 and returned to England with him in 1945.

Fox–Dvr R. O. Fox, did his Basic Training at Ossett and then went to Huddersfield for his Trade Training. He went overseas initially in 1940 arriving in Egypt in early 1941. Then he was posted to Ethiopia in about June 1941 and stayed there until the end of the campaign, returning to Egypt in March 1942. There he got posted to Alexandria, after which the Company was posted to El Alamein and then all the way through the Western Desert to Tunisia. They embarked at Tripoli for the invasion of Sicily (1943), landing just after the first of the troops. Embarking at Messina, for the invasion of Italy he served with the same unit from June 1941 to the cessation of hostilities in 1945 returning to England in 1945. He continued serving in the Yorkshire i/c Transport Sect until his demobilisation in 1947.

Hudson–Maj A. A. Hudson TD, it is with deep regret and sadness that I report the sudden death of our former Treasurer/Secretary Arthur Hudson on Monday 10 February at his home in Preston.

Arthur who was a founder member of this Branch on its' reformation in 1970, will be sadly missed by all of us here at the Preston & Blackburn Branch. Also by those throughout the Corps, both serving and retired, who will remember his excellent sense of humour. Our thoughts and condolences go to his wife **Bridie**, and children **John, Anne, Tricia, Pauline** and **Maureen** also to his 11 grandchildren.

Arthur's long and distinguished career in the services started in 1941 at the age of 16 when he joined the Air Training Corps. He later joined the RAFVR and in 1943 joined the RAF as a wireless operator. In October 1943 he transferred to the Royal Navy as a telegraphist until November 1946 when he was demobbed.

In June 1948 he joined the R Signals at High Wycombe, Bucks. Selected for training as a special operator he was posted to 10 WTS, Woodhouse Eaves, Loughborough, and promoted to Cpl Instructor, where he stayed until 1951. He was posted to 1 Wireless Regt (13 Sigs) in Munster and Birgelen as Watchkeeper and Regimental Staff.

Promoted SSgt in 1956, his next move saw him in the Far East serving with Singapore District Sig Regt. At this time he was selected to attend a Sig Cen Supervisors Course at the School of Signals (FARELF). His next move saw him off to 'Oscar Tp' 3 Div HQ & Sig Regt, Bulford from 1959 to 1960. 28 Sig Regt was his next move where he worked in Rheindahlen till 1963. Time for training again and Arthur attended No. 6 Yeoman of Signals Course and was then posted to 254 Sig Sqn as the First Yeoman in Aden. In 1965 he was posted back to 28 Sig Regt as WO1 (YofS). 1967 saw him posted to the School of Signals for medical reasons and in 1968 his final posting was to RHQ 7 Sig Regt.

He took up employment in civvy street as a despatcher in Preston Docks. However, a vacancy in the COMCEN of HQ North West District took him back to the forces as a civilian employee and COMCEN Supervisor. His service with the Corps continued when he was invited to join 38 Sig Regt (V) and was enlisted into 93 (East Lancs) Sig Sqn (V) at Blackburn as WO1 (YofS). He quickly rose through the ranks after his traffic commission in 1971. He retired in 1982. He received the Territorial Decoration whilst with the TA for 22 years service as a volunteer.

He kept the Preston and Blackburn Branch flowing over the years and was a 'regular' at the monthly meetings. He held the post of Secretary/Treasurer from 1970 until February 1993. **Arthur**, who was awarded Honour Membership of the Association will be greatly missed by all of us.

Hughes–Maj (Retd) E. P. Hughes died 13 January 1997. He joined the Middlesex Yeomanry in March 1935. On Boxing Day 1939 he left England with the 1st Cavalry Divisional Signals for the Middle East. He escaped the Germans in Crete and served in 13 Corps, 30 Corps and 8 Army Signals before joining the 9 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (Middlesex Yeomanry) as a Sgt. After Alamein he was commissioned in the Corps in late 1943.

He was demobilised in 1947 into the TA and rejoined the regular Corps in 1952. He served with the Trg Bde, the Depot, the Signal School in Hamburg, 10 Sig Regt and the Staff of HQ AER. His last posting was with 21 Sig Regt in Laabruch.

He continued to support the Corps in many ways through the Association and more recently on a Sponsored Ride, in aid of the Corps Museum Fund

Our sympathy is extended to his family, in their loss of a true character.

A full obituary is published in the Spring Journal.

Parkinson–ex Sig George Parkinson (better known as 'Scouse') died suddenly on 7 December 1996. **George** was a Combat Driver by trade and served with the Corps from August 1974 until his discharge in December 1982. During his service he served in Cyprus (262 Sig Sqn), Germany (21 Sig Regt in Gutersloh) and in the United Kindom at the RMAS.

George was well likely by all those who came into contact with him (after getting through his outer shell). He thoroughly enjoyed his time with the Corps and although he left the services he never forgot the comradeship and friends he had made whilst serving.

George died at home of a heart attack, his death came suddenly and unexpectedly, he will be dearly missed by his family.

Jowala–Mr Jowala Coffee formerly of the Singapore District Signals Regiment, I wish to convey that he passed away peacefully on 14 December. In 1968 I made the overland journey to India, where I became a guest of Jowala at his home in Jullundur. I am informed by his son that he would have reached the age of one hundred in January, had he lived. His memories of campaigns in India and of the various Regiments with which he served, were like tales told on the veranda, as he related them.

This has been written by me to pay tribute to a fine old veteran. **Mr N. E. Carter.**

Jowala and myself centre–Jullundur 1968

Warren–Maj Nicholas Thorn Warren, MBE TD, was the Chairman of the Southampton Branch of the RSA from 1955 to 1959 and again from 1988 until his sudden death at home on the 30 November 1996. His interest in radio communications began whilst at Sherborne School and he held an Amateur Transmitting Licence in 1937.

He enlisted in the TA in March 1939 and was commissioned in August with the 43rd (Wessex) Div Signals at Southampton. Too young to remain in that unit he became an instructor at 151 OCTU in 1941, where he gained early promotion to Captain. In 1943 as a Staff Officer with Signals Tac HQ, he was engaged in developing solutions to communications problems arising from an anticipated landing in NW Europe, for which he was awarded an MBE. Serving aboard HMS *Hilary*, off the Normandy coast, he went ashore on D Day plus 2 and was involved in operations around Caen, Le Havre and Antwerp. After crossing the Rivers Maas and Rhine, he became heavily involved in planning the restoration of civilian communications.

He was demobilised in 1946 in the rank of Major and rejoined the TA in 1947 in command of 10 Air Support Signal Unit at Southampton. This Unit had the distinction of being the first TA Unit to serve abroad in peacetime, taking part in a major Rhine Exercise during the 'Cold War'. He retired from the TA in 1959 to enable him to devote more time to his business affairs. He continued to maintain an interest in the RSA which he joined in 1946 and he kept abreast of modern communications and computer developments.

He was an enthusiastic Branch Chairman, who regularly attended Blandford reunions and was a frequent visitor to neighbouring branches and to Remembrance and Commemorations Services.

A widower since 1982, he lived alone. He was a diabetic, a complaint that led in January 1994 to the amputation below the knee of his left leg. His reaction was both courageous and immediate; by March he had mastered his artificial leg and was in the Chair of the Branch once again. Further disaster followed a year later when his right leg was amputated above the knee. This he met with the same fortitude and resourcefulness. By April he took the Chair at the annual lunch and in June took part in the D Day celebrations both on the beaches and at the war cemeteries. Later that year he had his car fitted with a contraption that enabled him to lift his wheelchair on an electronically controlled hoist, into a container on the roof of the car giving him the complete independence he needed to attend the meetings of the many organisations of which he was a member. At the local British Legion he served as Branch Secretary and then as Service Committee Secretary; he was Treasurer of the New Forest Railway Society and at Lymington Town Sailing Club he worked out intricate racing handicap results.

He was a good talker and as a radio amateur and a member of the Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society and also the Radio Amateur Invalid and Blind Club he enjoyed chatting on the air daily. He was most grateful to this organisation for being instrumental in supplying and fitting much of his equipment. His long service to the RSA and for the courage and cheerfulness with which he met his misfortunes, **Nicholas** was presented with the Association's 50 Year Badge and Honour Life Membership in April 1996.

THE Wire

June 1997

The Royal Corps of Signals

How do you feel about leaving the Army?

As you're well aware, serving in the Forces isn't just a job. It's a way of life. So, it's no surprise, that after leaving, many people feel as though they're high and dry, like a fish out of water.

But there's no need for you to feel this way. It's perfectly possible for you to keep up with old friends, make use of the unique skills you've acquired, *and* make a vital contribution to the nation's defence into the bargain.

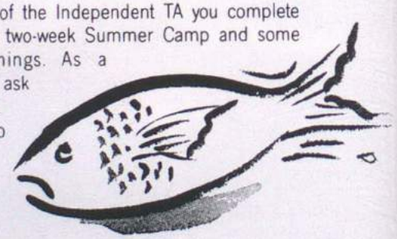
How? Simply by becoming a member of the Volunteer Forces, which make up a third of our Army and represent a significant part of our commitment to peace.

There are two options open to you.

Firstly, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those leaving Infantry or Cavalry regiments.

Secondly, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

You can contribute as much time as you want in any one year. The minimum that we ask is that as a member of the Independent TA you complete 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and two weekends.



In return you will receive payment equivalent to the rates paid to Regular Army soldiers plus an annual tax-free bonus.

If you would like more information about how you can stay in the swim of things, write to the address below, giving details of which option you are interested in, your current age and address, your intended county of residence, and of the regiment you have left or are leaving.

The Territorial Army, Freepost, 4335 (Ref: 9000), Bristol BS1 3YX.

The Royal Signals Magazine

June 1997 Vol. 51 No: 3

The Wire

All correspondence and matter for publication in **The Wire** should be addressed to **The Head of Publications, The Wire**, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, DT11 8RH Dorset. Tel No: Blandford mil 2079 STD 01258 48 2079

Matter for publication must be received by the 15th of February, April, June, August, October and 10th December for publication six weeks later.

All enquiries regarding subscriptions/despatch should be made to ext: 2087

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Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder

Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

***The Wire* is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers**

Articles for 'THE WIRE'

Contributors to *The Wire* should note the dates by which matter for publication **MUST** be received in *The Wire* office. Too many units have taken too frequent advantage of Editorial kindness!

40% of the submissions for the April *Wire* were late arriving in the Editors' office!!
(The Gold Laying Goose was eaten at Easter!)

Please get your articles in on time as we have a deadline too!

(Apologies to 35 Sig Regt (V) who made every effort to meet the deadline but got swept up in my loss of patience.)

FAR EAST EXHIBITION–UPDATE

by Eddie Cooper

Following the article in the Summer 1995 Issue of Dekho and other Services Journals and Newsletters donations come in slowly nationwide (some even from overseas). This, however, wasn't adequate to enable any real progress to be made in establishing this exhibition in the form we (the Burma Star Association Herts Cambs & Essex Branch together with The Imperial War Museum, Duxford) visualised. I therefore decided to go for 'The Big One' and made application for a grant from the National Heritage Fund. The Grant has been approved and the project has been awarded £120,000 from a total estimated cost of £180,000. Duxford and myself will be providing the balance shared equally between our two parties. We have each contributed £5,000 and I am now looking to raise £25,000 from my side to complete the project, which has already been started and which, we hope, will be up and running before the end of 1997.

I am making a National Appeal for funds large or small and any donations from Branches & Individual Members are welcomed and should be sent to me at Little Foxes, Hay Green, Therfield, Herts. SGB 9QJ. Cheques should be made payable to 'Far East Exhibition Appeal Fund, **NOT TO** Burma Star Association as this is not a Benevolent Fund Appeal. If you have any Artefacts or Memorabilia you feel would be of special interest and are prepared to donate please give details in writing to **Eddie**. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN THE FIRST INSTANCE**. Any further details can be obtained by phoning **Eddie** on 01763 287519. This is YOUR EXHIBITION for posterity–Please support it.

FRONT COVER: Cpl 'Pat' Patrick airborne for 15 Sig Regt.

BACK COVER: The Back Cover shows a watercolour sketch executed by **Sig J. H. L. Beattie** of 71 Sig Regt (V), during his tour in Bosnia. His remarkable talent resulted in his appointment as 'war artist' for the duration of his tour.

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IN VINO VERITAS

(A TRUE STORY FROM THE 8TH ARMY)

This happened in a Squadron in a Regiment of the Corps
Whatever others may profess is first to go to war,
In '45 when guns were hushed in Italy and gathering dust
To keep lines open and maintained perforce the L of C remained.

Signals every line must test before the Night Shift went to rest.
The Duty Sergeant then with care a detailed Line Report prepare.
Alas, month after month one line, though tested with precision
Reported, 'Out of Order,' to the Indian Division.

It then befell one morning operators without warning
Relieved but unbelieving found the Indians were receiving.
The Signalmaster framed and hung above the bottles in the Mess
The Line Report that had begun the day of technical success.

But when it seemed within their reach there was intermittent speech
And before the day was done it was clear they'd jumped the gun.
Said the Major, 'We will go as far as needs along the Po.
We'll unfold the mystery and still be home in time for tea.'

Mulberry trees and poplars lined the route South East where they would find
Army cable overhead right back to Division lead.
They drove by bridges blown and banks deeply scored by trucks and tanks.
Unbroken lines against the sky showed the wires were taut and high.

High poles on the further shore miles of Don 8 twisted bore
But at last the Don 8 dipped. From it's moorings it had slipped
And on the water lay suspended. There all line transmission ended.
How, though was the fault related if it still was insulated?

Land of music and of sun, by Allied soldiers dearly won
Still the local man had need his land to till, himself to feed.
When the rivers are in spate the land is hard to cultivate.
The valley farmer's oil and wines depend on olive groves and vines.

Until now the fault concealed, suddenly all was revealed.
Fruitfully their search had ended. On the cable hung suspended
Luscious dark grapes there marooned, as for a festival festooned,
Swept downstream iron vines afar, bunch on bunch of Pinot Noir.

There is a moral to this tale. When communications fail
The Signaller may well complain that his training was in vain.
If you decide the man's a fool, think before you lose your cool
And call the chap an ugly name, perchance Bacchus is to blame.

RETIRED OFFICER GRADE 2
HEADQUARTERS
LONDON DISTRICT

(Retired Officer Vacancy Notice Issue No: 2/96
dated 5 February 96)

A vacancy for a Retired Officer Grade 2 to work in Communications Branch, Headquarters London District is still open. The official details can be found in the Retired Officer Vacancy NOTICE Issue Number: 2/96 dated the 5th February 1996. There are many facets to this Grade 2 appointment. Perhaps the most interesting is the involvement in all aspects of communications for State Ceremonial Occasions. Occasions such as The Queen's Birthday Parade, formal State Visits, the Remembrance Day Commemorative Service at the Cenotaph and various other formal events such as Beating Retreats or Anniversaries that take place on Horse Guards Parade and at Buckingham Palace. The provision and control of all other military radio, facsimile equipment and mobile telephone systems for London District make it a very suitable job for a retiring Royal Signals Officer with a Staff background. The Technical content is of a more general nature and is not an essential requirement.

The appointment is based on Horse Guards Building, Whitehall (opposite the Banqueting House and MoD Main Building) and carries with it the usual salary and conditions of service as outlined in AGAI Chapter 40 (March 1994).

If you would like to know more about this interesting opportunity please do not hesitate to contact either Lieutenant Colonel I.M.G. Strong MBE, Royal Signals, or Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) B.O. Haw at the address below:

Communications/CIS Branch
Headquarters London District
Horse Guards, Whitehall, London SW1A 2AX
Telephone London (0171) - 414 - 2440/2441
Army Telephone Network (736) - 2440/2441
Extension 2450

The engagement has been announced between
SUO Michael John Moreton
of Southampton UOTC, shortly to enter
Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, and
WOCdt Heidi Othen
also of Southampton UOTC, daughter of
Mr & Mrs Othen, formerly **Sgt and Mrs Othen**
of the Royal Signals, on 27 March 1997.

Congratulations and best wishes for their
future happiness together from all the family.

SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM
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Our clients are a market leader within the fast moving telecommunications industry and operate on a worldwide basis. They require experienced technical instructors, based in the Middle East to provide customer training as part of a contract to operate and maintain a major military comms network. They have opportunities in three areas:

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All instruction is based at an impressive, modern, purpose built training centre.

For all of the instructor positions you must be qualified to HNC/HND or equivalent in an electronics related subject or have had Armed Forces training in an Electronic Technician discipline and have reached Class 1 level. For the position of Senior Technical Instructor you must have been trained as an Artificer or Foreman of Signals. You must hold a recognised teaching qualification and have five years engineering experience and three years teaching experience teaching technical subjects in a formal environment. Your ability to convey your knowledge effectively to students of all levels will ensure that you succeed in these challenging roles.

As all these positions involve residency within the Middle East, we are only able to consider applications from men. Our clients offer a substantial tax-free remuneration package on single status which include generous leave entitlements and paid air passages.

To join our clients at this exciting time, please apply in writing with a full CV, stating current salary to **Gail Postans-Miller**, MSL International, Quadrant Court, 50 Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 1TH.

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e-mail 101473.2630@compuserve.com

Royal Signals
Short Term Training Team To Ghana–1997
Builma Camp, Accra, Ghana

At the start of January whilst most of Europe was struggling through a particularly unpleasant bout of Arctic weather, four members of the Corps were occupied with unseasonable thoughts of sun-kissed, palm tree covered golden beaches and what protective sun cream they should he using. The lucky four, **Capt Andy McCole** and **Sgt** 'Dickie' **Dyer** from 4 Armd Bde Sig Sqn in Osnabruck, **WO2 Phil Lord** from 604 Sig Tp in Aldershot and **SSgt (YofS) Frank Branson** from 36 Sig Regt, Ilford, were part of a training team chosen to deploy to Ghana in West Africa. Together we formed a Short Term Training Team (STTT) which deployed for a period of two and a half months. During our short tour we were attached to the Signal Training School in Accra, the Ghanaian equivalent of the Royal School of Signals, to run an instructional course for selected Ghanaian Armed Forces WOs and SNCOs.

Ghana itself is known as one of Africa's best kept secrets and it only recently celebrated the anniversary of 40 years of independence from Britain, when it was then known as the Gold Coast. The influence of Britain remains everywhere, especially so in the Armed Forces where the Ghanaians always try to copy the British way of doing things. Indeed the statement, 'The British do it this way,' is always the argument the Ghanaians use before attempting something new. The Ghanaian Army is considerably smaller than the British Army, consisting of two operational Brigades that together have six infantry battalions. The majority of the Army serves overseas with the Ghanaians being heavily involved in the UN (the new UN Secretary General is Ghanaian) and the recent list of operational theatres that thev have served in is impressive. The list includes UN tours in the Lebanon, Cambodia and Rwanda as well as being one of the central nations in the ECOMOG peacekeeping force in Liberia. Whilst the British Army prides itself on its peacekeeping role in places such as Bosnia, some of the horrific tales and war stories we heard from the Ghanaians from their experiences from such places as Liberia suggest that we could learn quite a bit from them.

Enduring the rigours of being in a STTT in West Africa . . .

The Signal Training School in Accra is very different from its equivalent in Blandford. The School consists of old, wooden colonial buildings built by the British at the end of the last century. As in most African countries, resources and money are scarce especially throughout the Army and this is evident at the School. Here a class of forty has to share a single précis between them. However with no money the Ghanaians have not had the opportunity to update their instructional material and so we often found them using British training pamphlets produced in the 1950's and 60's. Whilst the School in Blandford prefers to teach using Powerpoint presentations, view-foils and videos, the Ghanians have to use the simpler, traditional system of chalk and a blackboard. The aim of our STTT deployment was to update and improve the knowledge of selected Ghanaian Signals Instructors from what they had learnt at their School. They in turn were, upon successful completion of our course, to return to their parent units to instruct the Signallers under their command in the new knowledge they had been taught. Therefore hopefully raising standards throughout the Ghanaian Army. The Ghanaians on our course were drawn from all three services, with the Army contingent coming mainly from the Infantry and Signal Corps. Inevitably they at first had a few problems understanding our accents as well as having a few cultural differences. The first of which was the confusion in understanding that addressing **SSgt Branson** as **Yeoman Branson** was because of his appointment and not as a friendly greeting. However, it never stopped the majority of the students on the course from continually shouting, 'Yo! Man–**Branson**!' As for our accents the Ghanaians unanimously agreed that **Sgt Dyer** had the clearest teaching voice. This was much to the bewilderment and amusement of the remainder of the team who were unaware that Cornwall had such strong cultural links with West Africa. It would however explain why **Sgt Dyer**, when asked what tribe he was from, said he was from the, 'Great Cornish tribe.'

Sgt Dyer and WO2 Lord outside the Signal Training School

The course itself lasted six weeks and consisted of a number of different subjects, These included Electronic Warfare, Antennas and Propagation, Methods of Instruction, Field Cable and Line, Voice Procedure and batterv maintenance. The subject matter taught was of a fairly basic level by British standards, especially when you consider that the 25 course students rank ranged between Cpl and WO1 and were all quite experienced in their particular jobs. However, as already mentioned their lack of resources means that the Ghanaians have been unable to update their level of training and knowledge hence our STTT. So subjects such as EW were completely new to them. One of the highlights of the course was a day-long exercise where the Ghanaians communicated to the parent units of the team members in the UK and Germany. The fact that they were able to talk such a distance through the use of a PRC 320 and a decent, well-constructed antenna was a complete revelation to them. However, one of the ironic things the team discovered is that some of the Ghanaian comms kit is better than ours. They have only just recently purchased a new system from Plessey called Raven, which incorporates some of the technology to be used in the Bowman project and is far more advanced than Clansman. This discovery particularly delighted the Yeoman who looked at the kit as if he had discovered a new toy. The Ghanaians however, could not believe that their kit was more advanced than ours.

Of course it wasn't all work. The team had ample time to explore and see the sights of Ghana and experience the local nightlife. Drinking the local beer however was very much a game of Russian Roulette, with the strength of a pint varying between 5 and 15%. This therefore gave **WO2 Lord** the excuse of having had 'two particularly strong beers' upon beginning to slur his words early on in an evening. To make matters worse, or better depending upon your particular point of view, an 'average' pint only costs around 25 pence, which with beer of 15% strength ensured the team had a lot of cheap nights. Despite all the cultural differences it was also good to see that the Ghanaian and British armies share a few common activities, not least of which is the Friday afternoon happy hour led by the School CO! The team was also brave enough to try a number of the local delicacies, some of which weren't bad at all however the majority of local dishes didn't react well to delicate British stomachs. The exception being **Sgt Dyer** who bragged of his ability to eat anything before becoming bedded down for a week with food poisoning.

SSgt (YofS) Branson establishes HF comms
with 36 Sig Regt and 604 Sig Tp in the UK

British Army STTTs are sent overseas regularly to countries that have either not got a permanent BMATT team or they are sent to supplement the BMATT team to carry out a specific specialist task. In the case of Ghana, a BMATT team was in the process of being created. However, it is to be infantry based. Our deployment was sponsored and financed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, rather than the MoD (hence we soon

discovered the benefits of being a member of the diplomatic service such as flying to and from Ghana by British Airways Club class!) Indeed the team was quite jealous of the life and diplomatic perks enjoyed by the British Defence Advisor in Accra, a fellow member of the Corps, **Lt Col Andrew Gale**. The advice the team has for anyone who is thinking of volunteering for a STTT or BMATT is to go for it. Whilst there are many frustrations in working with an army of a third world country the challenges and the enjoyment that can be gained from the tour far outweigh them. Certainly the team thoroughly enjoyed our short tour in Ghana and the excellent way we were hosted by the friendly Ghanaians, we look forward to volunteering for the trip next year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please advise the Subscriptions Clerk,
at RHQ, IN WRITING, of any change of address.
This information should not be telephoned.

Sgt Dyer attempting to see whether his A&P skills allow the Ghanaians access through Portishead radio to 0898 numbers

EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM SHIVER

by Lt A. Arthurton

It all started on a rather bleak winter morning in Wiltshire when seven Officers and three Officer Cadets began their long journey to Tignes, in the French Alps. OIC Exercise, **Lt Ian Large**, thought it would be a good idea to travel through the night–that is unless you were driving yourself. Not only were there French roads and weather to contend with, but also French drivers!

The aim of the exercise was to develop novice and intermediate skiers' skills with a view to selecting a team to represent RMCS at the LAND UK Championships. For the first few days the novices were given the 'basic training' to help them improve and progress. Meanwhile, the OIC Ex took the remainder through some very physically and mentally demanding training–obviously, to help everyone get in the right frame of mind for what was to follow.

Four days into the exercise the more competent members of the group started on some poles training. For those members who had raced before it was quite straightforward and a case of trying to shave tenths of seconds off their times. For those more novice members (tending to be those with less fear), it was a matter of getting through the course and making to the bottom. Everyone who took part in the Giant Slalom and Slalom training benefited greatly and it proved to be a superb aid to those going on to the LAND UK Championships.

The team that then went on to the LAND UK Championships achieved an awful lot. They came first in the 4 Div Minor units competition and second in the Major units competition. The team also achieved positions of second in the overall downhill competition and third in the Alpine competition, both of which were out of all Major and Minor units.

'It's the DANGER sign on the right that worries me!
Do we have to go that way?'

It wasn't, however, ski, ski, and ski. Although the exercise members were working hard from the first lift at 0900hrs through to the last at 1600hrs they all still managed to find strength to appreciate some of the finer details to the 'skiing life'–the Apres Ski. Whether it was 'Vin chaud' during happy-hour at Harri's Bar or Pierre Chaud cuisine, or even a mixture of the two, the team succeeded in becoming a part of the furniture. A lot of effort went into organising the exercise and the training and it would be impertinent not to say thanks to 'Eddy' **Large** for the time spent on making sure we had an enjoyable and beneficial time.

SPAR RETAIL

Spar is the partner that has been chosen by Naafi as its retail partner to convert its 200 UK shops.

The contract is worth nearly £500 million over the next five years and was awarded after extensive trials which also involved Londis and Costcutter.

Making the announcement Geoffrey Dart, Chief Executive of Naafi, said: 'Naafi is embarking on a major restructuring programme to return it to profitability and provide a world class value for money service to its customers.'

The turnover in Spar's four trial site stores was 50 per cent up on the same period last year and profitability was also improved significantly.

Now Naafi intends to invest over £10 million in modernising its UK stores which will continue to be staffed and managed by Naafi personnel.

Meanwhile Spar will provide staff training and development, distribution and logistics and information technology support services, as well as a range of products including Spar branded goods.

'We foresee this partnership lasting well into the next millennium. It is part of Naafi's new approach of using leaders in particular business areas to help provide support and welfare services to the Armed Forces,' said Mr Dart.

All UK shops are expected to be modernised by April 1998.

Naafinews

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

APRIL 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
Col G.J. Mann	Project CASH Blandford
Maj M.W.G. Adams	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Maj M.D. Bailes	21 Sig Regt (Air Sp)
Maj J.D. Carr	DSSS
Maj P.J. Grey	HQ BF Cyprus
Maj R.G.C. Sparshatt	Exchange Appts Washington
Maj R.J. Standing	HQ RAO
Capt (A/Maj) D.S. Smith	2 Sig Regt
Capt I.A. Blower BEng (Hons)	32 Sig Regt
Capt M.J. Boxall	2 Sig Regt
Capt D. Chrystal BEM	40 Sig Regt
Capt S.A. Clarke	JCU NI
Capt J.J. Cole BEng (Hons)	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt S.L. Copely BSc (Hons)	37 Sig Regt
Capt R.C. Cory	36 Sig Regt
Capt R.J. Edwards BSc	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Capt P.H. Grainger	JSIO
Capt M.J. Hanby	24 Air Mob Bde/Sig Sqn (210)
Capt F.E. Hargreaves	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Capt W. Heelan BEM	DSSS
Capt A.B. Mitchell	RSS
Capt N.M. Peet	30 Sig Regt
Capt L.S. Pilling BEM	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt D.M. Sharkey	40 Sig Regt
Capt P.R. Smith	21 Sig Regt (Air Sp)
Capt J.S.T. Sykes	HQ 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde
Lt (A/Capt) A.G.R. Hoensch	RSS
Lt W. Anderson	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Lt J. Williams	21 Sig Regt
2Lt C. Alexander	RSS Blandford
2Lt I. Bates	RSS Blandford
2Lt K.E. Cochran	RSS Blandford
2Lt C. Crowther	RSS Blandford
2Lt S. Hutchinson	RSS Blandford
2Lt K. Jeeves	RSS Blandford
2Lt J. Lambeth	RSS Blandford
2Lt I. Lowther	RSS Blandford
2Lt E. Rae	RSS Blandford
2Lt A. Taylor	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

MAY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
Brig A.E.G. Truluck	MoD Whitehall
Maj M.G. Shaw	HQ DFTS
Capt G.R. Burrows QGM BEM+	216 (Para) Sig Sqn
Capt T.J. Carmichael	3 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
Capt A.D. Cathro BSc (Hons)	RSS
Capt A.M. Churchill	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Capt G.C. Hailstone	30 Sig Regt
A/Capt J.M. Standen	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)
Lt M.J. Crawford	16 Sig Regt
Lt J.P. Hazelwood	20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (200)
Lt M.A. Fielding	HS JCUNI

WOs and SNCOs

APRIL 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
WO1 M. Williams	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 D.C. Laycock	21 Sig Regt
WO2 S.C. Keilty	30 Sig Regt
A/WO2 A. McClean	Liverpool UOTC
SSgt T.W. Abbot	32 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt A.C. Bentley	39 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt F. Corrigan	HQ NI & 15 Sig Regt
SSgt S. Clark	37 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt N. Donohue	8 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn
SSgt R.J. Ramsey	14 Sig Regt
Sgt I.D. Campbell	14 Sig Regt
Sgt C.J. Cowell	Royal School of Signals
Sgt G.L. Dawson	34 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt C.R. Garratt	PHQ Comms Coy Landcent
Sgt T. Hussey	7 Sig Regt
Sgt L.D. Kemp	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt B.T. Law	HQ DFTS
Sgt T.J.M. Millar	399 Signal Unit
Sgt G.R. Murphy	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt D.W. Oliver	14 Sig Regt
Sgt R.K. Owen	34 Sig Regt
Sgt J.R. Payne	17 Port & Maritime
Sgt A.R. Purdy	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt M.A. Press	HQ NI & 15 Sig Regt
Sgt M.A. Prince	Sp Bn ARRC
Sgt J.N. Runchman	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt K. Stacey	14 Sig Regt
Sgt C. Symonds	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt A.M. Tocker	39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt G. Walker	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt C.S. Walton	1 Royal Anglian
Sgt N. Wheatly	Royal School of Signals
Sgt B. Wilkins	Balado Bridge
Sgt M. Zaar	UKNMR SHAPE
A/Sgt G. McGachy	22 CTT

MAY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
WO1 P.A. Horton	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 J. Howell-Walm	19 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn
A/WO1 G.R. Johnson	30 Sig Regt
WO2 M.D. Elliott	2 Sig Regt
A/WO2 D.R. Clark	Comms & Sy Gp (UK)
SSgt A.W. Dawson	ITC Warminster
SSgt S.A. Matthews	71 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt S. Shaw	32 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt R.A. Bell	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt R. Buxton	30 Sig Regt
Sgt S. Cain	39 Inf Bde
Sgt S.H. Gilbert	HQ DFTS
Sgt A.M. Thompson	16 Sig Regt
Sgt D. Wood	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt

SHORT SERVICE COMMISSION

APRIL 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
2Lt C.S. Alexander	1 (UK) Armd Div & Sig Sqn
2Lt I.F.K. Bates	249 (AMF(L)) Sig Sqn
2Lt K.E. Cochran	8 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn
2Lt C.P. Crowther	30 Sig Regt
2Lt S.H. Hutchinson	39 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn
2Lt K.A. Jeeves	30 Sig Regt
2Lt J.O. Lambeth	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt E.T. Rae	7 Sig Regt
2Lt A.M. Taylor	4 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn
WO1 (Lt) J. Williams	15 Sig Regt

MAY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
WO1 (Lt) M.A. Fielding	JCU NI

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NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Alternate War Headquarters Communications Squadron

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Kelly**
RSM **Adjt Rik Binje (BE Army)**

On Friday 10 January 1997 **Maj Paul Kelly** took over command of the Squadron from **Maj John Rowley** in a ceremony presided over by the Comd of the Central Region Signal Group (CRSG), **Col G. Meijer NL Air Force**. The hand/takeover of command was signified by the passing of the CRSG flag from **Maj Rowley** to Comd CRSG and then from the Comd to **Maj Kelly**.

EXERCISE COOPERATIVE GUARD MAY 1996

Cooperative Guard May 1996 was a Partnership for Peace (PfP) Exercise that took place at Airbase Karrup in Denmark. Elements from Alpha and Bravo Tps deployed for five weeks in the previous November to install in buildings and staff shelters the communications needed to support a Combined Joint Task Force HQ. The bulk of the work fell to the line section, under command of **Cpl Dave Croxon**, installing internal cable for 160 users in the staff cells set up in the airbase gymnasium. **Sgt Jerry Pickett** and **MSgt Tom Brown** carried out the maintenance and operation of the Mitel SX 2000 PABX that was especially leased for the Exercise.

COMMANDER'S CUP

The final event of the 1996 Commander's Cup competition, cross-country, took place on the 12 December 1996 in Maastricht on St Petersberg. A maximum participation event saw most of the Squadron running. First place went to **SM Noyens** BE Army, second **Sgt1 Dekkers** NL Army, **LCpl Dave Purdon** finished third with **WO1 (FofS) Lee Wookey** hard on his heels in fourth place. The winning team Alpha Tp packed eight runners in the first 15 to finish. No coincidence that OC Alpha Tp, **Capt Keith Bell** assisted by **ISgt Johann Smits**, organised the event and spent several days running his Troop around the course!

The results of the cross-country event made very little difference to the overall positions for the Commander's Cup. Bravo and Delta Tps tied in first place. The trophy went to Bravo Tp on a decider of which of the two Tps had the most first places in all of the events throughout the year.

OC'S FAREWELL LUNCH

The South Limburg SNCO's Association farewell lunch to the outgoing OC, **Maj John Rowley**, took place on Friday 13 December 1996. Which proved to be an unlucky Friday 13th. **Maj Rowley** went to Sarajevo on Monday for a short 24hr farewell visit to those members of the Squadron serving in Bosnia. Unfortunately the 24hr visit turned into a five day visit because of flight delays. Despite the absence of the OC, he was by Friday midday somewhere between Landstuhl in Southern Germany and Brunssum, the SNCOs went ahead with the lunch. **WO1 (FofS) Lee Wookey** called in the services of **OLt Stephan Lissinna** GE Army, the Sqn Syscon Officer, to stand in for the OC. The SNCOs and guests enjoyed an excellent 8hr lunch! **OLt Lissinna** is looking forward to taking part in other British military traditions.

South Limburg SNCOs' Association and guests farewell lunch for Maj John Rowley (significant by Maj Rowley's absence).

ARRIVALS, DEPARTURE AND CONGRATULATIONS

It is only a short hop over the border for the outgoing Sqn Comd, **Maj John Rowley** and his wife **Jane**. We wish them a happy and successful tour in Rheindahlen. The Squadron extends a warm welcome to the new Comd **Maj Paul Kelly** and his wife **Marie-Paule** on posting from Shrivenham. Also welcome are **LCpl Alex Burnham** from 3 UK Sig Regt and **LCpl Dave Purdon** from 7 Sig Regt. **SSgt Al Ironside** and **Michelle** join us from LCO Senden. Congratulations and farewell to **Cpl Trev Croxon** who has departed for 210 Sig Sqn in Colchester on promotion to Sergeant. **LCpls Andy McMorran** and **Frank Battison** have left the Army for civvy street and we wish them well in their new careers. Finally, congratulations to **Lt Stephen Lissinna** GE Army on his recent promotion to Hauptman and on taking up his appointment as Sqn 2IC.

IFOR/SFOR MISSION

The ending of IFOR and the start of SFOR saw a change in the Squadron's mission in support of the operation in the Former Yugoslavia Republic. The final IFOR augmentees from the Squadron working on the IDNXs in Bosnia returned in December. The three technicians pleased to be back in time for Christmas were **Sgt Dave Currie**, **Sgt1 Erik Van Rijt** and **Kpl Ron Schoonderwoerd**. The Squadron now provides two Transportable Satellite Ground Terminals (TSGTs) for HQ SFOR and a Mobile Communications Module Tp for the SFOR TAC HQ.

TSGTS SARAJEVO

January has seen the roulement of the crews on the TSGTs at Zetra and Ilizda. Until now we have had no UK personnel manning the Squadron TSGTs in Sarajevo. **SSgt Al Ironside** and his crew took over from **TSgt Powel** US Army and crew at Ilizda. **SSgt Ironside**'s TSGT is providing two strategic links back to Belgium and Italy for the NATO IDNX network and a theatre link to the TSGT supporting the SFOR TAC HQ.

MCM SFOR TAC HQ

The MCM Tp under command of **Capt Nathan White** USAF arrived in Sarajevo in November 1996. There are 18 personnel in the Troop from Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, UK and United States. The Troop has in one communications shelter an IDNX, Ericsson PABX and Crypto equipment. Two Royal Signals SNCOs, **SSgt Keith Carter** and **Sgt Andy Butler**, and one USAF SNCO, **Sgt Steve Hickey** are responsible for the maintenance and engineering in the communications shelter. Responsible for laying the cables, LAN fibre and field quad, between the MCM and the HQ staff shelters is the MCM Line Section. This is commanded by **ISgt Danny Maes** BE Army who has two UK Linemen, **LCpls Jerry Jerman** and **Neil Ibinson**, two BE Army Linemen **Kpls Gunter Roelandt** and **Stephan Schoofs**, and one NL Army operator **Kpl Op't Roodt**. The MCM gives the TAC HQ staff data, voice, message, fax and VTC capability. Using one of the Squadron's Transportable Satellite Ground Terminals allows the passing of command and control information to anywhere in the world.

After setting up and confirming connectivity in theatre the MCM Tp managed to get back for the Christmas and New Year break. Since returning after the New Year the situation has been one of hurry up and wait. **Maj Paul Kelly** the new Sqn Comd made the first of what will be many working visits to theatre. He spoke with all of the Squadron members deployed with the TSGTs and MCM during his stay in Sarajevo. The MCM is currently located at Zetra Stadium. The latest we have at the time of writing is standby for a move.

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

UNIKOM

A short report from 'our men' in UNIKOM–no it's not misspelt–that's UNIKOM with a 'K'–the UNITED NATIONS IRAQ KUWAIT

OBSERVATION MISSION

Following the Gulf War, a United Nations Mission was set up in April 1991 to monitor the border between Iraq and Kuwait. A demilitarized buffer zone was established, stretching some 200kms on land and 40kms on water between the two countries. The DMZ extends 10kms into Iraq and 5kms into Kuwait. The principal task of the Mission is to monitor activity within the DMZ, record ground and air violations and redress small scale armed incidents across the border. Currently catching the sun are **Col Martin Stretch**, MA to the Force Commander and **Maj Bob Turnbull**, Senior Operations Officer, both working in the main HQ in Iraq, and **Maj Matt Helm** 'somewhere in the desert' in Kuwait on a Patrol and Observation Base (POB).

There are 195 military observers from 32 nations, each serving on a 12 month unaccompanied tour. The observers normally spend 4/6 months in POBS, either in Iraq or Kuwait, carrying out general ground and air patrols before moving to another sector within the DMZ or taking up a staff appointment in the HQ which lies just across the border in Iraq.

The 18 POBs within the DMZ are fully self contained in terms of accommodation, fuel and water. Communications are fairly basic with an insecure VHF radio network as the primary means of communication. All POBs are linked to their respective HQs by this repeater network, backed up by a microwave borne telephone system that tends to fluctuate with the temperature! Patrolling is carried out in 'ageing' Toyota Land Cruisers fitted out with Motorola mobile radios. Seven observers, all from different nations, man each POB. Although English is the spoken language throughout the Mission the plethora of languages sometimes heard on the radio defies description–perhaps a useful COMSEC aid! Observers in the bases cook for themselves which brings national pride to the fore, however, certain communal meals have a unique flavour and sometimes offer a never to be repeated experience!

The weather can get hot–over 55°C in the summer! Apart from scorpions, snakes, and unexploded ordnance, especially on the Iraqi side of the DMZ, the biggest threat comes from Kuwaiti drivers who put their faith in Allah and their foot on the accelerator–In Sha Allah! That said, it's a unique experience and certainly different!

11 SIGNAL BRIGADE DONNINGTON

THE NEW LOOK 11 SIGNAL BRIGADE

To create the G6 Division in HQ LAND and prepare for the JRDF, it was decided to regroup Royal Signals units within Land Command. As a result, 11 Sig Bde took control of a number of additional units in January: 30 Sig Regt, 40 Sig Regt (V) and 94 (BY) Sig Sqn. In addition, the Bde now has Technical Direction and MS responsibilities for: 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and 604 Sig Tp.

These significant additions have brought the strength of the Brigade up to just over 4000 of which approximately half are TA. The Brigade is now responsible for the day to day management and technical control of all of the Army's strategic communications assets, over 60% of its Ptarmigan assets and over 90% of its Euromux equipment. At the same time, the Bde HQ Staff have taken on the task of assisting J6 Branch in Northwood with planning communications support for land-based JRDF/JFHQ deployments. Notwithstanding the above, the Bde retains its responsibility to provide trunk and CNR support to the ARRC.

Inevitably, these changes have brought with them an increased work load for the small but dedicated HQ Staff. However, rumours that the NHS is considering sending some of its trainee doctors to the HQ to undergo sleep deprivation trials are totally unfounded.

BRIGADE TRAINING WEEKEND JANUARY 97

The first TA training weekend of 1997 enabled a great deal of 'team bonding' to take place. Having just taken over as COS, **Maj Paul Hudson** found himself bonded to his desk trying to grapple with the problems of arriving in a Brigade that had doubled in size the previous week! The remainder of the staff and several of the wives enjoyed themselves undertaking a variety of activities from a new 'Green' form of Clay Pigeon Shooting, whereby firers assumed that the idea was not to hit the clays,

DCOS Charlie Millar and CEC Lee Brown
Why are they looking in different directions?
DCOS is cock eyed!

The Saturday Night saw the Bde Staff and their wives assemble to say farewell to some old timers in the shape of **Maj** (now Lt Col) **David Proctor** . . . who gave a somewhat lengthy speech! and **Maj David Whimpenny** whose NI pay will no doubt help pay for a more comfortable Mess Kit! The evening was rounded off in style with a short playlet, performed by the Ironbridge Players led by the DCOS, entitled 'A day in the life of a COS' which was a somewhat scurrilous interpretation of what goes on behind the closed door of the COS's office. As a result the new COS has decided to enforce a new open door policy!

EXERCISE STAFF RAMBLE 1/97 'THE SOUTH BANK SHOW'

Ex Staff Ramble, Comd 11 Sig Bde's 'Bonding' exercise, sees the HQ Staff (both military and civilian) take part in events such as walking up Snowdon or mountain biking along the Tissington trail in the Derbyshire Dales (on Army mountain bikes that need to be pedalled down hill!!). The aims of this exercise are obvious and on the whole enjoyable for everyone (except 'Toby' the dog). Ex Staff Ramble 1/97 was a walk along the Tow Paths of the River Thames, starting at Reading, taking in a Brewery at Henley followed by a further walk to Marlow. Assets available were a Thames Tow Path specialist from HQ 5 Division and one of the Managing Directors of Brakespeares Brewery **Col (now Brig) A. P. Verey TD (V)**.

A dubious start was made in that the Tow Path specialist cancelled the day before, which should have warned us that all was not well. The party travelled in three groups aiming to meet at the start point in Reading at 0830hrs. Comd 1 Bde arrived on time (as usual), next was the SNCO/JNCO transport (only one hour late), nobody could be bothered to wait for the Officer transport (they might not have been in England).

The first two groups set off late having reassured the Commander that there was still plenty of time to meet with **Col Verey** who was waiting at the Brewery. There was even a possibility that somewhere along the walk we would meet up with the Officers. At the end of the first leg we met the transport at the right spot and with time to spare. There was even refreshing news that the Officers had made the start point and were not far behind. The sun shone and all was well!! Then it started to rain. By some strange freak of nature we took a wrong turn. Although not lost, we found ourselves on the wrong side of the River Thames. There was no way of getting back across unless we walked all the way to Henley via the main road, this would make us late for the Brewery. Not a problem! We can all map read: after all, this is the Bde HQ, if we can't get ourselves out of a problem, who can?

We tried bribing canoeists 20 pounds to take us across. We trudged through swamps. We clambered through peoples property (and very nice property too).

We were late for the Brewery. 'Do you think the Officers have made it?' said the Commander. 'Trust me, if we haven't made it, the Officers wouldn't have' said the **** (Name protected). One and a half hours late, we finally arrived at the Brewery. 'Hello' said the Officers, 'Where have you been?' After many apologies some food and a fine pint of Brakespeares Brew, **Col Verey** kindly showed the remainder of us around the Brewery.

The sun started to shine again. The rest of the walk passed without incident, except for much mockery. The point to note from all of this, especially for those who are planning similar outings is: 'If you think this will ever be forgotten, if you think your career will climb back to where it was before the walk, if you think that some disaster will finally come along which will avert peoples attention–'You're Wrong'. This all took place on 4 February 1997. It is now 6 April 1997 and I am being ordered to commit this to *The Wire* for all to read. 'Never Again!'

THE PTARMIGAN TRAINING CENTRE, DONNINGTON

The Study of Royal Signals Ptarmigan Training carried out by the MAN S (Org) Assignment 765 in 1992 recommended that three Ptarmigan Training Centres should be built for each of the three TA Regiments to be issued with Ptarmigan as a part of Options Whisky. These were to be built in Liverpool for 33 Sig Regt (V), Darlington for 34 Sig Regt (V) and Sutton Coldfield for 35 Sig Regt (V).

TAVRA North East were quick off the mark and the centre at Darlington was completed before the deadline imposed for the expenditure of Options Whisky funding. The centre was magnificent but had overrun the budget which brought into question the funds available for the two remaining centres at Liverpool and Sutton Coldfield. After much prevarication no solution was found.

The re-location of the Bde HQ to Donnington, a site between Liverpool and Sutton Coldfield, presented the possibility of an amalgamated Centre to be constructed adjacent the new Bde HQ. This met with HQ Land approval, funds were made available and the go ahead was given in December 1996.

The contractors broke ground on 13 February and the expected completion date is 15 September. The finished article will be a tremendous asset both to the Corps and to HQ 5th Division for training and conference purposes and will be something that the 'aborigines can sing about.'

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS & TRAINING

The Royal School of Signals
Blandford

Number 37 Troop Commanders Course

Commander Royal School of Signals presents the top student award for Number 37 Troop Commanders Course to 2Lt Andrew 'Hoppy' Hopcraft, posted to 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

The sportsmen and women of Number 37 Troop Commanders Course: (*L-R*) 2Lts Katie Caie (Army Ladies Orienteering Champion), Owen Finnie (Corps Swimming), Andrew 'Hoppy' Hopcraft (Corps Hockey), Andrew 'Skippy' Stead (Corps Officers Rugby), Nigel Francis-McGann (Corps Officers Rugby) and Roddy Wilson (Corps Rugby and Corps Officers Rugby)

Commander Royal School of Signals presents the Evis Memorial Sword to 2Lt Andrew 'Hoppy' Hopcraft. The sword is presented to the Top Student of the R Signals Tp Commanders Course

The 15th Quartermasters' Convention

by Lt Col A. M. Boyle R Signals

This year's Quartermasters' Convention took place on 18 April 1997 at Blandford. This consisted of a day of topical syndicated discussions, culminating with dinner in the HQ Mess.

There were 81 serving and retired Quartermasters at the function and the theme this year was the cutting of the Umbilical Cord between Yorkshire and Dorset, now that AAC Harrogate has moved to The Royal School of Signals and there are no training facilities in the North.

To that end, guests included the last commanding officers of both 8 and 11 Sig Regt and the Army Apprentice College, Harrogate and the current commanding officer of 11 Sig Regt.

The other guests were the Signal Officer in Chief and, for the last time, the Master of Signals, whom we were saying farewell to. Did you know that **Maj Gen Birtwistle** was a sailor for 22 days! . . . that was a few years ago of course!

We were also dining out the two senior Lieutenant Colonels; **Lt Col Len Jeffrey** and **Lt Col Ian Buckley** (our man in Hong Kong). Each said a few words about each other which went down very well. Inevitably the President of the Retired Quartermasters, **Maj Buttons Young**, updated us regarding the antics of his members.

The band excelled themselves by performing a routine not seen by the gathering before. They name it 'Cats'; ask them to perform it for you the next time you have the band!

A most successful convention. See you all on 17 April 1998!

Royal Signals Training and Development Team

COMPOSITION OF THE TEAM

SO1	Lt Col D. G. Weston
SO2	Maj G. D. Anderson
SO2 TDA	Maj I. M. G. Waller
SO2(V) TA Trg	Maj M. T. H. Stewart
SIO	Mr A. Knott
OPS SECTION	
OC Ops Sect	Maj A. C. Doane
Yof S1	WO1 S. C. Wayman
YofS2	WO2 S. P. Sutton
TECH SECTION	
OC Tech Sect	Capt J. D. Gorse
FofS1	WO1 S. E. Hatfield
FofS2	WO2 R. Wilson
ADMIN SP	
Ch Clk	Miss L. J. Hurst
Clk	Mr P. J. Callary

It has been some considerable time since the Training and Development Team (TDT) appeared in *The Wire* and for those who are not aware what we do, we are essentially your, that is the units' representatives in the Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA). Our primary responsibility is to ensure that the content of training is correct in order to allow you to carry out your tasks. We achieve this by constantly revising, updating and improving the Training Objectives for all Royal Signals courses, less those courses held at Comms & Sy Gp. To this end the Team spends a large amounts of time visiting units, interviewing you, to discover if the Corps Training Objectives are valid and up-to -date. Units recently visited include: 1 Sig Bde, 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn all in Croatia and Bosnia. Other members of the Team have visited 2, 9, 15 and 30 Sig Regts, 259 Sig Sqn and 600 Sig Tp. Luckier members of the Team also visited the US Signal Centre at Fort Gordon in Georgia. This programme of visits is designed to externally validate training and is an ongoing process. The visits will continue and we hope to visit other units later in the year.

CHANGES IN TRAINING

Since the last update from TDT there have been some changes to trade training courses.

Operator Group: In the world of Operator Trades Tele Op (Tg) and (Sys) now have a CIS module on both Class 1 and Class 3 courses. Morse training has been removed from the Tele Op (Tg) courses. Tele Op (Sys) now receive formal SAF and SCC training on their Class 1 course. For all Operator courses duplication of training has been removed between Class 1 and Class 3 training and management packages have been introduced on all Class 1 courses.

Tech Group: For both Tele Tech (R) and (Sys) there have been some considerable changes. Duplication of training has been removed between Class 1 and Class 3 courses. Commonality between Radio and Systems courses has been identified. Networking and newer technologies have been introduced. More emphasis has been placed on installations and systems rather than stand-alone equipment. More information on Health & Safety legislation in the workshop environment is now included on all courses. In the same vein as Operator courses there is now an emphasis on management and supervisory skills at Class 1 level.

Dvr Elec: For the Dvr Elec courses FEPDS and a new lighting kit will be introduced. This means that Class 1 soldiers will be responsible for FEPDS system certification within units.

Dvr Lmn: The redundant Ptarmigan elements have been removed from the Class 1 course and have been replaced with more focused practical line planning work.

Stores Acct: A detailed study is planned to identify changes in the training requirement.

CIVILIAN QUALIFICATIONS

The implementation of NVQs in the Corps carries on apace and TDT have been involved at every level. We are members of the Army Vocational Qualification Steering Group, this committee is tasked with the implementation of Vocational Qualifications Army wide. We also provide the chair and secretary for the Joint Services Telecoms NVQ Committee (JSTNC). The telecommunications communities of all three services and Royal Marines meet to share best practice in the implementation of NVQs. TDT. Also to provide representation to the Telecommunications Vocational Standards Council (TVSC); the industry lead body for telecommunications, at Board and Steering Group level where we represent the interests of tri-service communicators. **Capt Dave Gorse** sits on the Telecommunications Industry Training Organisation (TelITO) which is concerned with setting the framework for the Modern Apprenticeship and also setting and maintaining standards for training within the industry. At the sharp end TDT are actively involved in assisting and advising units to set up their own NVQ assessment systems. A NVQ level 3 pilot is now being run at the Royal School of Signals on the Tele Op (Data) Class 1 course and it is the aim to expand this to other trades in the future. In the Field Army, 1 UK Armd Div, 7, 16 and 30 Sig Regts are working towards implementing an NVQ scheme. 249 (AMF(L)) Sig Sqn are running their own NVQ assessment scheme and have recently awarded their first NVQs, which were assessed on exercise in Norway.

TDT TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS

TDT has been investigating different methods of access to training development material (i.e. RSTOs, Job Specifications). The aim of this development work is that the quantity of paper needing distributed is reduced and at the same time the quality of information provided is increased. Areas of investigation have included 3.5inch disks, CD-ROM, On-line electronic access via dial-up networking and on-line electronic access using World Wide Web technology. A pilot study involving 2 (NC) Sig Bde is investigating the issues involved.

As well as access to training objectives, these technologies will also allow the use of electronic questionnaires for information gathering. In the near future this will enable TDT to provide a faster, more responsive service to the Field Army and ensure that the training agency better meets the training requirement set.

SO1 HANDOVER /TAKEOVER

Lt Col Jim Ross (right) hands over command of R Signals TDT to Lt Col Dave Weston (left).

Finally, on 11 April 1997 **Lt Col Jim Ross** handed over the reins of TDT to **Lt Col Dave Weston**. The occasion was unusual in the fact that both officers are Tfc Offrs and their combined years of service adds up to a total of 71 years! **Lt Col Ross** retires from the Army in August to concentrate on his golf and the odd bit of consultancy work! Meanwhile the sporting emphasis in TDT has moved away from golf. Snatches of conversation have been overheard, with the words Triumph, Matchless, Ducati and Honda being mentioned. The tide has turned at last!

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The White Helmets

And so the training continues . . .

With 25 April and the Opening Show looming, the team embarked on an intensive three week training camp in RAF Sealand, Chester. The RAF proved to be extremely co-operative and provided excellent training and administrative facilities. Training was carried out on the glider airfield with the bikes housed and looked after in the friendly MT garages.

The camp proved, initially, to be fairly injury-free . . . until the car jumping phase was introduced. The select few were chosen to hold the ramp and the rest of the team then divided into those who wanted to, and those who didn't. **Sig** 'Nobby' **Summons** started off by showing how it was supposed to be done and then the 'beginners', rather fraught with anticipation, lined up. **Sig** 'Sammy' **Samson** proved to be rather a natural, and **Sig** 'Tintin' **Owen**, on completion of his first successful jump, claimed that the feeling was better than anything he had ever experienced before . . . He spoke too soon, for on attempt number two the bike (?) did not perform as planned and 'Tintin' ended up on his back. **Sig** 'Togs' **Teague** was next and he did a superb jump–shame about the landing. A delayed reaction to the latter resulted in a little trip to Chester Hospital the next day. Finally, **Cpl** 'Andy' **Butterfield** provided the 'creme de la creme' of impressive landings and ended up with a broken foot and in a somewhat confused mental state (situation normal?!) By this time, numbers in the queue of 'wannabe car jumpers' had dwindled noticeably and the Team Sergeant, **Sgt** 'Don' **Brebner**, decided to call it a day.

The Sqn Comd, **Maj Russell**, took a brief respite from budgets and policy to visit the team in Chester. It proved to be rather briefer than anticipated when, on day one, he took a bit of a tumble on the fire jump and added his name to the rather long list of White Helmets visitors to Chester General. Thankfully, he is now more or less recovered–did we hear something about not teaching an old dog new tricks . . .?

The team managed to enjoy a bit of socialising in their time off and honoured the local haunts with their presence. Notable occurrences included the Team Captain proving her social failings in the famous 'shoewear' incident–LCpl 'Daz' **Hankin** has still to forgive her for that undrunk pint. Additionally, **Sig** 'Slimline Tony' **Annetts** is now an avid subscriber to the 'Dateline' service provided by his boss . . ??

After Chester and a successful final show put on for the residents and workers of RAF Sealand, it was time to return to Blandford. Bikes needed re-trimming, CFTs and BFTs needed to be updated, and the complete show required spit and polish. In between, the team assisted on a number of PR, goodwill and recruiting visits. A class from Spetisbury School were given a White Helmets 'tour'. An assortment of Potential Officers were encouraged to join the Royal Signals so that they too could have a chance of riding motorcycles for a living and finally we were host to a somewhat high profile visit from a 93 year old great grandmother.

This latter visit resulted from an arrangement between the Team Captain and **Georgina Cavena**, the girlfriend of **Sig Keatley**, an ex-team member. **Georgina** works for the Signpost Housing Association, in a home for old people, and she wished to raise money for the home through a sponsored day with the White Helmets. The visit developed somewhat when the Press got hold of the story of a 93 year-olds' wish to ride a motorcycle. On the day, reporters from BBC Southampton, HTV West, Meridian, the Blackmore Vale and Radio Solent turned out in force and besieged the team with cameras, microphones and notepads. **Mrs Edith Nobles** (pictured below) impressed all by her incredible nimbleness–she hopped happily onto the Triumph behind **Cpl** 'Ellie' **Elson** and waved her walking stick, having first taken part in a mini version of the Irish Whip! Reports appeared in all the regional news programmes that evening and **Cpl Elson** now does autograph signing full-time.

Don't forget–if anyone reading this is interested in joining the best team in the world, send in the proforma. Any questions, contact **Maj Russell** or **Capt Giles** on Blandford Mil Ext 2365.

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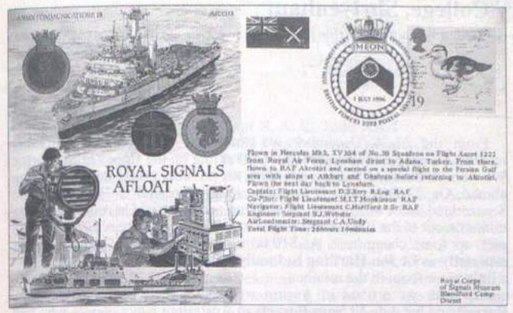
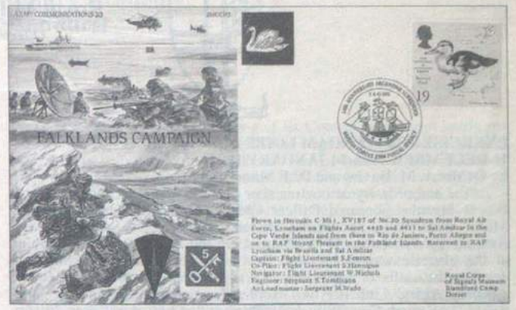
Commemorative Postal Covers

The last two in the series of 20 Commemorative Postal Covers issued by the Royal Signals Museum have now been released.





ROYAL SIGNALS AFLOAT

Royal Signals Detachments have served on board HM ships to provide communications in amphibious warfare operations and on logistic supply vessels since before the Second World War. 601 Sig Tp joined HMS *Meon* after the war and took part in the 1956 Suez Operation when HMS *Meon* was a Headquarters Ship. HMS *Meon* was officially affiliated to Royal Signals in August 1960, flying the Corps flag at her masthead on the 40th anniversary of the formation of the Corps. HMS *Meon* was again a Headquarters Ship during Operation Vantage in 1961. This operation forestalled an earlier threat to Kuwait's borders with Iraq. HMS *Meon* was decommissioned in 1965 and the ship's bell now occupies a place of honour in the Royal Signals Museum.

The Commemorative Cover is dated 1 July 1996 to commemorate the 35th Anniversary of Operation Vantage and the date stamp is based on the ship's badge of HMS *Meon*. Admiral of the Fleet, **Sir Edward Ashmore, GCB DSC**, has signed 'Special' versions of the cover. After a distinguished career which included command of HMS *Mercury*, the Naval Signal School, and Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Signals) at the MoD he was appointed First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff in 1974. RAF Hercules aircraft have flown all these covers to the Persian Gulf.

THE FALKLANDS CAMPAIGN

The cover illustrations show two aspects of R Signals involvement in the operation to recapture the Falkland Islands in 1982. The action of **Sgt Mather MM**, R Signals who was a member of a SAS surveillance team landed on the islands before the task force landed at San Carlos and the satellite ground terminal of 30 Sig Regt that provided communications to the UK.

Formation signs include those of the Commando and 5 Inf Bdes and the White Swan. Regimental badge of 30 Sig Regt. The date stamp depicts the vessel *Desire* in which **John Davies** discovered the islands in 1592 and the covers are dated 14 June 1996, the 14th anniversary of the Argentinean surrender.

General Sir Michael Rose, KCB CBE DSO QGM ADC Gen has signed 'Special' versions of the cover. As Lieutenant Colonel commanding 22 SAS, he negotiated the surrender of Argentinean troops with **General Menendez** at Port Stanley. **General Rose** is presently Adjutant General and has agreed to re-open the Royal Signals Museum in May following the completion of the extension and modernisation project. RAF Hercules aircraft has flown all these covers to the Falkland Islands.

Details of all the covers in the series are available from:

The New Museum Project Office
Royal Signals Museum
Blandford Camp
Dorset DT11 SRH

Those purchasing complete sets of the 'Special' covers for £100 will also, at no extra cost, receive them in a suitable presentation album.

NOTICE

For: ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS FUND
Read: ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

THE BLANDFORD PROJECT

The rebuild of Blandford Camp to form a single centre for R Signals training is almost complete. The 'face' of the camp has changed much during the past three years with many new buildings where before there were green spaces. All new training or work facilities are blue clad finished whereas living accommodation is red brick under pitched roofs. All areas have been left soft landscaped but it will be several growing seasons before these are mature and fully established.

Phase 1 was completed in April 1996 and Phase 2 should be handed over in mid July 1997. The main buildings in Phase 2 are the octagonal 'Catterick Room'–a public room in HQ Mess (14 April 97). Then there are the two 102 bed junior ranks single accommodation blocks known as 'Cairo' and 'Hereford' blocks. These are mainly four man rooms and carpeted throughout). HQ Mess single living accommodation– three story block with 30 suites for field officers (10 July 97) and the 'Harrogate' block, a two storey, 4,500 sq metre training block on the North side of Hawke square (1 May 97).

Yet another building project which dominates the area by Engineer's Corner is the construction of the building for the Land Reference Centre. This is an MoD (PE) project where Syntegra will model and test all future Army and many Defence communication systems, equipments and software upgrades during their development, introduction into service and throughout their life.

BLANDFORD PARACHUTE CLUB

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Royal Military College, Shrivenham

(Electronics & Guided Weapons Division)

EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM LOIPE
11 DECEMBER 1996-14 JANUARY 1997
by OCdts A. M. Davies and D. J. Mann

At the end of last year one member of the Corps (**Lt Colin Kell**) and two R Signals sponsored Officer Cadets (**Anna Davies** and **Duncan Mann**) undertook a period of adventure training in the Swiss Alps and Austrian Tyrol, between 11 December 1996 and 14 January 1997. The aim of the exercise was to introduce novice skiers to Nordic Skiing and develop the skills of intermediate skiers by taking part in the Royal Artillery Alpine Club (RAAC) Nordic Training Scheme and the joint Royal Armoured Corps/Royal Artillery and Army Air Corps Nordic Skiing Championships. All members of the expedition were undergraduates from RMCS Shrivenham. The exercise leader was **Lt Chris Brogan RE**. He was assisted by **Lt Colin Kell** and **2Lt Ben Macinnes REME**. After two months of panic planning it finally started on 11 December 1996 after a long university term at Shrivenham. Now with passport in hand (or in baggage on the roof rack) we were ready to depart, in our heavily loaded minibus, for 4½ weeks skiing. The expedition team consisted of five officers and three Officer Cadets: one seasoned veteran; two 'Arctic Warriors', one semi-novice (exmogul man with bad knees); and four Nordic newcomers–two of whom had not skied at all before. We caught a ferry from Dover to Calais and eventually arrived in Pontresina (nr. St Moritz) at 0200hrs on 13 December. The journey had taken us 25 hours with a number of long stops on the way. Unfortunately our time appreciation meant that we had to sleep in the minibus until a more sociable hour to take-over our accommodation.

As soon as we had unpacked the minibus we waxed our skis ready for our first afternoon on skis. This proved to be an extremely amusing spectacle as everyone tried to find their legs/balance. On Monday 16 December we joined the RAAC Training Scheme, which is a three-week course designed to teach and improve Nordic skiing technique to RA personnel. Unfortunately due to the term period at Shrivenham we were only able to join the scheme in its final week. The scheme organiser, **Maj** 'Spike' **Butcher RA** (HQ 4 Div), integrated the more experienced of us with other groups and very kindly set up a 'special' group for the four novices. Then with a lot of patient instruction, from Spike himself, we managed to grasp the basics–we quickly learnt the 'head plant' halt. On the Wednesday we had our first race, the 10km Freestyle, which only the more experienced members took part in as the novices had not been taught to skate at this stage. Considering we had only been on snow for six days the team; **Lts Chris Brogan**, **Jon Harding RA** and **Steve Mellor RILC** and **OCdt Tom Salberg**, did extremely well. The novices, however, were not left out as their turn soon came on the Friday with the 7km Classic race. Although a short race it proved to be a very hard first race as it was about 98% uphill! Everyone managed to make it to the top where a lunch of Bratwurst mit Kartoffeln was awaiting. Here the final farewell speeches and prizes were presented. **OCdt Anna Davies** won first prize, and a cap, for being first in the women's category (first and only woman in the race). The RAAC Training Scheme provided an excellent standard of training from some of the experts in the field of Nordic skiing and equipped us with the basic techniques and knowledge to improve. Our only regret was that we could not have attended the full three-week course.

From (*R-L*): Lt Brogan RE, Lt Mellor RLC, OCdt Mann, OCdt Salberg, Lt Kell R.Signals

From the 21-26 December we continued with our own training including a couple of rest days downhill skiing on the slopes of St Moritz. We were determined to try everything we possibly could whilst we were abroad. On 27 December it was time to say farewell to Pontresina and Switzerland and a welcome to Hochfilzen and Austria. On route we took a minor detour to the PX in Garmisch Parten Kirchen where we were able to pick up some cheap beer. At $10.60 a crate of Bud we had no choice especially as **Lt Jon Harding** had sadly returned to the UK and there was a little more room in the minibus.

Just after we arrived in Austria we were joined by **Lt Cdr Mark Pureell** and his wife **Lt Sam Pureell** an Australian Navy couple who had just completed a short course at Shrivenham. We were glad for the new company and as they were both seasoned skiers also their critique. We achieved eight more days of training before the start of the RAC/RA/AAC Championships and were averaging around 25-30km a day. Classic skiing tended to be a real problem as the cold icy snow scraped off the stick wax and as reluctant as we were to using it Klister (stickier and goo ier than a very gooey thing) was the only answer. Apres Ski was usually food, water and sleep but occasionally we found ourselves sampling the Tyrol night-life. We were naturally attracted to a pub called 'The Londoner', which was exclusively staffed by Australians, and proved to be a popular venue.

The teams that participated in the RAC/RA/AAC Championships consisted mainly of RAC and RA teams (no AAC) with guest teams from the RAF, Parachute Regiment, Devon & Dorset's and Highlanders. During the Championships we would spend the day between the range (much needed) and inspecting the course of the race. The first race was the 10km Freestyle which was not too pleasant as the course could not be pisted and was covered in ice patches–most of them placed on downhill bends. Next was the Team Biathlon in which we entered two teams the fastest four forming the 'A-Team' (**Brogan, Mann, Mellor** and **Salberg**) the remainder formed the 'B-Team' (**Kell, Macinnes, Pureell** and **Pureell**). Both teams worked hard to compensate for poor shooting and came 10th and 21st respectively, out of 25 teams. The next race was 7.5km Team Relay Biathlon the only change being **Lt Colin** 'Black Russian' **Kell** replacing **Lt Steve** 'Shark' **Mellor** in the 'A-team' on shooting merit. However, this was to no avail as everyone shot poorly with the exception of **OCdt Tom Salberg** and **Lt Sam Pureell**–this was purely attributed to the fine skill at arms training from **Lt Colin Kell**. But as the saying goes–"Those that can do. Those that can't teach!' The A and B teams came 20th and 22nd respectively out of a field of 27 teams–not too bad. The final race of the Championships was the 12km Classic Pursuit race. Due to the lack of stick and the flatness of the course meant that the main method of propulsion was by arms. This was a fast course with a couple of nasty corners that as we found out were not supposed to be taken at high speed! Four hours later we were back on the minibus and looking forward to returning to school! Many thanks go to the RAC/RA/AAC Championship staff for allowing us to take part it was an education and a pleasure. The Championships certainly lived up to their nickname of 'The Friendly Games'.

OCdt Mann after the 4x7.5Km Biathlon Relay

In summary the expedition was invaluable in building the skills, some from scratch, of the exercise members. The RAAC Training Scheme was well run and is recommended to any unit that can persuade the RA to let them join. The RAC/RA/AAC Nordic Skiing Championships were also well organised and provided the exercise members with a number of races that enabled them to gauge their abilities and whet their appetites for more skiing. Roll on the 97/98 season.

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

Chief Instructor	**Capt R. A. U. Todd KRH**
RSMI	**WO1 (YofS) Kenny Kendrick**
YofS Old College	**WO2 (YofS) Russ Darlington**
YofS New College	**WO2 (YofS) Andy Campbell**

Over the past 12 years, the Signal Wing at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst has demised from a previous Royal Signals Monopoly to now only 22% of wing personnel. All arms personnel arrive qualified as Regimental Signals Instructor for SNCOs and minimum Class 2 for ORs. This varied background allows the full range of Signals versus Unit role reference. It also means a steep learning curve for those Royal Signals personnel arriving in Sandhurst, meeting a Corporal of the Horse, who wears three tapes and a crown, is in fact a Sgt and doesn't necessarily ride horses can be a daunting experience. Of course there are other anomalies, why is the Scots DG SSgt addressed as Serjeant Major and why, in the Academy do they spell Serjeant with a 'J'. All of which add to the uniqueness of RMA Sandhurst.

EXERCISE SPRING VICTORY 97

LCpl Trev Trevelyan RDG, Sgt Al Smith Scots DG, Sgt Bernie Clifton QDG, LCpl Ben O'Shea R Signals, Sgt Mick Simpson R Anglian, LCpl Steve Williams R Signals, WO2 (YofS) Russ Darlington R Signals, LCpl Stef Milner R Signals
CSgt Carl Harris 1RRW, Gnr Smudge Smith RA, GDSM 'Taff' Thomas WG, LCpl Norm Wright 1 Green Howards, LCpl Paul Bain 1 SG, Tpr 'Hoppy' Hopkins QDG, Bdr Tony Spears RA

Ex Spring Victory was the Threshold Exercise for Commissioning Course number 962. The exercise was centred on Bloodhound Camp in the Western Sovereign Base Area of Cyprus.

The Pre-advance party, consisting of Ex Control department heads and a small support contingent, deployed four days before the advance party and 11 days before the officer cadets arrived in theatre. Plenty of time to ensure the necessary communication infrastructure was operational to support the field deployment as well as behind the scenes C2. It also allowed Signal Wing personnel to spend slightly over 24 hours relaxing in the Mediterranean sun, hail, rain and electrical storms.

As the Signal Wing within the Academy suffer manpower shortages at this busy time of the academic term, we draw upon external units to support this exercise. The location of Cyprus negates the need to twist any arms. This Term's volunteers were **LCpl Stef Milner**, **LCpl Ben O'Shea** (the Radio Tech) and **LCpl Steve Williams** all of 24 Airmob Bde Sig Sqn (210). External from the Corps, **LCpl Paul Bain** 1 Scots Gds. Thanks to all those who supported the exercise for a job extremely well done.

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Welcome to **Maj Bob Sharp** posted into New College to command Arnhem Coy, an extended welcome to his family. **Capt Sharon Moffatt** arriving to command 2 Platoon Blenheim Coy. **Capt Rupert Chapman** and family commanding Dettingen Coy in Old College. **LCpl** 'Mac' **MacArthur** recently arrived from 238 Sig Sqn into Commex Tp.

Early Goodbye to **WO2 (YofS) Russ Darlington** who is off to 15 Sig Regt in Lisburn after spending over two months in Cyprus during his tour in Sandhurst. Looking forward to **WO2 (YofS) Tony Bunce** and family arriving from Corsham. **Sig Dave Vakalala** posted to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt in Herford. Farewell to **SSgt Harry Kemp** posted to 3 (UK) Div and Sig Regt. **Capt John Cole** posted to 14 Sig Regt as Adjt.

Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Taff' **Thomas** on selection for WO2 and **LCpl John Cranswick** on selection to Cpl.

NEW ARRIVALS IN THE CORPS

After completing 12 months intense and often arduous training on the commissioning course, ten Officer Cadets have taken up commissions and passed out of the Academy mid April. Welcome to the R Signals, now the learning really starts. Good luck to all in your careers with the Corps. As you're already paying for your copy of *The Wire*, here's your name to justify the cost:

2Lt Colin Alexander	-	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt Ivan Bates	-	249 AMF (L) Sig Sqn
2Lt Kerry Cochran	-	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt Cris Crowther	-	30 Sig Regt
2Lt Steve Hutchinson	-	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt Karl Jeeves	-	30 Sig Regt
2Lt Jim Lambeth	-	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt Ian Lowther	-	5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt Emma Rae	-	7 Sig Regt
2Lt Annabel Taylor	-	4 Armd Bde

263 (Harrogate) Signal Squadron
Army Apprentices College
Arborfield

SQUADRON PERSONALITIES

Sqn Comd	**Maj C. S. K. Paterson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D. Forteath**

UPDATE ON THE ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE ARBORFIELD
by Capt E. P. Driscoll

Prior to the closure of Harrogate last September, 263 (Harrogate) Sig Sqn was set up ready to receive the first intake of 50 potential Telecommunications Operators and 49 potential Technicians into the Modern Apprenticeship. They arrived on the 9th September last year. Those that passed phase 1 of training here moved to Blandford for trade training on 6 May this year. When this is published we will have trained, or be training, a total of 280 recruits in our first year.

The old two year Apprenticeship has been divided into two parts. Phase 1 training is conducted at Arborfield consisting of two 14-week terms. During the first 14 weeks Apprentices undergo their basic recruit training, the Common Military Syllabus (Recruits). The content on this course is identical to the 11 week ATR syllabus at Bassingbourn. The end of the first term contains leadership and character development training not carried out at an ATR. Obviously we have the added challenge of training, and looking after, junior soldiers aged from 16 years to 17.5 years. Those that pass out from the first term, currently around 75% of the intake, move on to become seniors. The emphasis then changes from the strict military regime of the first term. Obviously discipline standards are not lowered but the onus is on self-discipline. That is, the Apprentices are now given more freedom. The aim of this is to prepare them for Blandford where they join single entry soldiers for phase 2 training and are treated as trained soldiers, and not recruits.

The content of the second term is largely centred around education. Military training and physical fitness is still programmed, but not with the intensity of CMS(R). The course is divided between Technical Studies in preparation for trade training, and a general military education from the AGC (ETS) personnel in the Military Studies Wing. This covers areas ranging from report writing to the role of the Army and the Royal Signals' part in it.

To achieve all this the Squadron consists of four Troops, two junior term and two senior term. The junior term Troop consists of a Tp OC, Tp Sgt and four Cpls. The majority of the military training and discipline falls to the Cpls. It is hard work with long hours and all the frustrations of trying to turn civilian adolescents into trained soldiers. On the plus side the training is rewarding and the permanent staff have 10 weeks leave a year. It is also a good career move for a young Cpl who wishes to take a tour out

of trade and concentrate on the military aspects of life (as well as gain SAA, drill, NBC, first aid and map reading qualifications). There is also a need for people with an interest in mountaineering, caving, canoeing and rock climbing. The senior term staff is employed mainly for administration, but still conduct military continuation training throughout the term. Troop ORBAT consists of a Tp OC, Tp Sgt and one Cpl. The heritage committee have now titled the Sqn: 263 (Harrogate) Signal Squadron. 263 Signal Squadron was a training Squadron in Singapore from 1964 to 1965. The Harrogate part of our name is to carry on the memory of the previous Apprentice system that has sadly been lost.

The SOinC meets (L to R) Sgt Anthea Burdus, Mercury 'Messenger of God' and Sgt 'Paddy' Townley.

EXERCISE SOLENT SIGNET 1997
by AT Sgt Longworth

Ex Solent Signet commenced on 10 February, a wet and windy winter's day. Three yachts were drawn from the Joint Services Yacht Club at Gosport. Each of these yachts 'warmly' welcomed two members of permanent staff and four 'eager to learn' Apprentices.

Day 1–After all of the personal kit and rations etc. had been stowed away, it was time to learn about safety on the boat. Shortly after this, the crews became proficient at knots under the instruction and guidance of the respective yacht skippers.

Day 2–We got an early start to the journey on our second day and by 8 o'clock we had already washed, eaten and were well on our way out of the harbour at Gosport. With a force eight gale blowing onto us, our drills on the boat were left rather wanting. We finally made it to Southampton by about 6 o'clock and sat down to a greatly welcomed curry for dinner. Our first full day sailing certainly tired us out and sleeping through the night's storm took no trouble whatsoever.

Day 3–The journey was a rough one today with the winds reaching up to force nine. We left Southampton harbour and instantly hit the heavy waves. This day definitely introduced us to the other side of sailing compared to the calmer seas that we had experienced over the previous days of the expedition. Good old fashioned fish and chips was on the menu for lunch as we moored up at the 'Jolly Sailor' for a few hours around midday, before regaining our course for Cowes. This part of the journey was the most difficult and of the three yachts who set off, only two of them made it to the Isle of Wight. The remaining yacht, *Trochus*, lost her keel and was towed by the lifeboat back to Hamble. Seasickness got a grasp on one of our crewmembers and needless to say, there was no dispute over who was going to be scrubbing the decks that night!

Day 4–The force 10 gales would have been unconquerable and instead of sailing, we spent the entire morning cleaning the yacht ready for the handover on the following day. Throughout the day the weather conditions deteriorated and our original scheduled time for departure at 10 o'clock was delayed by six hours and we finally left at about 4 o'clock. Here we were to experience a few valuable hours of night sailing before reaching our final destination at Gosport for half past eight.

Day 5–Cleaning the yacht was inevitable and was done as quickly as possible before handing over and returning to dry land. The entire week proved to be extremely informative, exciting and physical. The majority who had taken part were keen to return to the waves for another expedition.

(*L to R*) ATs Bottomley, Keen, Burrel, Capt Driscoll, AT Sgt Longworth.

EXERCISE LONDON LEARN 8 APRIL 1997
by Lt Saul

At 0930 hrs on 8 April 1997 90 Apprentice Tradesmen disappeared into the dark and dusty depths of the London Underground. Their mission was to explore the capital city and answer a multitude of questions about the city and its landmarks, whilst attempting to avoid the ever watchful eyes of the permanent staff. The Apprentices were split into groups of four, dispatched into the city via Sloane Square and instructed to return at 1830 hrs that evening. The permanent staff running the exercise was **Capt** 'Gordon' **Newell**, **Lt** 'Daz' **Saul**, **Sgt** 'Paddy' **Townley**, **Cpl** 'Mac' **McCorkell** and **Cpl Cowlard**.

Naturally the young AT's were excited about the prospect of being let loose in our nation's capital and for most of them it was to be their first ever visit. First stop for the Apprentices was the cash point machine where they promptly emptied their accounts with their shiny new cash cards. Then, whilst the permanent staff went off to find a strategic "OP" to monitor the exercise, the apprentices set about their work. Very few apprentices were seen during the course of the day and it is probable that when the PS turned up to a location to monitor their progress they were all in transit. Thankfully all the Apprentices managed to get to the pick up point safely, intact and on time. The following AT's accomplished a few notable achievements from the exercise:

1. Getting back safely! All.
2. ATs **Melia**, **Treen**, **Love** and **Shriling** managed to get themselves paid ten pounds for watching a political video and filling in a questionnaire.
3. ATs **Livery**, **Mills**, **Maughan** and **Murray** found themselves in the company of a Calvin Klein underwear model complete with a camera.
4. Many of the AT's talked their way into Madame Tussauds for a free guided tour, much to the annoyance of the several hundred people waiting in the queue.

Undoubtedly a great day was had by all, the weather was very kind to us and we (the permanent staff) are very much looking forward to planning and running the exercise next term!

Apprentice Tradesmen on London Learn

EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP 2
by AT Cpl Muller

It was that time again. On 24 February 1997, 263 (Harrogate) Sig Sqn senior term departed for their second experience of External Leadership (EL 2). We knew what to expect this time and so lots of warm clothing and waterproofs filled our bags and cases. The format for the week was slightly different to EL 1 in that we could choose one of three activities for half of the week, and then enter the mountaineering phase for the other half. The activities were canoeing, climbing and caving.

Mountaineering–We set out on the Monday for a 40 km, 2 day expedition covering vast mountainous areas of South Wales. The weather gave us hell, and many problems arose because of it. Some members of one party started to suffer mild hypothermia, and abandoned their high-level hike in favour of a low-level minibus ride back to Crickhowell. After many hours of miserable, cold, wet walking over the mountains the rest of the groups were all ready for our overnight camp-out. As we arrived at the destination of the campsite our hearts sank, as we found it completely submerged from the overflowing river nearby. We searched for another suitable campsite in the immediate area but as none could be found we radioed HQ to see if they had any ideas. After a quick drive and recce of the area **Cpl Pegg** agreed and gave us all a lift to a relatively comfortable night in the accommodation at Crickhowell Camp. On the second day it was decided that we would not try any high level walking because of the predicted gale force winds. This meant a low level hike around the base of Sugerloaf mountain, practising navigational skills.

Canoeing–This was expected to be similar to EL 1 (Ice-breakers needed!), and so there were a lot of anxious people standing on the bank of the river waiting for the cold blast as they capsized. We were not disappointed! A few hours later we returned to the banks wet cold and numb.

Climbing–This was the activity for the adrenaline seekers! The first day was spent climbing on a sandstone rock-face. This was hard work but enjoyable. The second day was more fun as we were on a sheer rock-face practicing the art of abseiling. A few people overcame their fear of heights and had a go at the more traditional way of abseiling. This led onto different variations and ended up more like bungee jumping. Good fun had by all!

Caving–Squeezing through small holes underground is not for the faint hearted (or the claustrophobic!). Tunnels were explored and even bats were spotted but caused no trouble for the members of the caving party. Excellent fun was had and there were bruises and sore knees all round.

Return–With all the activities completed we packed our bags and said goodbye to another tiring but enjoyable experience in the Welsh countryside. We all piled onto the coaches for the sleepy journey back to Arborfield.

NEWS FROM BOSNIA

MND (SW) HQ & Sig Sqn (200) (20 Armd) BFPO 553

OPERATION LODESTAR
SHQ

Sqn Comd	**Maj Jim Richardson**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Kev Jones**

The Brigade's tour of Bosnia–Herzegovina is drawing to a close and ends a most historic two years for 20 Armd Bde. The Brigade was deployed as part of the UN Forces on Op Grapple 6 and then returned one year later to be part of IFOR and hand-over to 7 Armd Bde as SFOR. The Brigade has been heavily involved with operations during the tour and on return to Paderborn we will form the lead elements of JRDF for 12 months.

EXERCISE RASPUTINS' FIST

The unpredictable Bosnian weather threatened to spoil the day when members of SHQ set out for Lisina West Hill Top Site to construct the Brigade's flash–a mailed fist on the hill side. **Capt Paul Smith** masterminded the engineering aspects. The team of workers that included 'Ops Officer' **Capt Stu Boyne**, the RAO **Capt Steve Skidmore**, **Capt Ruth Pilkington**, **WO1 (RSM) Kev Jones**, **WO2 (SSM) Steve Bovan**, **Cpl Rob Lavers**, **LCpl** 'Taff' **Wainwright** and **LCpl Mick Moore** shifted nearly two tonnes of white stone which the Engineers had kindly dumped about 50 metres away. Whilst the workers slaved away, the OC **Maj Jim Richardson** and **SSgt (FofS) Marshall** wheeled their way down to the farmhouse below to sweet talk the local farmer who was somewhat concerned that any rolling stones would kill his sheep! After a few hours toil, the Sqn Comd's 'mad' idea was complete and we spent the next two hours filling our faces at a barbecue within the Colpro confines of the rebro location.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt D. R. Seymour**

Well here we are, with few days to do and the lads are now walking around with mobile chuff charts, although it's not politically correct to keep reminding those we are leaving behind or 207 Sig Sqn who are becoming the MND(SW) Sig Sqn. With 207 Sig Sqn come 7 Armd Bde HQ so the might of the mailed fist will be replaced by the rat or should I say the Jerboa.

The last couple of months has seen the Divisional Forward HQ (Armd) & (Light) exercised. The whole Div took part in the CPX, including the Czechs, Malaysians, Dutch and Canadians as well as the British Battle Groups. Some of the VP kept the staff officers bemused. The Light HQ was flown in, underslung, by a Chinook and the Armd HQ rumbled to their location under the protection of the Warrior. The resupply team made their final airborne water resupply, with two 5,000 litre water bladders and a Chinook to the Sjenokosic, even though it was March there was still plenty snow to keep the crew busy. The Troop office in the heart of the Metal Factory is often burning the midnight oil, **Lt Dave Seymour** claims it's due to the sheer volume of planning that needs to be done ready for roulement, not that he is exercising his BT card spending hours talking to his fiancee.

The Troop wishes all the best to the TA and Reservists that have been with the Squadron since Sipovo but are staying a few weeks longer to aide in the continuity of the H/TO with 207. The Troops we leave behind are **Cpl Martin Cox**, **Cpl** 'Fill dropping–it wasn't my fault' **Cook** and **LCpl Michelle Greenslade** we wish them all the best and look forward to seeing some of them on other Operational tours !

MT

MTO	**Lt Chris Roberts**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Crawford**

After the move from Sipovo to Banja Luka and the MT had bedded themselves in to their own private corner of Banja Luka Metal Factory, we found a 1 ton Cinders Trailer and decided to renovate it. The LAD were called in, ordered a new floor bed, straightened a few twisted parts and issued new tyres. **Cpl Scott Pringle**, **Sig Tom Dunham**, **LCpl** 'Pops' **Williams** and **Sig Chris Beckett** set about rust removal, painting and fitting the new tyres. The 'Ash' trailer was renamed and will take pride of place behind many a four-ton truck on the roads of the FRY, yet another vehicle for the LAD to look after. Work goes on 24 hours a day in the MT. **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Roberts** and **Sig Mick Starkie** have been caught servicing vehicles in their PJ's sipping night caps. There have also been allegations that **Sgts Pete Crawford** and **J. C. Jerrison** have served them with breakfast in bed closely hounded by **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Helliwell** crying 'I got in after midnight but no one brought me a Mars Bar at NAAFI break'.

It has been great working alongside the TA guys with many a laugh on all sides. As our tour draws to an end, good memories will be remembered by all in the MT, especially **Sgt J. C. Jerrison**'s April Fool's Day 'Karaoke' wind up!

LAD

Tiffy	**SSgt Al Marshall**

On arrival at Banja Luka Metal Factory the LAD manpower increased, with fitters from 30 and 14 Sig Regt, 3 RMP and TA/Reservist soldiers–quite a conglomerate. The downside to all this was yet another horrendous increase in workload with vehicles arriving from all over northern Bosnia. The cold weather also hampered our efforts as vast amounts of snow would melt forming huge puddles on the workshop floor. With a distinct lack of crawler boards, lying on your back in the world's largest puddle was enough to wipe the idiotic grin off even the most enthusiastic VM's face. Fortunately, the cold weather and snow did not last too long. We held the first BBQ on 22 February in the hope that we would be able to wear shorts and T-shirts for the first time and we were not disappointed. Two weeks later the Squadron ran a volleyball competition. **LCpl Des Desroches** led the host team to the final. He strongly denies that the team threw the final away so that they did not win the prize of six Comms Tp T-shirts!.

Three of our LAD team did not quite make it to the end of the tour due to injuries. They are **Cpl Shane Clerk** who broke his arm playing football and **Cpl Steve** 'The Joker' **Thornely** who managed to dislocate his shoulder during the volleyball competition. Lastly, **Cfn Bob** 'I can fix that' **Binner** who escaped to do his class one upgrading course.

AN ADVENTURE ON THE VITRENIK
THE FINAL CURSE OF REBRO 21 FOXTROT
by 2Lt Mark Chambers

On Friday 13 December 1996 I marched up the steps of Old College to a commission after a year at Sandhurst. On Tuesday 17 December I

walked up the steps at RAF Brize Norton onto a flight bound for Split. I spent the usual 24 hours in Split before boarding a helicopter bound, as they say in Split, 'up country'. I was due to begin my attachment to 20 (UK) Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200). The HQ had 'downsized' to remain a divisional headquarters; MND (SW) HQ and Sig Sqn (200) and had recently taken over from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

The Sea King landed and I stepped out into brilliant sunshine to be greeted by the Adjt, **Capt Ruth Pilkington**. Little did I realise that this would be the last sunshine that I would see in Banja Luka for the next seven weeks. The Adjt gave me a tour of the camp and outlined the details of my attachment. I would be shadowing Comd Comms Tp, **Lt Dave Seymour**, who at the time was extremely busy. After being introduced to **Dave** and his fellow 'Troopy' **2Lt Bill Holbrook**, I settled into their corimec. I was given an insight into Comms Tp and decided it would be a good idea for me to experience Bosnia hilltop operations at first hand. So I volunteered to assist in a crew change on a rebro station in the south of our area of operations.

Comd Comms Tp warned me that weather conditions on these hilltop sites could be particularly bad so I had an ex 249 Sig Sqn arctic warrior in the form of **Sgt Carl Bruce** to aid me along with the Squadron's remaining BV 206 (but that's another story!). Early on the morning of Sunday 22 December, I set off from Banja Luka in a Land Rover with **Sig Marsh** to pick up **Sig Dowson**, a second BV driver from the rear link at Livno. **Sgt Bruce** took the BV 206 and drove down with supplies and **LCpl Cunningham**, the new rebro commander. The early start paid dividends and I met up with **Sgt Bruce** at the Engineers base in Tomislavgrad (TSG). TSG is only about 15km from the summit and at midday we started out of TSG and headed for 21F. The mountain had claimed BV 206's before and as we climbed in height, the snowdrift became deeper. **Sgt Bruce** advised us to stop the vehicle, which we did and walked the remaining 3kms to the top. The weather close to the summit was the worst Bosnia had to offer at the time–high winds, hail, snow and very poor visibility. Walking into wind was particularly difficult especially with ice underfoot.

Just over an hour later, I met the crew for the first time and in particular a cheerful **LCpl Payne** who was due to come off the mountain. Daylight was running out so after a quick handover and a brew we moved back down to the BV. What I said to **Sgt Bruce** will now haunt me for the rest of my life as it activated what was known as the curse of 21F. 21F had claimed many man-hours in setting up and I had questioned those parting looks from the Squadron in Banja Luka. Why had it appeared as if they never expected to see me again? This hand-over had gone well. We had not been able to take all the fresh rations up to the guys but we could try again tomorrow when hopefully the weather may have improved. As the BV appeared through the hail I said to **Sgt Bruce**, 'All we need now is for the BV not to start!' We clambered in, glad to be out of the wind and **Sgt Bruce** attempted to turn the engine over–nothing. 'Doh!'

The engine cover was removed and an hour spent attempting to restart the BV. It appeared as if we had a faulty starter motor. We secured the vehicle and moved back up to 21F to overnight there. The crew thought that some of their generator fuel was contaminated so they would need an urgent resupply. Not a problem I assured them; we would bring some up from TSG. We spoke to Banja Luka and requested a mechanic to fix the BV. We were assured that one would depart first thing tomorrow morning.

Monday 23 December

We arrived back at the BV at 1100 hrs. Two hours later the mechanic, **LCpl Hammersley** and **LCpl Goodman** appeared. Their Land Rover had become bogged in 3km down the track and was in danger of sliding down the mountainside. This mishap could be saved as soon as we got the BV started we could pull them back on to the track. Not so. The BV required a new starter motor and I was told that the only place we could get one would be from Sipovo. Communications were worsening. The battery on our SCR was running out and it was getting difficult to relay messages to 21F and onto Banja Luka. I split the group and **Sgt Bruce** went back up to 21F as **LCpl Goodman** and **LCpl Hammersley** moved back to TSG. Hoping that **Sgt Bruce** would be able to communicate with TSG to request a Land Rover to meet us below the snow line. Fortunately, a vehicle did appear and as **Sgt Bruce** spent another night on 21F, I drove to Sipovo with **LCpl Hammersley** in search of a BV starter motor. The guys at 7 Para RHA thrust the only spare starter motor in our hands and thanking them, we returned to TSG.

Tuesday 24 December–Christmas Eve

We requested the SNIC Team (Snow and Ice Clearance) to clear the track back to the isolated Land Rover that morning, so we allowed them time to get ahead of us. I spoke with Comd Comms Tp who expressed the possibility that due to problems with resupply and communications, 21F may be closed down.

We reached the SNIC Team under the command of **LCpl Bridge** just short of the Land Rover and waited whilst they fully cleared the track. The D6 bulldozer chugged on ahead as the combat tractor recovered our vehicle. Three Land Rovers now followed the D6 around the mountainside. An hour later we reached the BV. Once the starter motor had been replaced we could continue with the resupply of 21F. To my horror **LCpl Hammersley** informed that we had been given a diesel starter motor and we had a petrol BV! The BV was blocking the track up to 21 F and the D6 could not continue any further.

The engineers attempted to bypass the BV but only succeeded in getting the D6 bogged in. We could not communicate with anyone because of the terrain so I moved back down to TSG to pick up some fuel for the engineers and guide the Foden recovery vehicle up the track. Whilst at TSG I spoke to Comd Comms Tp and he confirmed that 21F was to be closed down immediately. Meanwhile the tide had started to turn in our favour. **Sgt Bruce** had managed to jump-start the BV by towing it backwards using the engineer's tractor. I spoke to him on SCR and with the track ahead clear he set off to close down the rebro station. I followed the combat tractor up the mountain before it could turn around and head for home. It was now getting dark, 21F had no comms and I was determined to be back in the valley before Christmas Day! The SNIC Team continued to work under spotlights while hopefully the BV was already at 21F. I attempted to follow the SNIC Team but as they were now only clearing the track of major snowdrifts, my LR became bogged in more and more frequently. Close to the summit we were unable to dig out again but the engineers informed us that the BV had closed the rebro down. Again they dragged us out and we turned the convoy around to head back to TSG.

After a planned 24 hour expedition had turned into a four day jaunt and 21F had been closed down, we spent Christmas Eve being entertained by the Engineers in TSG. They performed the Twelve Days of Christmas as only the Engineers can. The BV engine was kept running overnight and an early start on Christmas Day enabled the veterans of the Vitrenik to return to smog clad Banja Luka for Christmas Day lunch.

Comms Ops has now banned the use of the callsign 21F! The escapade on the mountain was an excellent introduction to the Regular Army after Sandhurst. Despite having those moments when I wished for a command appointment change, my attachment to 200 Sig Sqn was interesting, eventful and educational. As I commence my Troop Commanders course in the safety of Blandford Camp, the mistakes I made on attachment and the experiences I had in Bosnia can only stand me in good stead for any future posting. I can only send my thanks and praise the recovery teams who managed to dig out any vehicle that became 'movement inhibited' by a young officer! I wish the best to the officers and soldiers of 20(UK) Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) who gave me such a warm welcome and allowed me to fully experience life in an operational unit.

From (*L-R*): LCpl Payne, Sgt Bruce and 2Lt Chambers during 'Movement Inhibited' operations

280 (UK) Sig Sqn (Land)
BFPO 35

Sqn Comd — **Maj Ian Condie**
RSM — **WOI (RSM) Ivan Shiels**

OPERATION CONSTANT GUARD

The Squadron is now completing its first six month deployment and is in the midst of its first rotation in theatre which will take most of April before things settle down until the next rotation! The first SFOR medals have been presented in theatre 30 days after SFOR assumed command from IFOR. The parades since then have been organised and run by the HQ SFOR Sergeant Major–**WO1 (RSM) Shiels**.

(*L-R*) SSgt Eley, Cpl Ferrer 249 Sig Sqn (AW(L)), Cpl Walker holds the SFOR medals to be presented by Lt Gen Cordy Simpson to personnel of HQ SFOR

Sig Littler 249 Sig Sqn (ANT(L)) tests an LST 5E in the roof of Francisca Palace

QM DEPARTMENT

QM — **Capt Brian Dalton**
SQMS — **SSgt (SQMS) A. Eley**

The Quartermaster's department has seen many improvements in the past six months. On arrival in theatre in October 1996, we acquired office space in Zetra Stadium, nicknamed 'Ice station Zetra' for its unerring ability to remain below freezing when the temperature outside was quite a few degrees higher!! This was then packed with boxes, desks, computers and other such sundries, leaving just enough space to open and close the door. Getting to and from your desk was a task more suited to the Royal Engineer's Demolition team! Many thanks go to the QM(T) Dept from 7 Sig Regt for all their help.

Since then, we have moved up in the world, and across to the other side of Sarajevo, to the prestigious Ilidza site, location of HQ SFOR. Again thanks go to 7 Sig Regt Radcon for the help they gave (the Christmas tree is still alive!) Office space was more than trebled, with the acquisition of three corimecs for the offices (yes, offices plural!) and further iso-containers were made available for armoury facilities, storage space for a clothing store, and even enough room to swing a few cats, (or dogs, which plague the whole site!). The QM, **Capt Brian** 'I'm just going to ECHOS for a conference' **Dalton** has been improving the department since the move. After much consultation in the QM's conference facility (the ECHOS snack bar!) the civilian 'Engineer Support Service' provided the department with a proper roof over the corimecs, and we are currently awaiting some bits and pieces to complete the 'BBQ patio'. The SQMS, **SSgt A. Eley** has led the department through the tangled path of nightmare logistics, occasionally finding the many essential bits of paper which disappear into the 'Black-hole of Ilidza' Stores Accountant **Sig** 'Chippy' **Williams** desk! **Cpl Billy** 'get the brews on' **Fowler** seemed to be enjoying the experience, as he further 'educated' 'Chippy' in the in's-and-out's of accounting, (by leaving all the work to him!), and by having his go-faster green plastic mug permanently full! Also located in the department is **Cpl Phil** 'I can split hairs with the best of them' **Woodall**, our resident armourer and handyman. **Sig Dave** 'we borrowed him from 249 Sig Sqn AMF(L) but don't tell anyone' **Howie** who has been awarded the Honorary Storeman award. He runs an HF Radio network to the former warring factions from the office, but has been most helpful in the day-to-day running of the department. **Sig Ian** 'Mad for it' **Barnacal** has been instrumental in keeping the departments' transport running, at least some of the time, ably hindered by **Sig Matthew** 'I spend more time in Split than anyone else' **Hyde**. The LAD at Zetra have provided the maintenance on our vehicles, and kept them all running, with the notable exception of one vehicle which has spent more time being recovered than actually on the road!! With the new personnel arriving in the department for the second six month phase of our two year tour, it's now running at the peak of its capability, with everyone making full use of every opportunity to shout one of the departments' catchphrases, 'We haven't got any', 'Who told you it would be issued in theatre?' or 'Sorry, Dues out'!! All in all, the first team seem to have enjoyed their tour, but a welcome rest at the end is being counted down by those leaving, and with the dates fast approaching, a nasty outbreak of morale is spoiling it for everyone! However, we could be back again to keep the QM company for the rest of his tour!!

MOSTAR DETACHMENT
by Cpl White

Det Comd — **Sgt** 'Fergie' **Ferguson**

For the past two months, life in the five man detachment has remained calm: it seems that now the end of the tour is approaching, we have at last hit the quiet times we hear so much about from the other MND'S. The work front has remained especially quiet, despite problems caused by our 'hosts', and their continued attempts to break our fibre optic cables! The collective spirit of the det has taken an unexpected leap, as last month, members were taken one by one, to the island of Brac for five days of adventurous training. A combination of good food, sun, more good food and a variety of water sports had members of the det returning with spirits much higher than when they left. We are constantly trying to improve the quality of life in this location, and continue to construct and obtain assets as and when we can. The French had promised to supply us with an ISO container, but it has still yet to materialise. We are very keen to acquire this asset, as it will mean we will have a cooking area AND a gymnasium.

We said goodbye to the first departing member of the det this week when **Cpl** 'Casper' **Beasley** left for Germany at the end of his tour. Next to leave will be **Sgt** 'short timer' **Ferguson**, and **LCpl Ronnie Radford**. We shall be saying a big hearty hello to the first of our replacements soon: Can't wait to see you boys!

BANJA LUKA DETACHMENT

Det Comd — **A/Sgt Dore**

The six months are rushing to an end for the Banja Luka det and our replacements are beginning to arrive. **LCpl** 'Shifty' **Rutland** and **Sig** 'Bellies' **Benham** packed eagerly, happy to keep reminding the rest of the det that they were leaving first. With the last two months like a constant 'Groundhog Day' the det tried in vain to keep itself as occupied as possible. In the end it resorted to daily 11km runs, 'sad' we know! Although the det did get some enjoyment in hearing **Sig** 'Bellies' **Benham** constantly whinging about the size of the hills! **Cpl** 'Computer Geek' **Skidmore** keeps himself busy with a variety of computer problems and games. Over the last six months he has become very attached to his computer and there are fears that when the time comes for him to leave that tears may be shed! **Sig** 'baby G' **Prydie** has now adapted to the det humour and has learnt all there is to know about our kit. **Cpl** 'Ginger' **Willis** and **A/Sgt** 'Scummer' **Dore** when not fixing the VTC spend most of their time getting ready for civilian life. They're trying to decide whether or not they could bluff their way into a comms job, although **A/Sgt** 'Scummer' **Dore** wonders if there's any money in watching Southampton for a living.

All in all it's been a good tour but it'll be good to get back to see the rest of the lads from Krefeld who we have missed dearly.

COMBINED TROOPS

Tp Comd — **Lt Gareth Lamb**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Rob Melotte**

A warm welcome is extended to all personnel who have recently joined the Squadron and who will be deploying to Bosnia during April. Their time has been taken up with deployment training including IRT training in Warminster.

IRT 3–17-22 MARCH 1997

A 34 man team departed for Warminster and arrived at Knook camp late at night and when it was known that reveille was at 0500 hrs, everyone got their heads down, well everyone except **Cpl Keith Betts**, **Cpl** 'Spatz' **Brodie** and co who had 'other things' on their minds.

The week was very busy with all the skills that may be useful on deployment being practised. The penultimate day was ranges where **Sig** 'Dead-Eye' **MacDonald** showed his prowess. 120 rounds later, at arms length from the target a sort of group was achieved. The day was finished off on the FTR where no-one could get close to **Sig MacDonald**'s score, with a maximum of 65 possible he got a bit fat zero (wipe out). In all a worthwhile exercise which will hopefully mean a safe tour in Bosnia.

Congratulations to **Sgt Shaun** and **Lesley May** on the birth of their son **Jake**, also to **Sgt Guy Roberts** on selection for promotion to SSgt.

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NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HQNI and
15 Sig Regt
BFPO 801

CO **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. J. Pellant**

The situation within the Province has continued to keep the Regiment on its toes. However, a great sense of relief has recently swept through the unit with the hand-over of responsibility for the Station to the new Headquarters Lisburn Station on 1 April 1997. One member of RHQ who has not yet had the good fortune to hand over his reins is our new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Steve Pellant**, arriving into the cauldron from 7 Sig Regt on 8 March. The RSM is also the RSM of Headquarters Lisburn Station and the GSM for Lisburn Station!

The Regiment's female sports teams have recently achieved two significant successes, winning the Army Volleyball Championships and came a close second in the Army Basketball Championships.

Earlier in the period, on 22 January 1997, the GOC Northern Ireland, **Lt Gen Sir Rupert Smith KCB DSO OBE QGM**, visited the Regiment. The GOC visited the Station WOs' and Sgts' Mess to present LS & GC medals to **SSgt Martin** AGC (SPS), **Sgt Jacobs**, **Sgt Dodd**, **Sgt Crowder** RAMC and **Sgt Crowton**. **Sgt Magin** AGC (SPS), 225 Sig Sqn was awarded a GOC's Commendation for his previous work in the Province with 8 Inf Bde.

Medal and award winners pictured with their families and the GOC in the Station WOs' and Sgts' Mess on 22 January.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj D. I. Whimpenny**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Hymas**

The Squadron is moving from strength to strength under the firm leadership of the new Sqn Comd. Extra manpower is flying in from all over the world, so 233 Sig Sqn will never stand a chance on the sports pitch again.

ALPHA TROOP

The last couple of months have been hectic for the majority of Alpha Tp personnel. Some unlucky members of the Troop were, however, detached to sunnier climates. The SSM, **WO2 Chris Hymas**, was given a three month tour of RHQ to stand in for the RSM and **Cpl** 'Taff' **Brown** was, err, nobody actually knows where 'Taff' was!! But welcome back anyway.

The Troop would like to welcome the following people to our happy fold: **Cpl Bob Blair** AGC (SPS), **LCpl Jimmy McLean** from 9 Sigs in Cyprus (unlucky) and **SSgt Nicki Goddard** from the MoD. Fond farewells go to **SSgt** 'Shifty' **Swifty** off to the MoD in London, **Cpl Sharon Simmons** on promotion to 1 Hldrs in Londonderry and **Cpl Tony Cherry** also on promotion but not quite as far as Londonderry. We wish them all the best in the future.

ECHO TROOP
ARRIVALS

Cpl Graeme Campbell, **LCpl Dean Lenton** and wife **Lorraine**.
LCpl Phil Walton and wife, **LCpl Kay Wallace**.

DEPARTURES

Cpl 'Townie' **Townsend** and **LCpl** 'Pat' **Patrick** to sunny Brawdy.
Cpl 'Tel' **Parr** and **LCpl Alex Kelly** into civvy street.

CONGRATULATIONS

SSgt (Supvr R) Eddie Fisher on selection for promotion to WO2.
SSgt (Supvr R) Mike Osborne on successfully passing his EFP2.
LCpl Kay Wallace for being part of the female Runners Up team in the NI Orienteering Championships.

FUNCTIONS/EVENTS
EXERCISE MOURNE FINN

This was a hillwalking exercise in the Mourne Mountains. Two separate groups of troop personnel spent a day walking in the Mourne's. Under the watchful eye of exercise organiser **LCpl Duncan Halls** the two groups walked separate routes on different days. Day 1 took them up Slieve Donard, the province's highest peak and even the Squadron 'Grandad' **Capt Dave Dolling** made it to the top. Day 2 saw the group tackle the awesome slope of Slieve Binian much to the dismay of **LCpl Angie Cassidy** who claims she was only stopping to admire the view (every ten metres).

SQUADRON GAMES CHALLENGE

Those Greek God like men of **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave** 'Chunky' **Watson**'s A (Adonis) Watch organised an excellent Games Challenge consisting of teams of three taking part in a variety of events throughout the afternoon such as running, Concept II rowing, Aerobic Cycling, Basketball Shots and Penalty kicks. Then after a break for tea, the event continued with Remote Control Car driving, Nail Hammering, Can Walking and Ten Pin Bowling. The rank outsiders 'The Wrinkles' consisting of **Capt Dave Dolling**, **WO1 (Supvr R) Mick Hartley**, **Capt Phil Clark** and **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hymas** stormed through to win convincingly. OK they did have dispensation for **Capt Dave Dolling** to have a stand in for the stamina and endurance events. After all, you have to be careful when you reach his age.

GOLF TROOP

Golf Tp had another hectic period, during which time we said farewell to **Sgt Ivor Moore** and his family. A senior and valued member of the troop, **Ivor** is wished well upon on his posting to 280 Sig Sqn.

Congratulations are due to **Sgt Dave Evans** who has been selected for promotion to SSgt. Also to **Sgt Paul Amies**, who against all odds, achieved promotion to Sgt. Congratulations also go to **Sgt Phil Graham**, who against all odds has held onto the rank of Sgt. We must also say congratulations to **Cpl** 'Billy Bosswell' **Share** and **Claire** on the birth of their son. **Sgt Keith Muggleton** also deserves a mention for bringing the 70's retro look back by sporting his 'groovy man' Starsky & Hutch haircut. He was arrested yesterday by the Lisburn Station Sideburn Police and is awaiting bail. Coming down a few legal notches we have the "Lisburn Two" incident. While back on the Mainland, our two leaders suffered badly at the hands of the local police. **WO2 (FofS) Tommy** 'the Terrier' **Steele** and **SSgt (FofS) Bert** 'Calm Down' **Curtin** both incurred heavy fines while blatantly flouting traffic regulations (not wearing seatbelts in the back of a car). Anybody who knows our Foreman will know that they co-operated fully and didn't answer back. Basically, our Fozzies were lifted by the Fuzzies.

Our Bomb/Mortar practices have been going well (quite why we do them we'll never know, I mean who's going to blow up this building). However we are not sure that hiding under the tables offer that much protection, but try telling **SSgt John** 'Is that a spec of dust I see?' **Greenwood** that. Well you could if you actually ever got him out from under them.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON
COMMCEN TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 (YofS) Andy Drummond**
2IC **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow**

The Troop would like to say farewell and congratulations to **Cpl Sue Cox** who, in the past few days has given birth to baby **Connor** and farewell and good luck to **LCpls Debbie** and **Barry Blair**–hope Civ Div is all its cracked up to be. A big welcome also to **Sig** 'Blacky' **Black** who joins us from 16 Sig Regt.

It has been a sporty couple of months for the Troop–firstly orienteering and beating all the airborne warriors from the other three Troops (didn't we **SSgt Jim Duncan**?). There were outstanding performances from **Sigs** 'Scouse' **Lloyd** and **Sam Skyvington** in the recent Mercury Cup hockey competition where the Squadron won despite being underdogs (Unlucky **Maj Healey**–maybe next year). Unfortunately our winning streak has not been extended to McKelvie Rugby where we got more injuries than points! Injuries have plagued the Troop lately with **LCpl Nicky McRae** injured after only a couple of days on the Piste (Ski slopes). She is now on an eight-week holiday courtesy of the Duchess of Kent Military Hospital.

Finally we would like to congratulate **Sig Tracey Wallace** on her marriage to **Pte Den Hendin**.

INDIA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt R. J. Newhouse**
2IC **WO1 C. Mountain**

India Tp started the year with a Christmas function held in January–different but a great success thanks to **LCpl Al Royston** and **Sig** 'Jimmy' **Cunningham**. The New Year had barely started when the Troop won the Inter Tp orienteering and came second in the Rugby to a massively over manned TM Tp. India Tp was captained by **SSgt (FofS)** 'recently selected for promotion' **Andy Forbes**. The cleanest driving record of any Troop in the Regiment was destroyed by **SSgt Paul Sinderberry** whilst driving a hire car on the Mainland–cheers **Paul** and well done for coming off the board.

Congratulations go out to **Cpl** 'Vince the Mince' **Saunders** who is getting married later this month–best wishes for the future. Finally fond farewells to all who have left the Troop lately especially **Capt Martin Bever** or is it BEAVER and **Cpl** 'Willy' **Rouston** who is now in Bosnia.

ROMEO TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt R. Rumsey**
2IC **WO2 (YofS)** 'Billy' **Bingham**

As with all units in Province, Romeo Tp faces the constant battle to maintain continuity of knowledge to cover a wide spectrum of tasks. Caught here are the thoughts of two new arrivals–**LCpl Colin Hoosen** and **Cpl Iain** 'Colonel' **Galloway**.

'My move from TM Tp came as quite a surprise and as I took the long walk down to the SSD compound I was not quite sure what to expect. I was greeted by my new section head **SSgt (FofS)** 'mainland trips' **Woodley** who took me into the restroom and introduced me to a few of the lads: **Sgts Mick Payne**, 'Monty' **Farrow**, 'Polly' **Perkins** and **Cpls** 'Les' **Dawson** and 'Swanny' **Swannick**. I was then briefed on my responsibilities and since then my feet haven't touched the ground. Having been here for a month I have just about now settled in–there are loads of new equipments courses to go on and little projects which the FofS dreams up for us to keep us on our toes. The uncertainty of the job makes it enjoyable and I am looking forward to the rest of my time here. I got a lot of stick about coming to Romeo Tp from an operator at my previous unit but took it all with a pinch of salt. My introduction was a 'play off' at cards in the morning to see who would make the brews. Needless to say I lost–cheers Boss! The work is extremely varied requiring a flexible approach at all times. There is no such thing as a typical day and we work day and night sometimes not only in the Province but also on the Mainland and in Germany. My learning curve has been vertical since my arrival picking the brains of the likes of **Sgt Danny Heakin**, **Tony Ward** and **Bob Bleasdale** as well as **Cpls Pete Lawn** and **Mark Parr**–thanks for the scoops lads! If nothing else I hope I leave here as good a cheat at cards as the Boss.

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Gig Plumb**
2IC **WO2 (FofS) Ian Rutherford**

The turnover within the Troop continues a pace and every time the TOT returns from the Saddle Club there are new faces to greet. Farewells firstly to **Cpls Bannister**, **Kinnear**, **Pennicot** and **Simmons** to their T1 in Blandford. **Cpl Mick Hanson** and **Claire** are also going to Blandford with their new baby girl, **Holly**–Congratulations. A warm welcome also to **LCpl Hayhurst** and **Sig Nessling**–more TeleMechs for rigging courses!

Congratulations must also go out to **Sgts Ault**, **Alexander-High** and **McGregor** on passing the FofS entrance exam–good luck at RSSC and the selection board.

INTER TROOP RUGBY 10s

After much preparation the Troop were determined to avenge last year and put out a strong squad including the TOT and Sgt Pete SZ who had a combined age of 175. **Sig** 'Hoss' **Cartwright** added a bit of youth to an aged pack. The first match against India Tp was won with a torrent of tries without the opposition scoring a point. Next came COMMCEN Tp ably assisted by SQMS **Sgt Graham Weavers** who put up a good fight. However good running from **Sgts** 'Max' **Maxwell**, 'Cleggy' **Cleghorn**, **Alexander-High** and **Cpls Kev East** and **Al Costello** allowed us to cruise to victory once more conceding nothing.

The finale to an enjoyable day was the encounter with Romeo Tp who could only muster seven men. The game was hard with no quarter given. Victory was once again achieved without conceding a point with the only blemish being **Sgt Maxwell**'s nose after a run in with **SSgt** 'Ged' **Keane**. Don't worry 'Max' the women will still love you.

After completing the Grandslam the trophy is now back in its rightful place and the TOT didn't have to fork out for the beers.

QUARTERMASTERS' DEPARTMENT
QM **Maj Aspinall MBE**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Huzzey**

During the past month, the Ord Ancil Inspection Team paid a visit to the QM Dept. This passed with a few hours of 'overtime', but was otherwise quite successful, with no sacking or suicides.

On the sporting front (no, we won't mention the 5-Nations RQ!!), we had the rare treat of having **Cpl** 'Robo' **Robson** attend Squadron PT. Most people thought that we had more chance of seeing ELVIS, than **Rob**!!!

Once again the CO's cross country was upon us, the Dept fielded a strong team, **Sgt Chris Hood** and **Cpl Kev Joyce** finished in eighth and ninth position and readily 'volunteered' for the Regimental Cross Country Team.

EXERCISE CRYSTAL FINN 97

The rainy grey skies of Northern Ireland gave way to the clear blue of the French Alps for 29 members of the Regiment during its annual skiing exercise in the Serre Chevalier valley. Under the expert instruction of **SSgt** 'Ged' **Keane** and **Cpl** 'Cos' **Costello** all the participants improved their skiing on some of the best snow Europe has had in years.

An apology to the locals who had to endure **Cpl** 'Stan' **Stanbury**'s explanation on how Moguls are formed by monkey sized animals burrowing into the snow and **LCpl Nicki McRae** for her subsequent seven weeks off work owing to torn ligaments. A special mention has to go to **WO2 (RQMS) Sartorius** for his work in keeping the pistes clear for other members of the exercise by terrifying skiers into leaving the slopes or face a similar fate to that of a young family permanently traumatized by his skiing abilities (or inabilities).

A special thank-you to Thomas Cook for their help and wooden spoon to First Choice Holidays for their questionable competence in dealing with customers.

(*L to R*): Capt Louise Warrack, LCpl Nicki Snelling, Sgt 'Charlie' Brown, Cpl Carl Rossall, Sgt 'Spike' Hughes, Capt Ashley Hayden (OC Ex), SSgt Ged Keane, Cpl 'Cos' Costello, Cpl Kev East and Sig Wendy Keane.

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39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
BFPO 801

Sqn Comd **Maj R. J. Healey**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. McCluskey**

SHQ NEWS

The transition between OC's has gone well with everyone settling down into the new regime. After the initial bout of good attendance and keenness the Ops team have fallen back into their old routine. We now only see one of them at a time unless someone is buying a round!

Support Tp led by the OC followed very closely by the 2IC, **Capt Paul Rennie**, were well beaten in the Inter Tp Basketball. 'Participation is far more important . . .', or so the OC says. The Inter Tp Swimming Competition was a different kettle of fish . . . ooooh; with Support Tp getting their own back and winning with some style. A special mention should go to **Sig Moffat** for her excellent performance as the only female swimmer in the competition. Will someone tell the RSM that he can swim without his pullover on next time.

The mystery of **WO2 (YofS) Gerry Hughes'** stolen bicycle has us all confused, he had to look in every bar on camp before he found it by the PVCP, or so he told his wife!

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) G. Stoker MBE**

The RQMS has gone to run adventure training in Cumbria for three weeks. The last contact that we had with him was on his mobile phone in Harry Ramsden's Fish and Chip shop in Blackpool. Some adventure that is RQ.

Sgt Sean Hyland is taking the lead role in the Squadron social front, organising as many functions as he possibly can. Now there is a fourth child on the way he is trying more and more to keep away from home. **Cpl Al Keir** is blaming everyone else for the recently decorated Corps tea rooms, how much did you pay the tailors shop for the curtains?

By the time this goes to print the RQMS will be off to 7 Sig Regt to take up the appointment of RQMS (A). Good luck to you, **Jonie**, **Lauren** and **Bob** in Krefeld. There are two new arrivals in the Dept, **Sigs Bunn** and **Ufton**, we are pleased to have you here as you have just doubled the useable manpower. Welcome we hope you have a pleasant and safe tour.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Paul Merry**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev O'Neill**

Comms Tp continue to be as fluid as ever; as we say farewell to many stalwart members of the Troop, **Sgt Paul Chesters BEM** is off to Blandford and although a little closer to home it will be hard to be there more than he was over the last 12 months, **Cpl Vanessa Kent** and **Sigs Darren** 'Part time Pimp' **Wearmouth** and **Baz Savage** are off to civvy street, **Cpl Steve** 'Mil Skills' **Walton** is off to join the Royal Highland Fusiliers as their rear link Sergeant in Belfast, **LCpl Vinnie Vincent** has taken his fancy driving skills to 321 EOD in Didcot, and **Cpl Andy Eley** is going back to the RLC, but not before jetting off to Jamaica to marry **LCpl Linda Brown** in a Rastafarian ceremony. Apparently it is tradition to paint the grooms right big toe nail, or so we were informed during an informal OC's interview!! Congratulations and Good luck to you all.

You could knock **LCpl Matt Booth** down with a feather when, having been given his 'Brown Envelope', was handed a reprieve, promoted to Cpl, and posted to 30 Sig Regt, well done and soldier on **Matt**!

New arrivals include **Cpl Dale Eaton** who has joined us from 15 Sig Regt and is amusing members of the Rover Group with all his stories from his last tour 'post body guards'. **LCpl** 'Johno' **Johnston** arrived from the Mecca at Blandford. There are a number of other new arrivals in May, **Sgt Scott Cain** takes the reins of Rover Group **LCpls MacGregor** and **Ferguson** and **Dvr Jutson** all take up new and exciting posts in the Squadron.

Cpl 'Mus' **Murray** and **Sig Rick Hartley** have been on PTI class 3 courses gaining crossed swords and big biceps, well maybe not. The last congratulations go to **LCpl Jonah Jones** on his selection to the Army Basketball squad. Unfortunately we failed to retain the NI Basketball championship having won for the last two years. Well done JCU.

INCIDENT OF THE MONTH

The Commander's Rover Group continue to train as much as possible bearing in mind the continued upward trend in terrorist related incidents and the coming marching season. It was during one of these training sessions, live firing in the Ballykinler Hollow, that **LCpl Gary Mahy** came unstuck or was it stuck. The Team were practising extractions under fire when **LCpl Mahy** decided to place his foot into an old rabbit hole and started shouting 'I'm down I'm down'. The Tp Comd and SSgt were very quickly on the scene wielding first field dressings and expecting a very quick posting to Benbecula only to find a sprained ligament in the arm. We hope you get well soon and take the ribbing with a pinch of salt. A rare sighting of **Sgt Chesters** was reported on the ranges, however, this has been dismissed as he was apparently on urgent business in England.

Rover Group have had a busy time with an influx of new faces, and a spell of 'Hard Targeting' in and around Belfast with the Royal Irish and the Royal Tank Regiment. As is becoming a tradition–'Injury of the Month' has been switched from **LCpl Mahy** and landed squarely onto **Cpl Steve Clark** who took a spectacular fall during the Mercury Cup hockey. The result was a broken/fractured/strained/permanently disfigured shoulder, was it really worth it to get out of the OCs four-mile run?

TM TROOP

Tp Comd **SSgt Steve Hogdson**

Spring is here and so again are changes in the Troop. We welcome **Sgt Pete Barber** (not quite as old as granddad) along with **Elizabeth**, family and motorbikes. **Cpl Si Dupree** from 14 Sig Regt with **Gillian**, and **Cpl Gethin** 'Yes I am Welsh' **Bevan** and last but not least **Sig** 'Farquare' **Dryden** straight from the factory. We hope you all have a pleasant tour with the Troop. **Sgt Ted Heath** and **Debs** leave us for Blandford and hopefully a Foremans course in due time, he is pretty well prepared having taken the Sqn Foreman's, **WO2 (FofS) Paul Redmonds**, advice on poor dress sense, apparently it is a pre-requisite. **Sgt** 'Grandad' **Holden** has departed the Squadron. He rejoins his wife and family in Krefeld, where he joins 7 Sig Regt. Our most travelled Troop member **Cpl Chris Kelly** has departed to attend his T1. We are sure he will wish that he was still in Kenya after a couple of weeks on the course. **Cpl** 'Tosh' **Macintosh** follows him to that great institution with the same goal of passing his T1. **Sgt Andy Roberts** part time Troop member/BTLO/course expert is to leave us to civvy street, good luck with whatever the future holds. Also off to CivDiv is **LCpl** 'PP' **Parker** and **Sig** 'JR' **Ewing** we hope all that money you think you are going to get comes to fruition. What does PP stand for anyway?

The recent visit of **Col T. E. M. Richardson COS HQ** R Signals gave **LCpl** 'Shippy' **Ship** the opportunity to show the OC how well his preparations for a posting to 216 are going. **LCpl Ship** hurled himself off the Lisburn mast in a rapid descent with his partner in crime, **LCpl Sean Parker**, belaying him, even with his larger weight, to a safe but bumpy landing. Apparently the COS was so impressed that a posting order to Aldershot will be in the post to **LCpl Ship** within the week. **Cpl** 'UEL' **Davidge** has been sighted around the camp, maybe he is walking the Ulster Way? **Sig** 'Geordie' **Tonks** and **Sig Kathy Lloyd** have managed to get another course together, is there anything in this liaison?

EXERCISE ARAPAHO FINN II–THE SEQUEL

For the second year nine members of the Squadron set off in late November to the snowy heights of Colorado USA for a two week ski-touring expedition. The aim of the exercise was to introduce the group to basic ski-touring techniques and also to teach basic survival skills sometimes required in harsh conditions. The expedition took its equipment in the form of boots, salopettes, jackets and skis; all of which had been collected from Thatchham and was of the highest quality. None of the traditional Army apparel of orange crisp packets but the latest in North Face gear.

The Instructors: LCpl Jas 'Sozzler' Stone and SSgt Tim Comyns

Accommodation was booked in advance and the journey totalled 19 hours with stops in London, Chicago and Denver airports before a bus ride to the town of Breckenridge. **SSgt Tim Comyns**, now at Loughborough, was our Chief Instructor and was ably assisted by **LCpl Jas** 'Sozzler' **Stone** who is shortly off to 249 (AMF(L)) Sig Sqn; his love of snow and his deep desire to be an Alpine man move a step closer. **LCpls Vinnie Vincent** and **JC** 'Swampy' **Moses** added their own brand of humour to the proceedings by fully debriefing the instructors on their abilities after each day's activities. Their cooking skills require an upheaval as their best efforts consisted of chips and eggs or beans on toast, very adventurous! **LCpl** 'Sporting Hero' **Ridsdel** was unfortunately struck down by the mysterious 'flu' bug that seems to be attacking the world at large, but still managed to struggle on and skied whenever possible. The female contingent consisted of **LCpls Michelle Bradford** and **Lynn Sheridan** who skied with enthusiasm despite a regular covering of snow. Maniac of the Exercise award went to **Cpl** 'Tosh' **Macintosh** who dived, soared and fell over at every opportunity on the snow, but displayed a good level of self confidence in ski-jumping everything in the State of Colorado. However, everyone in the group found it highly amusing when **Lt Paul Merrys'** nose turned white with frostbite and threatened to fall off; a sign of the temperatures that went as low as -20 degrees Celsius.

The expedition skied on all of the mountains in the Arapaho region and gained enormously from the spell of adventure training despite the very prevalent avalanche warnings and cold temperatures. Planning for the exercise had begun in May 1996 but the work involved was more than compensated for by the rewarding experiences and ski touring available.

The Group
(*L to R*): LCpls Jas Stone, Lynn Sheriden, Vinnie Vincent and JC Moses, Cpl 'Tosh' Macintosh, LCpl Rids Ridsdel and Lt Paul Merry

SENIORS VERSUS JUNIORS FOOTBALL

The annual grudge match took place on Wednesday 26 March 1997. The leather-studded boots of the Seniors had a shine, as did the Squadron strip which they acquired, but unfortunately their performance was lacking the same! Other than the OC of course he was great, until he broke his toe!! The Juniors went into an early lead resulting from a dodgy penalty awarded by **Pte** (now LCpl) **Drew** who was the referee (do not know how he got promoted after that decision). It was always going to be difficult for the 'Old Men' to catch up, but a brilliant diving header, or did he trip, from **SSgt Stevie Hodgson** put the Seniors back into contention.

It wasn't long before **LCpl Jonah Jones** put the young pups ahead with a well placed header. Half time saw the introduction of George Bests' older brother **Capt Eddie Spence**, the AO, however, as much has he dribbled it could not stop a third and probably the most dubiously awarded goal of all time. The Seniors with the wind behind them were finding it difficult under the extremely difficult playing conditions to get back into the game, you know too windy, too bumpy and of course the referee. There were no complaints after the game only excuses and extra duties! Well done to the Juniors they were deserved winners!

MERCURY CUP POTTED SPORTS

The start of the Mercury Cup season was on 19 March 1997 with the Potted Sports Competition involving all the Provinces' Royal Signals units playing Football, Hockey and Volleyball. It was a really good days sport particularly for us at 39 Inf Bde as we ran out winners. Point to note this was the first time we had won a Mercury Cup trophy for more than 18 months!! A very creditable 1st at Volleyball, 2nd at Hockey, and 3rd at Football, all against the odds! Congratulations to all that took part particularly the line judges! We look forward to the Athletics that is the next event

STOP PRESS
ARMY HALF MARATHON

A team was entered for the first time in the Army Half Marathon at Fleet finishing in a very creditable 13th position out of 40 units. A 'well done' is extended to all those that took part particularly those in the qualifying positions: **Maj Aspray**, **Lt Merry** and **Sgt Young**.

39 BRIGADE SAAM

Sgt Paul Chesters took his team to the Bde SAAM as one of only two non teeth arm teams out of 29 teams in the competition. The team managed to achieve 13th place overall, 3rd in the Pistol match and 6th in the Moving Target match. This was a very creditable performance when competing against the 'professional soldiers'! Well done to all those that took part.

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Sqn Comd — **Maj M. J. Perry MBE**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Fisher MBE**

ROYAL SIGNALS NORTHERN IRELAND JNCO CADRE– 2/14 MARCH 1997
by Sgt Dez Eldridge
THE DS STORY

On Sunday 2 March 1997, 16 soldiers from the Province, RV'ed at Magilligan Training Centre, to undergo two strenuous weeks of death by square bashing and battle PT, not to mention the odd view-foil or two, as part of the Royal Signals JNCO Cadre Northern Ireland. Magilligan offers probably one of the most scenic training areas that the British Army has to offer. Unfortunately, like all training areas, it has the usual weather climate of four seasons in one day. However, we were blessed by the powers that be upstairs and managed to get away, with almost two weeks dry, calm weather. Sunday was spent doing all the intake tests in order to ascertain the general standard of knowledge that the soldiers had. After the tests, many expressed their doubt as to how they had done. Monday morning and the Cadre received a short sharp shock, which usually means a beasting in PT. Our instructor, **LCpl Phil Minns** RLC, had the chance to get his hands on fellow peers, who arguably get paid more than he, so he was prepared to make sure they earned it. The first week passed off with classroom revision etc, long days, with maybe a refreshing beer at the end of it, if your admin was squared away. Funny how the same people have their admin squared away every night, isn't it: LCpl (now) but was **Sig** 'Skits' **Smithurst**, **Sig** 'Andre Jouber' **Stewart** and not to mention **LCpl** 'Sicknote' **Green**. The next week we went on exercise. It wasn't exactly Salisbury Plain, with us having about 2 sq kms to play in. However in true Royal Signals fashion we cracked on. This heralded, possibly the most comical moment for the DS. One night we decided to try and infiltrate the Cadre's position, which was well defended in depth with **SSgt Pete Griffiths** and **Sgt O. J. O'Hanlon** the sections' DS, passing on their expert advice. **Cpl** 'Tripper' **Smith** wanted to send a Pioneer recce, (with no Scaley presence), to one position, whilst **Sgt John Payne** and myself occupied another. Imagine our sheer delight when **Cpl** 'Tripper' **Smith**, walked straight into a trip flare and the night was lit up like Blackpool at Christmas. 'Tripper' then tried to justify his exploits, but we told him to watch his step in future. The course was then at an end, 'Never mind, I'm sure there will be one next year!' On Thursday we all returned to camp for tea and medals, with **LCpl** 'Sicknote' **Green**, 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, gaining top student and **LCpl** 'Terry' **Venables** 15 Sig Regt gaining most improved student.

THE SOLDIERS STORY
by LCpl 'Daz' **Smithurst**

The course commenced on 2 March 1997 and consisted of 16 people from 3, 8, 39 Bde Sig Sqns and 15 Sig Regt. Once all the students had arrived we were shepherded into a classroom and told what was to be expected of us and what was going to happen to us over the next two weeks. The initial welcome brief was given by **Sgt** 'Marco Polo' **Eldridge**, who in the forthcoming two weeks was to demonstrate a mass of knowledge in the Military Skills dept (maybe).

The course was then split into two sections of eight men. **SSgt** 'Butterman' **Griffiths** led Section One and leading Section Two was **Sgt** 'Jack Daniels' **O'Hanlon**. After all the welcomes were completed it was down to the serious training in the bar as the last man there was bound to get the top student prize.

For the first four days things were very intense and there were a lot of hours put in by the students, studying, bulling, extra PT and remedial drinking. On a serious note the first week was very long, with a lot of classroom work. Some of the more memorable lessons on the course were, the 'O' Group' by **Cpl** 'Tory Boy' **Smith** who managed to cram two weeks of instruction into a two hour lesson. Also **Cpl** 'Superman' **Hunt** the drill pig straight from ATR Bassingbourn. **Cpl Hunt** always insisted on smart turnout and the need to be enthusiastic about every lesson. Unfortunately when it came to the drill-square the RSM could do nothing but rip into **Cpl Hunt** about his hole filled jumpers and sloppy pace stick drill. Sorry **Cpl Hunt** only one out of ten for that lesson. Talking about the lessons we couldn't leave out our old friend **Sgt** 'Marco Polo' **Eldridge** with his now infamous map reading lesson. He entered the class and said 'Well guys get hold of your Watford Gap', (apparently this means map). He really knew his stuff but apparently being only one point away from joining MENSA he let himself down on the actual practical maths. So there we were Grid to Mag–Get Rid, Mag to Grid–Add and the lesson if not smooth was enjoyable.

The second week of the course was the exercise phase were we put into practice all the skills we had learnt so far. We conducted Section attacks, recce patrols and Section in defence drills. Things were running just dandy until the last day when after the dawn final attack the end of exercise tab raised its ugly head. **Sgt** 'Marco Polo' **Eldridge** led the tab and following his map reading lesson none of us were surprised when he obviously lost his way.

In conclusion the course was very demanding with long hours and little sleep put in by every one. Every one on the course passed with **LCpl Green** from 3 Bde winning Top Student and **LCpl Venables** from 15 Sig Regt achieving most improved student.

Sig Morley realising that some times you have to stretch further than your pc127

VISIT OF MRS 'JOCK' DUNCAN

Mrs Pauline Duncan, widow of LCpl 'Jock' Duncan visits 8 Inf Bde Sig Sqn

LCpl 'Jock' **Duncan** was serving with 8 Inf Bde Sig Sqn MT when he was murdered by the IRA on 22 February 1989, whilst driving the school bus. On the anniversary of his death his widow and children visited the Squadron to lay a wreath on his memorial.

VISIT OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

The Squadron recently had the honour to host a visit of the Royal Signals senior serving officer (ever?), the Quartermaster General, **Lt Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**. He was greeted by the OC, **Maj M. J. Perry MBE** and taken upstairs for a cup of finest mocha (best occasions only).

It was then time to visit the troops and the first port of call was the nerve centre that is Ops/Plans. He was briefed on G3 matters by the 2IC/Ops Officer **Capt Watts** ably supported by **WO2 (YofS) Nige Donahue** on pointer. **Capt Vaudin**, Comms Officer, then gave a solo performance on G4. Can **WO2 (FofS) Phil Court** really have been on leave? Having been put fully in the picture the QMG then crossed the corridor and was greeted by **SSgt Pete Griffiths**, OC Comms Tp, and introduced to the Syscon. **Cpl** 'Cav' **Baber** then took the QMG on a map tour of the Squadrons comms responsibilities and the ins and outs of life in 'the Con'.

The QMG, Lt Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE, is given the syscon brief by Cpl 'Cav' Baber. SSgt 'Pete' Griffiths, OC Comms Tp, looks on.

After having seen the control element of the Squadron it was time to visit the sharp end troops of TM Tp. **Cpl Martin Dixon** and **LCpl Marc Singleton** gave him briefs on the role of the Bde Area Repair Teams (BART). **LCpls Tony Hughes** and **Steve McBride** then treated him to a display of a rapid mast descent, (almost too rapid as daredevil **McBride** landed with a solid thump much to the amusement of the QMG).

TM TROOP
Tp Comd — **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes**
BTNILO — **SSgt K. Williams**

FAREWELLS

The Troop has recently lost some of its stalwarts. First to go was **LCpl Pete Richards** who left on promotion to go down the road to Lisburn. They will have gained a valuable asset to their tug of war team, as **Pete** can't half dig his heels in. Next to leave was the BTNILO, **SSgt Dave Halkett**. His leaving caused a province wide shortage of aspirin and dialysis machines, especially after his leaving breakfast. **LCpl Tony Hughes** is leaving for God's country Sig Regt (33). He will have to work hard on his accent, as it is currently 40 miles out of whack. **Sig Paul Creeley**, the Troop's computer guru, is leaving the stress of rigging in Londonderry for the relaxation of laying line in an Armd Bde Sig Sqn, enjoy! All will be missed and we wish them all the best for the future.

WELCOMES

Luckily for **SSgt Keith Williams**, the new BTNILO, and **LCpl Andy Dodds**, there will be no need to get used to Londonderry's climate, as it is remarkably similar to that of Cyprus, eh? **LCpl Dodds** acclimatisation was taken one stage further as he got off the plane, got straight into barrack dress and waited on in the Foyle View club, followed swiftly by **SSgt Williams** who rapidly appeared in mess kit and got down to tackling some of the Emerald Isles finest product. Welcome also to **LCpl Mark Benson** who joins us from the production line of Blandford. **Mark** takes over from **Sig** 'Noo Noo' **Mier** as duty teenager and there was a moving handover ceremony of the sacred Clearasil.

TROOP OFFICE

SSgt 'Shuggy' **Hughes** still continues to run a ship as tight as **Tony Bullimore**'s. Site manager, **Sgt Andy Craig**, was recently placed on the MIA list. No one lost any sleep over this disappearance except . . . (insert Squadron nominal roll). Another rarely seen character is the rigging SNCO **Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick** who has recently been on more courses than **Keith Williams** is planning to get on, see you in '98. **Sgt Col Bentley**, well what more can be said but shenanigans. Luckily **Cpl** 'Josey' **Wales** keeps the office on the straight and narrow but it's about time he learnt how to use the kettle.

THE BART TEAMS

Apart from the usual frenzied activity involved in keeping comms alive in province, the techs and riggers have been active in several other areas. **Cpl Gareth Dearden**, deep in revision of calculus and J notation, suddenly came up against long division on his EFP threshold test–tilt! It was a close call but **Cpl Dearden** scraped in by the skin of his teeth. **LCpl Rob Pointer** was lucky enough to get away on a squash course recently and so as an antidote was sent down to one of our more inhospitable locations for the Easter period. Unlucky **Rob**, you win some, you lose some.

Cpl Jim Burnham found himself as Foyle View Club barman for the Yeomans' dining out and managed to amass enough tips to buy himself a new blazer and pair of shorts to go back to school with, good luck with your EFP. **Cpl Stu Crossman** has found himself a new career as a male model. He was tasked to demonstrate the latest in rigging apparel at the all arms display at the RMA Sandhurst, and gave Naomi Campbell a run for her money.

Sig 'Setch' **Setchfield** was picked from a cast of thousands to attend the Province JNCO cadre. After a less than gung ho start, 'Setch' eventually donned some war paint and got into the spirit of the course and ended up with a creditable result. **Cpl Mark Butler** has been doing more BART duties than you can shake a stick at recently. This obviously has nothing to do with his desire to go canoeing for several weeks in the near future, really.

Cpl Mark Butler demonstrating the technique involved in holding your breath during an Eskimo Roll

COMMS TROOP
Tp Comd — **SSgt Griffiths**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Wareing**

COMMS TRIALS
by Sgt Budding

Life at the cutting edge of communications has, as ever, been hectic with the Troop being mistaken for Piccadilly Circus more than once. The Troops' departments have managed to covertly carry out three-way shifts with less people than the Everton Supporters Club, and to their credit the quality of work and level of morale has not been adversely affected, (apparently!!).

Thanks to creative management from various sources, people are still managing to fit in leave, adventurous training and highly enjoyable Cadre courses. As usual the Troop has had its full and entire quota of incoming and outgoing which are as follows:

WELCOMES

Neil Hunt and family from ATR Bassingbourn. **Cpl Jasper Marrit**, (promoted on arrival), from 21 Sig Regt (AS), **LCpl Lee Benson** and family from 7 Armd Bde, **LCpl Matt Williams** from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Steve Birch** from COMCEN Bulford, and finally **Sig** 'Knockers' **Knox** from 14 Sig Regt. We wish you all an enjoyable time in tropical Ulster, (better than Cyprus any day).

DEPARTURES

The Troop says farewell and cheers for your jokes to many people. **Cpl** (on posting) **Sven** 'two can Van Damme' **Gronn**, to 14 Sig Regt, **LCpl** 'Mac' 'loads of cash' **MacGillivray**, to 7 Armd Bde, **LCpl Stan** 'complete Mong' **Martin**, off to our fellow unit down the road, **LCpl Nick Fulstow** off to work in KFC, civvy street, **Cpl** 'Fozzie', 'Butch' **Foster** to 249 'Harpoon' Sig Sqn AMF(L), and, **Sig Andy** 'Gooner' **Garner**, off to bash the tracks, and drink the Ale in Germany, **LCpl Scotty** 'Smiler' **Paul**, who eventually received his hearts desire and transferred to the Royal Irish. Finally a fond farewell from all of the Troop to **WO2 (YofS) Terry McHugh**, after 22 years service, we wish him all the very best for the future (and Everton F.C.).

PROMOTIONS

Promotions are always welcome but having had so many has left the Troop somewhat decimated of experience. Congratulations to; (now) **Sgt Carl Vidal Budding**, **Cpl Sven Gronn**, **Cpl** 'Fozzie' **Foster**, **LCpl Stan Martin**, **LCpl Kath King**, and **LCpl** 'Chubby' **Smithurst**.

MT TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO2 (MTWO) Simpson RLC**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt O'Hanlon RLC**

The Troop entered three runners in the Army Half Marathon held at Fleet on 23 March 1997. They were **LCpl Burke**, **Sig** 'Biscuit' **Brown** and **Pte John Hankey**. All achieved commendable times with a special mention to **LCpl Burke** for a time of 1hr 30mins. In the process the team also raised £400 for the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh.

The Troop would like to congratulate **Sgt John O'Hanlon** on his selection for promotion to SSgt and **Pte Debbie Utley** on her promotion to LCpl. The Troop takes this opportunity to welcome **LCpl Green** from 3 Bde, **Pte Canning** from Bicester and **Pte Moffat** from 7 Regt RLC in Bielefield. I'm sure they will have a productive and enjoyable tour with the Squadron. Finally it is a sad farewell to **Pte Nikky Brady** who is posted just up the road to Ballykelly, **Pte Mark Ling** and his wife **Sarah** off to Cyprus and last but by no means least to **LCpl Danny Parker** who is joining Civ Div.

QM'S DEPARTMENT

The department has finally been hit by a quiet period, so quiet in fact that even **Cpl Karl Duncan** has taken leave. With the Opeval fitness test coming up it has been rumoured that even **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Knott** RLC has been out running. The QM's department sends a warm welcome to **LCpl Dave Wardle** RLC and family and a sad farewell to **LCpl Ronny Holloway** RLC and his family as they leave us for Germany. Finally congratulations to **Sig Firth** on his successful completion of the R Signals (NI) Cadre Course.

SITUATIONS VACANT!!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MOTORCYCLE DISPLAY TEAM

Are recruiting new riders to fill vacancies which occur in the team. Two week selection courses will take place at Blandford.

No previous experience is necessary - all you need is guts, determination, fitness and ..... a sense of humour.

Application forms are kept in your Orderly Room/Sqn Office. Get one. Apply now and get on the next selection course.

THE WHITE HELMETS WANT YOU!!

40 Sig Regt (V)
Belfast

CO — **Lt Col N. C. Beacom TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) J. S. Black**

WELCOMES AND GOODBYES

We warmly welcome **WO2 (AQMS) Andy Somerville** and **Karen** to the province. May your time here be enjoyable. Farewell to the QM, **Capt John Mackay**, who will look back on his time here with fond memories–all the best in 3 (UK) Div. Farewell also to **WO2 (AQMS) Mick Bennett** and **Jill** off to Nepal, best of luck with getting your tongue around gurkhali.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Sgt Debbie Wolffe** on her promotion. Now she can keep her eye on her husband **Ian** in the Sgts' Mess.

OFFICERS' MESS 30TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The Regiment was formed on 1 April 1967 and so to coincide with the 30th Anniversary Celebrations the Officers' Mess held a dinner night on Friday 21 March 1997. This was a splendid evening with many serving, former and retired officers of the Regiment attending.

The guest of honour was the Master of Signals, accompanied by **Sylvia**, and he was presented with a farewell gift on this, his final visit to the Regiment as Master. A few former COs managed to attend and it was great to see the likes of **Lt Cols Ian Strong** and **Ian Henderson**. Our Hon Col, **Col Sandie Cramsie** and **Bridget**, and Hon Col NIH, **Col James Leslie** and **Elizabeth** attended as did **Col John McCann**, former Hon Col who belied his 85 years. In addition at the dinner, the Mess dined out the RMO, **Maj Ian Moles** and **Evelyn** off to take up post of 2IC 253 Fd Hospital. Also the Adjutant, **Capt David Cathro** and **Penny**, who are off to Blandford where Command and Support Gp does not know what is about to hit it. Can we honestly let **David** loose to savage the future officers of the Corps!

The CO presents The Master with a farewell gift

UNIT PRE INSPECTION

With the Unit PRE Inspection looming upon us in March, the MTO, **Capt Standen** requested manpower from the Squadrons to help prepare the fleet. So keen was the call taken up that **Sgts Bobby Ballance** and **Keith Harvey** 'quit their well paid civilian jobs' and joined the maintenance team. **Sgt Ferguson** from 85 Sqn was press-ganged whilst in camp collecting mail (or was that an excuse to go to MacDonalds). With a sigh of relief we discovered that 'Billy 100 X-Jobs' was no longer part of the inspection team and the hard labour put in by the Squadron's MT personnel ensured the inspection went well, with the Regiment receiving it's best report for five years. Well done.

BAMA RALLY ACTIVITY

The British Army Motoring Association year started with the very challenging Ex Rickshaw Ramble in January on the Longmoor Training Area. Competition was fierce with entrants from all three Services, Civilian Police and Vehicle Manufacturers Works teams. An expert crew of **Majs Ian Kyle/Robert Kelly** and a beginners crew of **Sgts Mark Bainbridge/Michael Ferguson** were entered. Fortunately **LCpl Colin Gordon** had come along in support to take some video footage. His first scoop was **Sgts Bainbridge/Ferguson** rolling their lightweight Land Rover onto its roof during the trials section. Unfortunately for them it was also caught on camera by a local TV crew and made the local news–Oh, the embarrassment of it all. The expert crew made a tremendous start, leading the first two thirds of the event before unfortunately developing mechanical problems and finished a creditable 12th Overall, 1st Scatter and 1st Military Crew. At the end of the event **Majs Kyle/Kelly** rescued a stranded vehicle and gave a textbook lesson in recovery using a lightweight Land Rover–much to the embarrassment of the three V8's that had already failed to extricate the 110 from the bog. Well done to **LCpl Gordon** who 'happened' to be in the right place at the right time with the video camera.

Three crews were entered in Ex Eastern Rover which was held in the Stanford Trg Area on 28 February–2 March. It was very pleasant to participate in a daylight event for a change–this was necessary due to troops dug-in on the area and live firing. This was a very tough event and the considerable number of off-road stages was not suitable for the lightweight rover. After considerable efforts **Majs Kyle** and **Kelly** finished fifth overall and Best TA. The other crews of **SSgt Billy Lyle/Sgt Morris Moates** and **Sgt Bainbridge/Sig Sandra Cleland** finished the event with all crews well 'shaken and stirred'. None of the spectators seemed too keen on the crews at the finish. Maybe this had something to do with the slurry a farmer had spread over part of the course.

The Regiment entered seven crews in Ex Scottish Rover in Stirling the 14-16 March. This was a tri-service competition hosted by 230 Tpt Sqn RLC. Five beginners' crews supplemented two experienced crews of **Majs Kyle/Kelly** and **Sgts Keith Harvey/Moates**. These were **Sigs Cleland/Louise Robinson**, **SSgt** 'Mac' **McAlpine/LCpl Davy McArdle**, **Sig John Clarke/LCpl Jason Giles**, **Sig Fred Amos/LCpl David Miskelly** and **SSgt Billy Lyle** and a member of the RAF from NI, as one of the team had to withdraw at the last minute. After an uneventful crossing and drive to Stirling on Friday night everyone managed to grab a few hours sleep before the start. The exercise commenced at 1400hrs on the Saturday with vehicle scrutiny and briefings. A long and difficult course followed with crews not finishing until 0500hrs on Sunday. Fortunately the off-road sections were not too rough and allowed the lightweights to compete on a more even footing with the V8s and turbo-diesels. The team returned with an excellent result. **Majs Kyle/Kelly** finished second overall with **Sgts Harvey/Moates** a close third overall. To have two crews finish in the top three is first for the Regiment and has not been achieved by any other unit for many years. These two crews also won 1st Unit Team. **SSgt Billy Lyle** and his RAF Navigator (well he was from NI) won best NI Crew. The other crews gained much driving and navigating experience, enjoyed themselves immensely and are as keen as ever to enter future events. Another good weekend–four major prizes and no damage to body or soul.

The teams are looking forward to more success during the rest of 1997. Many thanks go to the Service Crew at West Freugh who keep the vehicles on the road.

HQ SQUADRON

Sport has featured highly in HQ Sqn activity in recent months, golf in particular. At the first ever 107 (U) Bde outing at Ballyclare on 21 March the Regiment was represented by **Capt Tony Tierney**, **SSgt Paul Armstrong**, **Sig Blain** and **Steve Walker** from the LAD. **SSgt Armstrong** won some Tyrone Crystal for the best score on the outward nine holes and **Capt Tierney** won some for the best score on six 'hidden holes'. Congratulations to all and they keenly await the next outing in the autumn.

The Squadron has been more than active in recruiting. **Capt Tierney** gave a presentation to career masters from leading schools in the greater Belfast area and scout leaders, another presentation on Op Student Opportunity for sixth formers of local schools and yet another at Queen's UOTC. Well done **Tony** and we hope to see all your hard work bear fruit.

66 SIGNAL SQUADRON GO SKIING

It was off to Grantown-on-Spey for Ex Second Fall Finn to enjoy a weekend's skiing at The Lecht and Cairngorm ski slopes. A little ditty was composed to sum up the event:

On Tuesday the Advance party left,
To deploy on SECOND FALL FINN,
Next day it was the main party's turn,
But their ship, it didn't come in.

We found some friends in the Legion,
Which was just across the street,
Thanks to the Chairman and 'Young Ladies',
But they danced us off our feet.

With very tentative snow ploughs,
The beginners started on the slope,
Would they ever get the hang of it,
God could only give them hope.

The advanced group started their skiing,
With Shirlee-Anne's fall on the first run,
But Janet and Gary entertained us all,
By somersaulting just for fun.

The show was run by 'Mr Brittas',
Aided by the chefs from Wales,
And to keep the lads off the fire,
'Gaz the Fireguard' never fails.

Best dancer was 'See-through Lisa',
The Golden Blanket was won by 'The Skin',
Best injury by 'Eddie the Eagle Hedley',
The window smasher was 'Jimmy McChin',
Some people enjoyed 'Crofters' in Aviemore,
Some found the Legion enough,
But the last party held in the Hostel,
Left everybody feeling well rough.

Soon the time had come to depart,
And leave old Grantown-on-Spey,
The ferry journey was a bit dodgy,
And the 'Chucking Club' gave a display.

66 Sqn Apres Ski
(*L to R*): 2Lt Craig, WO2 Irvine, SSgt Shaw, Cpl Westerberg, Sgt Hedley, Bdr Watkins, SSgt (FofS) Dixon and LCpl Hanna.

CLONAVER ACF

The annual inspection of the Clonaver Park ACF Detachment took place on Monday 10 March 1997, the inspecting officer was **Maj Joe Fallows**, OC 66 Sig Sqn, and he was accompanied by **WO2 (SSM) Derek Irvine** and senior PSI **SSgt Mark Barrass**. The Det is Royal Signals capbadged and commanded by **Lt Betty Green**. The Det has regularly provided a number of high achievers, in particular the Crawford sisters, **Amanda** (18) and **Cheryl** (16) who hold the ranks of Cadet CSM and SSgt respectively. Both have been selected to attend the UK Master Cadet Course–normally only one cadet is selected from NI each year but in 1997 there are two from the Clonaver Det. In recognition of their achievement, the Inspecting Officer presented them with Royal Signals Stable Belts. **Maj Fallows** has a special interest in the ACF, his wife, **Lt Claire Tyler**, commands the Malone Det.

69 (NIH) SIGNAL SQUADRON
EXERCISE GLOBAL WARRIOR 1/97

29 members of 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn deployed on Ex Global Warrior 1/97 to Castle Kennedy, Scotland on 21-23 February. Our task was to carry out comms checks for the forthcoming 107 (U) Bde Ex Eagles Fire, and Executive Stretch. Despite extremely rough sea conditions in the Irish Sea, the HSS gently carried the Squadron to Stranraer on the Friday night. Here the Advance Party met us at Castle Kennedy, just after midnight. Luxury had been created with tented accommodation and lighting a very elegant portaloo and access to as much tea and coffee you could drink.

Reveille was at 0600 and by 0730 all five dets had deployed into the local area to attempt comms checks for Executive Stretch. Several of the original sites were now 'ponds' after the recent weather conditions and alternative drier sites had to be chosen. Masts were nearly bent over double due to the high winds and man-packs had to be used in some areas. However, the opportunity to deploy in daylight, without camm and in slow time especially with the unfamiliar VHF equipment was greatly appreciated by the soldiers. That afternoon the Squadron tested sites for Eagles Fire, these were at much more desolate locations and even RADCON had to move! All comms was established without problems and all dets were called back to Castle Kennedy by 1700hrs.

69 Sqn Ex Global Warrior 1/97 checking kit in Scotland.

Dinner eaten and first quote of the exercise noted. On approaching the dinner queue one of the soldiers asked the chef if the food was burnt. 'No' came the reply, 'It's just stuck!' The Ops Offr arranged for a shower run but only two others accepted the offer, this was probably in retaliation for his one man mission to turn the Squadron non-smoking. The mini-bus ferried everyone to the local village and a pub where the theme for the evening was country and western. Despite lots of tired faces, Squadron members participated fully in the evening–even helping the singer provide entertainment. A raffle was held and Squadron members won most of the prizes.

Sunday morning began with a BFT, followed by a hearty breakfast and a 100% kit check. Even more food followed and then it was time to check in for the ferry. The weekend finished back at Limavady at 2000hrs.

Due to good vehicle and equipment prep, excellent pre-teaching by the PSIs and a clear mission from Regt Ops all aims were achieved. The Squadron learned a great deal, especially the OC and 2IC who now know not to get in a LR with the Ops Offr driving, and acquired the information and skills needed for the forthcoming exercises. The troops agreed–it was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend.

Finally, the best quote of the week-end was made by the Ops Offr, **Capt Aaron Ballantyne**.

2IC–'What's happening this afternoon?'
Ops Offr–'The HF comms trial is being done and we are visiting the sites.'
2IC–'Right, how long will that take?'
Ops Offr–'Not long. They'll be in and out in 30 seconds and probably only need the whips.'

85 SIGNAL SQUADRON
EXERCISE GLOBAL WARRIOR 1/97

It remains an unsolved mystery as to how the Golf Tp clearance patrol did not encounter the ferocious ram that had set up an OP in the barn of their location. The SSM uncovered this creature in the dead of night, and only the bravery of Bosnia Veteran **Sgt Billy** 'social hand grenade' **Herridge** saved the SSM from the wrath of this ferocious animal. Ex GW 1 was a successful exercise. It was the first exercise of the year and the deployment of two full EANs and OSC140 was a good achievement. The determination and professionalism afforded by all was a credit to the Squadron, keep it going for the future.

EXERCISE JIMMY MCFINN–SKIING

Sgt 'I'm a horizontal Alpine skier' **Biggs** had a successful adventure training weekend at Aviemore. However, **Cpl** 'Michelob' **McCann** must be awarded the most improved skier of the weekend (was this due to the 'Rear Entry' demonstration from **Sgt** 'I never fall' **Hedley**?). The winter adventure training proved yet again to be a success as it catered for 40 soldiers including three instructors and achieved the aim of introducing beginners to alpine down hill skiing whilst improving the intermediaries in their technique.

The entire population of Aviemore were still in a state of shock following the arrival of an unknown talent who graced the town. The sales of anti-perspirant in the town have reached unheard of levels. The local police are also searching the streets for a hyper individual dressed in a 'last of the summer wine' type vest. Confusion has also rattled the Aviemore doormen as to why they encountered so many people from Room 111 in their local Mercury hotel trying to access this particular room at the same time. This is believed to be due to the record consumption of 'WICKED'. The Squadron are now looking forward to the next adv trg in the summer after a well deserved break from Ex Eagles Fire, Executive Stretch, Pied Piper and Able Condor.

RECRUITING

The Squadron has just sent away five recruits on their recruits course to Magilligan. On their successful return they will be straight in to their trade training cycle. These are the first of the new recruiting campaign and are vital to the Squadron aims of raising the number of trained soldiers in preparation for Ex Able Condor. The recruiting drive continues at an encouraging rate and further recruiting displays are planned for the very near future.

LOOK FORWARD

As if the first three months of the year were not busy enough, the Regiment now enters an even more demanding phase. In April we deploy on Ex Eagles Fire a 107 (U) Bde FTX, in May we are the coordinating unit for Ex Executive Stretch and in June we deploy on Ex Able Condor. The Ops Cell has steam permanently blowing out of the door as the PC and printer struggles to cope with the rain forest of paper that **WO1 (FofS) Woolaston** and **WO2 (YofS) Goodliff** are generating. The QM Dept are demanding everything that can be demanded and the MT/Movs Cell have melted their telephone booking ferries. It goes without saying that it will all be alright on the night. Remember, at the end of the day–it gets dark.

NOTES FROM CANADA
by Lt Jeni Ballagh

(**Lt Jeni Ballagh** is a Tp Comd of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) who is currently working in Canada for 6 months.)

I am currently attached to 709 (Toronto) Communications Regiment in Canada. This attachment came about as a result of my civilian job relocating me to Toronto for 6 months. This was in order to conduct market research for Challenger UK, an outdoor management development company, while also attracting North American organisations across to the all Ireland Challengers event to be held in September 1997. Although my

job keeps me more than busy I am thoroughly enjoying my time with 709. The Regiment meets on Monday and Thursday evenings with weekend exercises planned regularly. 709 Regt has been based in Fort York Armouries by Lake Ontario since 1966. It takes its history from the first Militia Signals unit formed in 1907 as the 2nd Signalling Company. Today its role is to provide communications support to Land Forces Command. As with our own reserves, several people have seized the opportunity to serve with NATO in Europe and on UN Peacekeeping Duties in the Middle East. The Regiment is currently manned for 129 all ranks and consists of four Squadronns including a special Signals Artillery Tp providing comms support to 7 (Toronto) Regt Royal Canadian Artillery. I am attached to Alpha Sqn, acting as Line Tp Comd and attended my first real 'winter' exercise early February at Borden Training Camp with the Radio Tp. The aim of the exercise was to train the infantry in field communication skills and getting me acclimatised to the cold weather conditions!

Being in the freeze of the Canadian winter brought back fond memories of my drive around the world as part of the 1994 London-New York Overland Challenge. On the trip the temperatures ranged from 13°C in London to -95°C with wind chill in Alaska as we snow machined along the Yukon. At -20°C on the Challenge it was almost summer yet on this recent exercise I was surprised at how much the cold affected me. I was more than thankful for my Canadian winter kit. 709 have made me feel exceptionally welcome and I will benefit greatly from my experiences.

Lt Ballagh on exercise in Canada.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
BFPO 15

CO **Lt Col P. A. Pratley MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) T. J. Keates**

SIGNAL TO HQ LAND AND THE ROYAL SIGNALS ON 131100 Z DEC 96

As the deployed elements of 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt return to Herford, we wish our successors in Bosnia Herzegovina every good fortune. The Regiment assumed responsibility for CIS in the Div AO on 17 June 1996 and handed over to 200 Sig Sqn and Theatre Trunk Sqn of 30 Sig Regt at 131000A December 1996. During that time the Regiment has deployed 622 individuals on Op Resolute, and provided an unprecedented comms and info systems suite to an operational Multi National Division HQ. Our involvement with the local community has varied from distribution of gifts to children (Op Shoebox) and local patrols in Banja Luka to the largest PTT reconstruction project in Bosnia, and the first to cross the IEBL. We have run two TV stations, three radio stations and supported or initiated 889 conference calls, driven over a million kilometres and generated over 14 tonnes of mail. Officers and soldiers have lived with Canadian, Dutch, Czech, French and American contingents, in Republic of Serpska, the Federation and Croatia, at altitudes varying from sea level to 6250 feet. We leave the continuing task in good hands, knowing that once again the Corps has shown its ability to provide the vital link. Certa Cito.

Radio Relay vehicles drive off site for the last time

THE FINAL CHAPTER
by WO2 (YofS) Phil Day

On a beautiful crisp cold December day (then again it could have been cold wet and miserable, but still a marvellous day) for us in Comms Ops, the final chapter had begun. After 6 months in control of CIS in NM SW the Sig Regt was formally handing over command to the Bde Sig Sqn and Theatre Trunk Sqn.

The majority of the Regiment were back in Herford so without too many hindrances, the hand over of key areas in Banja Luka such as, the COMMCEN, Syscon, ADA and Staff Support Tp took place. **Cpl** 'Doob' **Rogers**, **Sgt Mick Holloway**, **Cpl** 'Brassie' **Brayford** and **Cpl Brett Newton** respectively handed over to their counterparts in 200 Sig Sqn. This took the better part of a week to complete. During this time only 50 soldiers of the Regiment remained in theatre.

The remaining days were extremely busy, indeed we continued to monitor the staff conference calls ensuring that **Sig Sally Giffiths** improved her sprinting times by running backwards and forwards between Syscon and the Ops room every time someone fell off the COS's conference. Pressure was so intense during those last few days that **Sig Lucy Corlett** decided drastic action was need to avert a conference catastrophe and fainted. The last evening incorporated a farewell visit from **Field Marshall Sir Peter Inge**, who had thought it would be a good idea to pop across and make sure the hand over was going well. It was, however, apparent to everyone, especially **Cpl Tim Borrie** and **LCpl Matt Lennie** in Syscon that the end was in sight.

Comms Ops saw the completion of the hand over to the new Ops team with tears in our eyes and huge smiles on our faces. The final handshakes, signatures for the computers (including 223 different powerpoint presentations), keys for the office having occurred, we said our last goodbyes. As an epitaph to a highly rewarding tour a photograph was taken on the steps outside the Metal Factory, with again huge smiles for the camera. A quiet moment of reflection (but not too long), a last wave, and we all rushed for the coaches, just in case the CO had one final presentation for us to give?

Handover in the Metal Factory

LO TROOP'S WITHDRAWAL FROM BOSNIA
by Sig Dave Sinclair

Finally the day had arrived for the Troop to pull out of Gornji Vakuf. With a six month tour shortly to be behind us morale was high and every few hours we felt obliged to remind some of our newly arrived neighbours, notably the Green Howards, that we had only days left to do until we were back home in Germany. Needless to say they weren't too impressed with our news, mainly as they all had a full tour ahead of them. The Troop as a whole had been busy over that last week. The SAN at Kupres, under the leadership of **Cpl** 'DM' **Davies-Morris**, and the LO Dets commanded by **LCpl Adel Robins**, **Cpl** 'Ironass' **Ireson**, **Sig** 'Marty' **Fell** and **Sig** 'Baggy' **Bagshaw**, from Sarajevo, Mostar, Kiseljak and Tuzla respectively, all moving to the Troop HQ in GV. The LO Dets were replaced by RAF Regt personnel and all of these had to be escorted to the various locations throughout the country and shown the ropes. The lads based in GV were happy to see friends from the out Dets, happy that is until they discovered that they had to share their not too spacious rooms with these new guests, especially **Cpl** 'Spike' **Milligan**, whose posterior apparently, took up half a CORIMEC.

As lady luck would have it the weather turned for the worst in our final week, the snow returning in contrast to the pleasant spell we had had the week previously. Finally, our snow chains were issued from Banja Luka and for once we were happy with the phrase better late than never. The Tp OC, **2Lt Gareth Oliver**, arrived back at our location on the final day after a weekend in sunny Split–the excuses that he'd actually been attending a study course in Kupres were obviously not believed. Then it was at last time to move for an overnight stay in Kupres prior to the final push down to Split. Upon our arrival in Kupres we were none to happy to find five feet of snow drifts and an empty warehouse with an extremely cold concrete floor inside. The latter was to ensure that a good night's sleep was not had by anyone.

Rising early for the crack of dawn move, 8am is the crack of dawn according to **LCpl Paul Evans**, we were ready to go half an hour before we were supposed to leave. Once again fortune did not favour us and just before we were due to drive away we were notified of a RTA which had closed the road. Not minding a short wait spirits remained high, though we finally did leave 8½ hours later. Of course not before the entire Regiment, en route from Banja Luka, had manoeuvred their way just far enough past the camp on the MSR to ensure that the three packets stuck inside the camp would be the last to move–thanks guys!

Once on the road the journey was quite pleasant, the snow chains were removed and we followed in the trails of brake lights that we could see in the distance. We eventually crossed the border and the last few hours flew by. We were extremely glad to arrive at Split North Port with all of our vehicles after an uneventful journey. All that had to be done now was to return all of our accountable items to the QM's department–no weapons, ammunition, morphine or flak jackets to carry around (Hurrah). All we had to do was wait for our flight, which for some lucky ones was the next day whilst the rest of us got back three days later. And finally we were home.

Cpl Carl Crofts is reunited with his daughter at the end of a long six months

END DAY
by WO1 (RSM) Trevor Keates

As with any Regiment, a suitable way of deploying at the end of the tour was needed. Something that would signify the end, draw a line under the past six months, be something worth remembering for all concerned and a turning point to the future. It was decided that a parade followed by an all ranks party would be appropriate, before going on some well deserved leave. Now for me came the hard bit, what day to hold it on? After considering returning flights, ship docking times and vehicle movement, the 20 December 1996 was chosen and once the decision had been made fingers became continually crossed in expectation of all the equipment returning. And yes the feared nightmare did occur. Although the ship, the MV *Brazilia* arrived on time, it turned up in Vlissengen in Holland and not in Emden, Germany. Even this would not have been too much of a problem except that **WO2 (RQMS) Gary Waters** managed to take his whole packet into Belgium in the opposite direction from Herford. Eventually everyone got back and preparations could begin in earnest. With not much time for rehearsals, simplicity was the name of the game. The day before the Parade, in pouring rain, rehearsals were held much to the Adjutant's delight and the horror of **Lts Gary Pinchen** and **Alex Hutton** who arriving slightly late stayed hidden in their car foot wells as the RSM and Adjt passed by. The square was marked so nobody was in doubt as to where they should stand although **Cpl** 'Pik' **Botha** had his boots painted yellow.

Whilst preparation for the parade went on **WO2 (SSM) Neil Coatsworth** and **Alan Balsdon** with members of the Rear Sqn set about the preparation for the function and spectator seating area, as we fully expected the weather to turn nasty and we weren't to be disappointed. Nobody had contacted the Padre reference the booking of the weather, so during the night we had a good covering of snow and high winds that caused the tentage to collapse. With snow covering the square and also more importantly the markers where the people had to stand, the first priority on the morning of the parade was to clear the square, to prevent the parade quite literally falling flat on its face. Everything was ready. The medal recipients were formed up in their Bosnian Sqns and as the temperatures dropped to -7°C, coupled with a wind chill factor that took it down to -12°C everyone prayed for a quick parade. Our guest of honour the Burgermeister, **Dr Gerhard Klippstein** escorted by **Col J. P. Riley DSO** and the CO arrived to present the medals. With the families braving the cold to watch 367 members of the Regiment receive their medals, it was a great relief to start the march past recirculating the blood, which had frozen in our veins. After the parade, a very serious defrost was required. A marquee had been hired and the gymnasium was laid out for food. The only thing left was to celebrate, with a hot mug of tea and a magnificent buffet, what was a very successful tour.

REBRO TROOP RECONSTITUTION
by Cpl Andy Allen

After spending six and a half months on Mt Adam, an isolated rebro site in the Falkland Islands, the return to Herford was a welcome relief for all deployed, as was the four weeks leave. However, the rest was short lived as the Rear Details came thick and fast until the Regiment returned from Bosnia and block leave. The six week reconstitution came as a bit of a shock with the work load piling up, not to mention the bergan runs. There are also a lot of new faces as many of us shifted around the Regiment in the new ORBAT.

To the delight of the Tp storeman, **LCpl** 'Taff' **Lewis**, the main problem initially was tracking kit, but since the arrival of the elusive 'ISO container' there have been no excuses! The armoured element of the Troop took a hammering whilst we were away as the two vehicles were stripped out and used for driver training. Obviously these were both returned in mint condition so **Sig Neil Parsons** and **Sig** 'Smudge' **Smith** had nothing to do all day but drink tea. The majority of the wheeled Rebros are now in good order. However, **LCpl Charlie Henson** had a few words to say when his Land Rover was returned to him by the Regt Ski Team. They had forgotten to mention that it was still painted blue! Suggestions that skylining would no longer be a problem on exercise were not taken too well and needless to say his finely honed diplomatic skills ensured that it was rapidly repainted.

Reconstitution is now well underway with first and second line inspections in the build up to Ex Premier Rhino. The next year is going to be packed with exercises and the odd battle camp thrown in for good measure, but it will certainly be a challenge.

LCP TROOP 212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

After a hectic 1996 for the old Out Of Use (OOU) Tp 211 Sig Sqn, and a much needed Christmas and New Year break, the Troop has now reformed as the new LCP Tp 212 Signal Sqn as part of the Regiment's reconstitution. The few 'Old Gits' of the Troop who are left (**Cpl Paul George**, **Cpl Bob Porter**, **Sigs Fay Wood**, and 'Spud' **Tainton**) would like to welcome **SSgt Bob Brehany** and **Sgt Dougie Douglas** along with an almost completely new workforce. The main task of the Troop is to now reclaim a vast range of equipment, which was signed out for the Regiment's deployment to Bosnia and relocate it within the Armd Sqns. The Troop has also recently swapped eight AFV with 211 Sig Sqn and is now going about the tasks of CES checks, servicing and technical inspections to prepare the vehicles for a short stay in LCP. Despite being promised that vehicles coming into LCP would stay in LCP we recently had to reactivate one AFV for 211 Sig Sqn–hopefully this doesn't set the trend for the future.

Finally we would like to thank everyone who passed through the Troop over the past seven months, and with hard work has made the return of the Regiment much easier.

REGIMENTAL SPRING BATTLECAMPS

The 1997 Regimental Spring Battlecamp, split for ease into two parts, disturbed the rural peace of Haltern Training Area near Munster, with both the Trunk Sqns and the Armd Sqns conducting some highly imaginative and useful military training. Some of the humorous events were:

Cpl Cal Hewitt ordering his Section to 'Run away,' when faced by a GPMG position and supposed to be doing a deliberate attack, much to the disbelief of **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Brummie' **Lawes**.

Cpl 'Windy' **Gale** and his Section patrolling in extended line through a wood on the Night Navigation exercise to find **SSgt Steve Russell** with torches ablaze and crying out, 'Where are you?' . . . so much for bearings and pairings.

The 'Trumpton Fire Brigade' of **Sgt Dave Eden**, **Cpl** 'Thomo' **Thompson** and **Sig** 'Jo' **Crayden** racing out to extinguish the flames caused by the tracer on the GPMG range, much to the horror of **Sgt** 'Dutch' **Holland**, the Range Conducting Officer.

Cpl Justin Carter falling flat on his face and driving the GMPG gun barrel into the ground whilst posing for the ubiquitous media photographs.

Cpl 'Gaz' **Stokoe** who demanded ammo on **SSgt Steve Cherry**'s

Cpl Cal Hewitt briefs his Section on how to withdraw in the face of an inferior force

highly imaginative defence shoot without specifying what type and ended up with 7.62mm for his rifles, he distributed it anyway and **LCpl Fozard** and **Sig McLeod** shouted, 'Bang!' frequently–to the terror of the figure 11 targets.

Sig Payne, after following the rest of the Section along **WO2 (FofS) Ron Bunn**'s rope walk, all wearing underpants over their heads and in respirators, crying out, 'Get off my ***** hand,' to someone who trod on it. This was to the confusion of the remainder of her Section and the blushes of the DS who had got a little too close to take photographs.

201 & 208 SIGNAL SQUADRON'S SPRING BATTLECAMP

Following the hectic and thoroughly exhausting reconstitution period after our redeployment from Bosnia it was time to have some fun; or so we thought! The direction from higher was to run a Battlecamp that the soldiers would enjoy instead of the standard tab here and tab there, which is usually accompanied by a thousand blistered feet. From the outset **Capt Jason Hazelwood**, **Lt Mark Brookes**, **WO2 (SSM) Sarah Stonier** and **WO2 (SSM) Alan Balsdon** were given the honored responsibility for the organisation and conduct of creating the ultimate fun-filled and adventurous Battlecamp in the Haltern Training Area.

The Battlecamp was run in three phases: Junior NCO Leadership, Minor Tactics and ranges; read APWT. The Junior NCO Leadership phase consisted of an orienteering route with a number of different military skills based stands thrown in for interest. First Aid was covered in an interesting scenario; **Sgt Pete Preece** organised two command tasks; the first was a river crossing using a long rope and several very heavy objects. The rope, however, was considerably shorter by the end of the week, **Cpl Fisher** decided that the task would be much easier if he were to snap it in half, apart from the fact that neither half would span the river. The second task consisted of lots of blindfolds and a loudhailer; traversing the maze was fairly straightforward apart from a strategically placed tree that caused much merriment for the senior spectators. Of course no Battlecamp would be the same if it didn't incorporate something physical. **Sgt Jay Mitchell** and **Cpl Stephen Crooks** eagerly organised an ammunition re-supply by fire teams, the idea of a scenario quickly dissolved when the teams discovered that it was actually a stretcher race under a different name.

The Field craft/Tactics day was a combination of minor level tactics with the addition of a bit of digging. The day began with a wood clearance battle exercise run by **SSgt Andy Strudwick**. There were a number of notable achievements: **Lt Gill Greenhill** managing to kill off most of her platoon; **SSgt Jeff Clarke**'s continual mutterings about the demise of volleyball and the parentage of **2Lt Gough**!!, and finally **Lt Alex Hutton**'s expertly timed use of his 'Get out of Battlecamp Free' card. Then came lessons on patrol harbours and agent meets by **Capt Hazlewood** leading to an afternoon of digging - in marshy harbour areas. The night of patrolling followed, where the Sections' skills of observation were pitched against the 'Tank Crew' of **Cpls Paul Garratt** and **Roy Boscowan**, the 'Jammerberg Giants' of **SSgt Ian Lee** and **Cpl Dave Morgan** and finally the 'Can we light another fire crew?' of **Cpls** 'Hanny' **Hannon** and **Steve Riley**. **SSgt Ian Lee** had the unenviable task of co-ordinating the enemy, who all gained from the experience, if nothing else, by learning Marine Speak.

Due to the shortage of 24 hour ration packs the Regiment chefs were called upon to ensure that everyone was supplied with copious amounts of calories. **Sgt Neil Rigby** and his staff of **Cpl Colin Huetson**, **LCpl Scott Caddief**, **LCpl Ritchie Tiley**, **Ptes Chris Small**, 'Robbo' **Robinson** and finally **Ritchie Straw** had, once again, demonstrated their mastery of the culinary arts by ensuring that all soldiers and staff were well fed. On second thoughts, maybe it wouldn't have been a bad idea to tab all over the Haltern Training Area, at least the final days of CFT helped to make some amends in this regard.

EXERCISE BLUE RHINO 2/97
PUMA TROOP 208 SIGNAL SQUADRON PERSPECTIVE

This was the first tentative exercise after reconstitution and a big 'Well done,' must go to **Sgt Dave Allen** and the Radio Relay guys for remembering the art of communication and movement. Unfortunately, our acting Systems Sgt, **LCpl Bri Hurcombe**, had had a bad case of 'Dead Switch'. This then caused many sleepless nights for the gallant technical crew led by **Sgt Jim Hawkins**. After many hours of work, **Dr Hawkins** pronounced the switch was working again, to the great relief of the Troop Commander, **Lt Gill Greenhill**. The said Switch still remains to be proven in combat. Its time will come on Ex Rhino Link, but we remain quietly confident.

FORWARD TROOP 211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

After the return of the Regiment from Bosnia, the Squadron underwent an intensive reconstitution. Following this Fwd Tp was the first to deploy into the field to Minden North. Torrential rain meant that the location could have doubled for the set of 'Waterworld'. However, good luck prevailed and after a rapid issue of waterwings no panzers or men were lost. It was a good day out and a lot of cobwebs were blown away. On the way back to camp the troubles really started as the engine belonging to the GOC's TAC wagon insisted on cutting out and endured the journey being jump started about fifteen times during the 30km trip. **Cpl** 'Brassy' **Brayfsford** assumed the role of traffic controller at one point and, clad in his luminous vest proceeded to strut his stuff in the road. His zealous arm waving and flowing pirouettes were certainly entertaining and may have had something to do with the fact that there was a Restaurant of locals looking on.

The future will certainly involve many changes, not least because we are losing some of the Tp's main personalities. **SSgt Tony Bentley** moves to 39 Sig Regt. The Div Recce Officer, who is now desperately trying to improve his 'MacDonalds' German, will especially miss the fluent German of **SSgt Bentley**. **Sgt** 'Murph' **Murphy** escapes on promotion to 71 Sig Regt and **LCpl Gordon Lloyd** goes globetrotting with 30 Sig Regt. **Sig** 'Birdman' **Bird** moves within the Regiment to join the 'Wheelies' of 208 Sig Sqn. At this moment Fwd Tp is undergoing further changes with the reorganisation of the HQ, and will be deploying on subsequent exercises in it's new role as Comms Troop.

MAIN TROOP 211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

The post-Bosnia reconstitution has been a turbulent time for the entire Regt. The HQ complex has changed beyond recognition, returning to the old 'Diamond' notation, and splitting into numerous parts. The 'BFOT' is finally dead! It is to be replaced by a series of zip together 'SFOTs', a decision possibly made after finding out that the depleted Troop size was not enough to stop it flying away while set up on the square. The weight of nine bodies was simply not enough to prevent an impromptu hanglider impression! This tentage transmogrification is possibly made definitely finished after trying various options including penthouses, cobbled together canvas drapes and all in all enough different tentage styles to fill the pages of any Cotswold catalogue.

The post-Bosnia rush has also seen some new faces join the Tp, **Sigs Olatunde** 'On a Sunday' **Ileomoh**, **Robert Platt**, **Stuart Lannie** and 'Windy' **Millar** all fresh from training. **Sig Millar** deserves a special mention as, following a transfer from the RGJ, he won the Raychem prize for being an all round special chap at Blandford; this along with being mentioned twice in the same article should be more than enough to see him 'slabbed'. **LBdr** 'Taff' **Ball** has also graced us with his presence and decided to have a look at life 'Scaly side', which we are sure he will find enlightening! We also have a few goodbyes to say. Firstly we have lost **Cpl Tim Vanandel** and wish him all the best with his new job at Blandford. Secondly, and finally, we see **Sgt** 'Smudge' **Smith** off on his Yeoman's course, for which we wish him well.

We all appreciate **SSgt** 'Gunney' **Slaney**'s kind request to stay with the Squadron until the end of the year. Despite being selected for promotion he has decided to sacrifice an early posting to ensure that reconstitution is completed satisfactorily–well done 'Gunney'! Finally we would like to say a fond farewell to **Lt** 'Judith' **Chalmers** car exhaust–which made a spectacular departure during the Regiment Battlecamp. Everyone could hear a fleet of panzers approaching the Training Area but were surprised to see a lowly Ford Orion, followed by an impressive stream of sparks, arrive at Haltern–serves him right for driving a 'padmobile'!

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

THE KIWI HALF MARATHON

Last years' Kiwi Half Marathon raised £1390 for SSAFA. Pictured below is **Mrs Susie Delves** accepting the cheque from the CO who is being guarded by the RSM and Families Officer, **Mrs Rosemary Hayes** looks on. The race for this year will take place on Sunday 28 September 1997, entry forms can be obtained from the Unit Families Office in Bulford.

Mrs Susie Delves accepting the cheque for £1390 raised for SSAFA by the Kiwi Half Marathon

REGIMENTAL CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

The team has had a very successful year with the following results in the 3 (UK) Div league, which just goes to prove we weren't skiving exercises for nothing!

1st Female	**Cpl Nevens**	243 Sqn
3rd Female	**Lt Hay**	222 Sqn
2nd Male	**LCpl Conlon**	257 Sqn
2nd Female Team	**Lt Hay**	222 Sqn
	Cpl Nevens	243 Sqn
	LCpl Phillips	HQ Sqn
	Sig Baines	206 Sqn
	Sig Campbell	206 Sqn

Cpl Donna Nevens–1st Individual Female 3 Div Cross Country League

Cpl Donna Nevens, **LCpl Kev Conlon**, **Sig Emma Baines** and **Sig Jenny Campbell** ran in the Army Championships. In addition to this, **Cpl Nevens** and **LCpl Conlon** have competed in the Inter Corps and Inter Services Championships. Colours were awarded to **Cpl Milsom**, **Cpl Nevens** and **LCpl Conlon**. Well done to everyone who represented the Regiment during the season and best of luck to all those who have moved on to new units. 'Keep on running!'

Lt Hay, Sig Campbell and Sig Baines
Runners up 3 Div cross-country League

HQ (SOMME)SQUADRON
TM TROOP

Regt FofS	**Tony Mullen**
Tp SSgt	**Dawn McKay**

A lot of things have happened since TM Tp last had an entry published in *The Wire*. We congratulate **SSgt Matt Nuttall**, and **SSgt Dawn McKay**'s husband **Andy** on being awarded their LS & GC Medals by the Master of Signals for 15 years undetected crime, making it a memorable day for members of TM Tp. Other than the usual exercises that we always seem to be getting ready for or on, some of the Troop has actually managed to get away on various activities in the last few months. **LCpl Louis Phillips**, **LCpl Gail Harper**, and **Sig Max** 'have I got a sun tan yet' **Maxwell** have all been away skiing.

A lot of the Troop personalities have moved around to cover the Regiments' commitment to the Falklands. Hence we say a temporary farewell to **SSgt Matt Nuttall**, **Cpl Paul Drysdale**, and **LCpl** 'Taff' **Thomas** who are by now counting the penguins down south, and **Sgt Drew Thompson** and **Cpl Fred Farnfield** who have moved to the remaining Trunk Sqn for the next six months.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Drew Thompson** on passing his Foreman's entrance exam, and we all hope that he does well on his Sergeants and selection for his course. We say fond farewell to **Cpl Phil Ellwood**, and **Cpl Sean Allsopp** who are leaving us for their T1 upgrading course. Also to **LCpl Louis Phillips** who has managed to escape after only a three month posting with us, she has now been posted to NI to be with her husband. We all wish to congratulate **SSgt Phil McMullen**, and his wife on the birth of their baby, and also offer our congratulations to **SSgt Dawn McKay**, and **Sgt Brian Gillies** for the good news on their expected patter of little feet.

The Troop welcomes the following into our number, **Sgt Pete Gibbons**, **LCpl Golob**, **LCpl Drysden**, and **LCpl** 'Juniper' **Berry**, and hope that they enjoy their time with 3 Div. On a final note, most of the Troop are looking forward to taking part in the Squadron Adventure Training in Snowdonia, going on Brewery trips, and getting the Wiggly Wire ready for the Regimental Open Day as well as exercise prep for the rest of the year.

MT TROOP

MTO	**Capt Charlie Tomkins**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Warcham**

MT Tp looking suspiciously clean on Ex Red Tricom

Well after that silly season called Christmas, the Regt MT seem to have sobered up enough to run a Fams Course, under the ever watchful eye of **Sgt** 'Biggles' **Purdue**. The aim of the course was to teach young soldiers who have come straight from their training centre at Blandford the basics in vehicle maintenance. They also completed a small exercise in the field during which they had to camouflage their vehicles and complete the cross-country course not only during the day but also in the dead of night. **Sgt** 'Biggles' **Purdue** managed to borrow a Snowcat from 5 AB and everyone seem to enjoy having a go in it. But we will not say too much about the other cross country phase . . . Bang . . . Bang . . . will we? We managed to only lose some of **Sgt Purdue**'s flowing locks during the cross-country drive. But again we will not say too much.

While all this was going on the rest of the MT where preparing for the first exercise of the year, that seemed to go well as the TCWO still had his bag of Jelly Babies on the second day. **Sgt** 'I don't wanna go' **Dixon** has been busy with the Regimental Shooting Team and some of the MT even volunteered to be members of this elite group (not!!). We have to say goodbye to **LCpl Jennings** and family who are in sunny Lisburn, also to **LCpl Watson** who has finally left the Army after going on about it for six months. We wish them both the best for the future. Hello and welcome to **LCpl John** 'how many courses can I get on' **Skinner** and his wife **Lesley** who is expecting their first baby sometime in September.

Handover of QM(Tech) from Maj Mick Besant to Capt John McKay

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Graham Complin**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Geoffrey Hawkins BEM**

Congratulations to **WO2 (YofS) Hawley** who has recently been selected for promotion to WO1.

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Alan Garrett**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Jim Stillie**

Winter 1997 has been a strange time for the Overloonies. First of all we expanded like a super model on a cake binge. Now though, all the quality personnel have been divided up between Waterloo Tp and Overloon Tp are back to our normal strength. The bloated Overloon Tp deployed on Ex Red Tricom 1, followed immediately by the staff, God bless them, arriving for Ex First Foray. With so many operators being on their first real exercise, it took a little while before everyone knew exactly what they should be doing. Luckily, unlike Iron Resolve, nobody got stuck in Marlborough or hopelessly lost. The highlights this time; the freezing extra-long cabby with no break for the drivers, taking a packet up some Brigadier's driveway at half past one in the morning and taking half-an-hour to reverse out. One thing does still escape us–how did **SSgt Jim Stillie** manage to win the quiz night. There could obviously be no collusion between him and **Cpl** 'Alfie' **Alford**, of course!

The rest of our time has been taken up by **Cpls** 'Stu' **McLean** and **Toby Fernbank** trying to get everyone through their track licence test. They have had a lot of success, especially as they had to cram the courses in very quickly. Well done to all those who passed. Thank goodness you did, we could have been rather static on the next exercise.

In between all this, we have all been fitting in some ATD training, with everyone taking part in a bit of shooting, running, and first aid. If all this was not enough, **Sigs Richie Hay**, **Stuart Southan**, and **Ross Williams** were all taking part in the Regimental Cadre Course, we are all very proud of your sterling performances.

Finally, the Troop says a fond farewell to **Sgt** 'Ods' **O'Dell** as he finally finds a 'Get Out of Jail Free' card and moves on to pastures new after five years with the Iron Division. Good luck in Germany.

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Blair Mitchell**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Crawford**

A warm welcome is extended to our new Tp Comd **Capt Harrington**. Also greetings go to Tp **Sgt** 'Mo' **Morris** and his family posted in from1 Div Sig Regt and from 7 Sig Regt **LCpl Ross** and his family. **Sig Goose** and family posted in from 1 Div Sig Regt and **Sigs Bryant**, **Fildes**, **Hills** and **Jenkins** posted in from the Factory at Blandford. As well as these, several have been cross-posted across from Overloon Tp, so a big warm welcome to you all. We are still saying hello and good bye to some of the Troop as they disappear and reappear from Bowman trials, but the count down has started for their return. We are due to say goodbye to our Tp Comd, **Capt Mitchell** who is posted to the Royal School of Signals, Blandford also **Sig** 'Gibbo' **Gibson** who is posted to 2 Div Sig Regt, York.

Over the last two months the Troop has still been busy with the rebuild of the second Armd HQ. We also provided the alternate HQ at BBGT Warminster for Ex Red Tricorn 1 and Ex First Foray. This was a short-lived experience as after the week long set up period the admin area (which was erected by 1 RGJ) was blown away by high winds.

The Troop has been well represented in sports over the last two months. In football at Corps level, by **Cpl** 'Alfy' **Alford**, **Sig** 'Johnno' 'I Didn't Do It, Honest Guv' **Johnston** and **Sig Meachem**. Plus Army level by **Cpl** 'Alfy' 'I'11 Be At Work One Day' **Alford**. Also Army Women's Hockey by **LCpl Tracy** 'Hello But Good Bye' **Ross**, well done to you all.

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Katy Caie**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Jon Clarke**

February saw the deployment of the Squadron on exercise. Tp personnel at that time were scattered throughout the Squadron. Achievements on the exercise included **LCpl** 'Flash' **Kidner** attempting to write off the MT fleet. **Sgt** 'No-Neck' **Turner** outdid his previous efforts with the Squadrons' Route cards, 'At the next T-Junction, go straight on'. **Sig Matt** 'Mad for it' **Parkes** was more than happy to show **Sig** 'Ginger' **Joice** how to start his Generator at 0300hrs, again! The Troop was reformed on 17 February, administration for the 'new' Troop was thrust on **Sgt Jon Clarke**, since we were still awaiting the arrival of the new Tp Commander. **2Lt Katy Caie** who arrived in mid March to take over the reins of the Troop and was also pleased to find that she had been nominated to lead the Regimental team in this years Nijmegen Marches. Despite initial problems with the integration of 'combat trades' and 'operators', the Troop is now running smoothly with only the occasional grumbles about sharing stores and restrooms.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Martin Hunt** and **LCpl Andy Miller** on their respective promotions. **Sigs** 'Mandela' **Slade** and 'Geordie' **Hall** on passing the Regimental JNCO Cadre and **Sgt Dave Martin** on getting away for three weeks on a hang-gliding course whilst the rest of the Squadron was busy preparing for Ex First Foray. Farewell to **Sgt** 'No Neck' **Turner**, off to ATR Bassingbourn to pass his golfing skills on to the Army's new recruits. Also to **Cpl Al Dawes**, **LCpl Andy Gleadall** and **Sig** 'Swan' **McArthur** off to JCUFI with 257 Sig Sqn, and **Sig Rob Penney** off to Civvy Street, we wish them all good luck. Welcomes to the Troop include **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Welsh**, **Cpl** 'Murph' **Murphy**, **LCpls Mick Lynn**, **Nat Kemp**, **Nikki Wilkie**, 'Windy' **Miller** and **Bob Shaw-Rowlands**, and **Sigs Brown**, **Criswick**, **Steele**, **Jackson**, **Westerman**, **Steel** and **Hudson**.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj P. W. Glibbery**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) T. P. Crane**

There have been few changes in SHQ since our last submission but the event of most note was the extremely well deserved selection for promotion to WO1 of **WO2 (FofS) Dave Ball** and **WO2 (SSM) Terry Crane**. Sadly this means that both will eventually leave the Squadron, but don't worry, we will still get our moneys worth out of you before you leave!

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt A. P .J. Coulston**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt C. Lloyd**

On 16 February 1997 15 members of Inkerman Tp embarked on Ex Arctic Rhino. The aim of the Exercise was to introduce the Troop to Alpine Skiing in the Cairngorms, Scotland. The expedition started with an uneventful eight-hour drive to Dundee except for **Sig Andy Welsh** who was accosted by a fellow transit driver selling bent car stereos! We spent the evening in a TA Centre, courtesy of **YofS Andy Dobson**, 2 Signal Sqn, however, this was only after an interesting tour of Dundee!!

The following morning on arrival at Aviemore we discovered that the resort was stormbound and there was to be no skiing in the Cairngorms. Undeterred by this small detail we learnt of a second resort, The Lecht, which was apparently open. All hungry for our first taste of snow we set off for this resort. On arrival, we found hundreds of mad people skiing on mud in the pouring rain, so we accepted defeat and for the rest of the day we checked into our lodge and sorted out our admin.

The rest of the week was spent dodging the storms in the Cairngorms and skiing at the Lecht. One day was spent entirely in our lodge due to a snowstorm and the local roads being closed by the Police. On the penultimate night we had a small party which resulted in numerous beer drinking games, **LCpl Phil Maybury** showing his stamina with a barstool and **Sgt Matt** Wakeling showing his lack of patience with the Navy! By the end of the week we had managed to ski three out of the five days, experience a taste of Scotland and enjoy the hospitality of numerous Scottish pubs. Finally, farewell to **LCpl Graeme Hamblen** (posted to 249 Sig Sqn, Bulford!) and **Sig Stewart Simpson**, good luck in Civ Div.

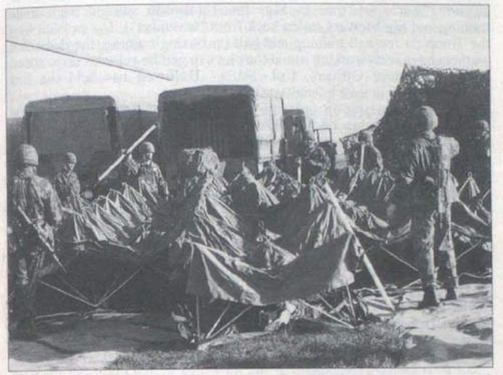
MONS TROOP
WOT, NO MORE DRASH?'

Tp Comd — **Capt Nik Bruce**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Chris Kidd**

Ex Red Tricorn 1/First Foray was the first shakeout exercise period for the Regiment after a calorie intensive Christmas. It was also time to educate new members of HQ DSG Staff on the pleasures of 'camping' on Salisbury Plain (SPTA). Unfortunately, due to the very nature of SPTA, the exercise soon became more of a washout than a shakeout.

During one particular early morning monsoon drainage ditches had to be dug to prevent the Staff from simply floating away. The scene was more like something out of 'The Cruel Sea' than an Army exercise. The only bonus was that with all the assembling and tearing down, DRASH camouflage had been perfected both inside and out–WITH MUD!!

With morale, understandably, not at its' peak, and most people on their third set of combats, an ideal opportunity arose to dismount the HQ into a barn. This went extremely well and is now the preferred option of the Staff (not to mention 206 Sig Sqn). So could this be the last that we see of our beloved DRASH (Don't Require Anymore Shelters, Hoorah!). To be continued . . .



'Here comes the rain again.'
A Rare moment as DRASH is erected in bright sunshine

Congratulations and best wishes to **LCpl** 'J' **Huntingdon** and his wife **Donna** who were married on 8 March–a very shrewd move, marrying a publicans daughter!

CAMBRAI TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Harvey**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Day**

The first exercise of the year started earlier for some, with one SAN, led by **Cpl** 'Wilkie' **Wilkinson**, deploying early with 216 Sig Sqn; **2Lt Joe Harvey** and **Sig Karl Law** practised their Arctic Warfare training during some night moves without a heater in their Land Rover, whilst others again had the joy of helping Mons Tp with DRASH. Straight on from this, with all the manpower retumed from the Bowman trials, was the Sqn Battlecamp held at Tregantle Fort near Plymouth. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all, especially due to some fine weather and interesting ranges (including some firefighting caused by our rogue Tp Comd who decided to set the ranges on fire one night with a tracer round from his GPMG). The new Tp Comd, **2Lt Fennell**, was welcomed warmly to the camp with various personality switches taking place and leading to more than a little confusion. The Troop also performed well in the intersection competition with a number of Troop members being in the winning section led by **LCpl Jim Walton**. Finally, our congratulations must go to **Sig Kev Meek** on promotion to LCpl and to **SSgt** 'Doz' **Day** on promotion to WO2.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj R. A. Mulholland**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) G. Johnson**

SHQ TROOP

Tp SSgt — **SSgt Kimber**

Two of our number have recently been selected for promotion, **WO2 (SSM) Gary Johnson** who is due to leave us shortly to take up the post of RSM 30 Sig Regt, we wish **Gary** and **Mourn** all the best in Bramcote. Also selected for promotion was our SQMS **SSgt Dave Rook** well done. Other cornings and goings are; farewell to, **Sgt Graeme Steel** who has re-badged AGC Corps, **Sgt Steve Pattenden** on detachment to Split, **Cpl Dave Sangster** to 243 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Chris Pugh** to Training Wing. Welcome to the following; **Sgt Si Jarnell**, **Sgt Drew Thomson**, **Cpl Fred Farnrield**, **Cpl** 'Dickie' **Dickinson**, **Cpl** 'Sabbo' **Saban**, **Cpl Brett Spruce**, **LCpl Ricky Ross**, **LCpl** 'Stan' **Stenning**, **LCpl Roger Teasdale** and finally **Sig Adam Burman**.

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt N. Morris**
Tp Sgt — **SSgt Hogg**

Aden Tp are as fluid as ever (this has nothing to do with the leave we've just had) and all the leaving drinks for the following; **LCpl Andy Plumb** and **Cpl** 'Penguin' **Coxon** who are off to 1 Div, **LCpl** 'Ale Monster' **Nealey** and **Sig** 'Nads' **Rayles** who are both off to 2 Sigs and last but not least, **Sig Trev** 'Do I care' **Bailey** who's soon to become **Mr Bailey**, we wish him all the best for the future. Well it's out with the old and in with the new and welcome to the following: **Cpl Frew**, **Cpl Turner**, **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Appleby** and **Sig Johnson** all from 7 Sigs. Last but not least **Sig Mates** from 11 Sigs.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt F. Hay**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Hill**

EXERCISE ARCTIC IRON 8/14 MARCH 1997

Ex Arctic Iron was the Oman Tp 'venture training exercise which took place in the Cairngorms area of Scotland. The good weather and snow conditions ensured that all personnel had five good days' of skiing, transforming even the most inept beginner into a skier capable of tackling the slopes in relative safety. That is, of course, unless your name is **Sig Vicky Ashworth**, who has shown us all how to wipe out a T-Bar in one easy move while on video camera. Jeremy Beadle watch out! The most desperate man on the slopes had to be **LCpl Steve Wells**, who can hone in on any woman within a five-mile radius 'just for a chat, honest'. We believe you, **Steve**. Awards for the most eye-catching outfits have to go to **Sgt Jim Robertson**, **LCpl** 'Seth' **Campbell** and **Sig** 'Victor Meldrew' **Buckingham**, who all sported attractive dew liners on the slopes, and showed us all how to hit Mach 1 in a 'Zoot' suit. All in all a successful week of adventure training, and **Lt** 'Fifi' **Hay** has agreed to organise another trip next year.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt A. Stead**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Lang**

Here we are again after two weeks Easter leave, all bright eyed and bushy tailed ready for another exciting term at the farm, and what a fun packed time we're all going to have with all these exercises coming up to stop us getting bored. Sharjah Tp was reformed at the beginning of the year and now it has been packed out with fresh blood posted in. Starting with yet another Tp Comd, **2Lt** 'Skippy' **Stead**, **SSgt Ray** 'Davros' **Lang**, **LCpl Kath Burgess**, **Sig** 'Vera' **Lynn**, **Sig Ed Howard**, **Sig Kelly Garret** and not forgetting **Sig** 'Granvel' **Drake**. Welcome to you all and have a good tour.

3 (UK) DIV SIGNAL REGIMENT HISTORICAL ROOM

The Regiment is currently refurbishing the historical room. Anyone with photographs, press cuttings or written memories which could be added to the displays in the room is requested to write to **Lt Hay**, 222 Sqn, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, Picton Barracks, Bulford Camp, Salisbury, SP4 9NY.

CONTINUE THE ACTION

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

TA
TERRITORIAL ARMY

Have you left, or are about to leave the Regular Army? Do you feel you still have much to offer? Do you miss the life? Will you be settling in the North West of England?
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33 Sig Regt (V)
Alamein TA Centre
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Huyton
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L36 3RW
Tel: 0151 489 8331

7 Sig Regt
BFPO 35

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Alan Stringer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Tony Barry**

This was another busy period for all members of SHQ Tp. First we start with 'Hellos' to **LCpls Haynes**, **Dixon** and **Jones** joining us from TM Tp. With news that **Sgts Eaves** and **Sanderson** are soon to join the Squadron fresh from their T1 in Blandford, the Tech Workshop is now a hive of industry. Will this put a smile on the face of **SSgt (FofS) Frank Cowan**? On the farewell side of the house we say goodbye to **Cpl Kev Macguinness** and **LCpl Andy Hunter** who are moving to 280 Sig Sqn and **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Hayhurst** who is tearing himself away from the football team to go to 35 Sig Regt (V). Thank you for your efforts with the Troop, we wish you every success in the future.

Congratulations to **SSgt (SQMS) Rob** 'Banana Feet' **Hood**, **Sgt** 'Gaz I missed a penalty' **Williams**, **Sgt** 'Big Mac and Chips' **Mckinnon**, **Cpl** 'Gaz where's my flip-flops' **Hayhurst**, **LCpls Steve Dixon** and **Scott Haynes** for being part of the BA (G) Challenge cup winning team. A big well done to **SSgt (FofS) Frank Cowan** and **SSgt (YofS)** 'Hodge' **Arthurs** for their efforts in the recent Convention held at 7 Sig Regt this year, don't worry next year it's your turn to sit and relax.

Word on the street is that **Capt Andy** 'I've got a new bike' **Knott**, is doing the first 6000km around camp can be confirmed. An inside source said today that he actually sleeps in his leathers. **Capt Knott** was not available for comment.

NOVEMBER 1 TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Stewart Scott**
SSgt — **SSgt Gary Davies**

This month we say a sad farewell to the experience of **Cpl** 'Rocky' **Hudson**, who is posted to 16 Sig Regt, and his wife. Congratulations go to 'Rocky' on his promotion to Sgt. We also say our goodbyes to **Sig Stewart**. Who although not going too far, goes next door to November 3.

A huge welcome is made to **SSgt** 'Gaz' **Davies**, wife **Bev** and family from 2 Sig Regt. **Bev** has already left her mark by putting her aerobic instructor skills to good use by 'beasting' the Regiment Football team. There was a definite lack of co-ordination displayed but then they are footballers (this from a frustrated rugby player!). We have also managed to acquire **Sig** 'Lordy' **Lord** (centre forward) from 230 Sig Sqn as they leave us for 16 Sig Regt.

It has been a busy month with all hands 'on deck' for the Regiment Board of Officers. All went extremely well due to the hard work and dedication of all concerned. We have seen **Sig** 'Alvin' **Carlyon** with a new job description as 'Domestic Corridor Technician' displaying his talents with the electrical buffer on the new Squadron Lines. **Cpl** 'Lee' **Irvine** with the challenging task of providing entertainment for the forthcoming Easter Fair–taken from the book of '1001things to do with an Easter Egg!' Usually clad in helmet and leathers **2Lt** 'Scottie' **Scott** has been grounded after dropping his motor-bike in the ice and once fixed found he was only to be out done by the 2IC's new sparkling and spangle Thunderace 1000.

NOVEMBER 2 TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Pete Young**
SSgt — **SSgt Neil James**

Since the epic return from Bosnia of the widely spread Troop of TN 12, we find that an 'Options for Change' phenomenon has happened. A flash of light, a loud crack, a tiny cry and as the smoke cleared there stood the fresh faced new-born troop of November 2. Within the Troop there were happy 'Hi's' and Tearful 'Byes'. So 'Toodle pip' to: **Capt Ian** 'playing rugby' **Heath**, **SSgt Ronnie Brent** gone to Civ Div, **SSgt Tom Lappin** who is off to York with his Susuki 600, **LCpls Billy Morris**, **Kieran** 'my tops off' **Slack** and **Reuban** 'Chalky' **White**. The Big Hiya's to: **2Lt** 'Paddy' **Fitzpatrick-Young** straight from the factory, **SSgt Neil James** from 1 Div, **Sgt** 'Kato' **Cooper**, **Cpl** 'Willy brilliant E.D' **Wilcock**, **Cpl** 'Ev The Man' **Bennett** and **Sig Colin** 'Fat-Lad' **Haslam**. Finally all the Radio Relay's wish to thank **Cpl** 'Willy' **Wilcock** for his demo on how to drain a 3 KVA generator by taking the filler cap off while the generator was running. This time we'll end on a low note with a poem from a lineman who would prefer to remain anonymous:

We never grumble,
We seldom moan,
We'll lay a line to your telephone,
We do our job,
We charge no fee,
We're the Army's version of B.T.

NOVEMBER 3 TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Trudy Robinson**
SSgt — **SSgt Paul Robson**

Once again it's a month of comings and goings. Fond farewells go to **Sig** 'Rob' **Garner** who is posted to 2 Sig Regt, **Cpl Gray** who has gone to Blandford to pass on his vast experience and **LCpl Gilbert** who has been posted to 280 Sig Sqn to sample the delights of Bosnia. We would like to extend a warm welcome to **Sig** 'Jono' **Johnson** straight from trade training and **Sig Stewart** stolen back from November 1 Troop. With half the Troop on football training and half on boxing training, the dedicated workers have been working round the clock to get the vehicles up to speed for the Board of Officers. **Cpl** 'Scully' **Halliwell** has held the fort admirably (well at least he makes a better brew now).

Congratulations are in order to **SSgt** 'Brains of Britain' **Robson** on successful completion of his SFA course. Congratulations also to **Sig** 'Hero' **Bonney** on his recent award of a COMMARC's CITATION for coming to the aid of a civilian who had been shot in Bosnia, **Sig Bonney** gave life saving first aid and then rushed the injured woman to medical aid. Next in the order of merit is **Cpl Robbie** 'How's My Hair' **Love** for scoring two goals in the semi final of the BA(G) Challenge Cup (will we ever hear the end of it). Finally many thanks to **Sig** 'Jase' **Martin** for organising the first of many successful troop nights out.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON INVADES JHQ

After two years with the mighty 7 Sig Regt, the time has arrived for 230 Sig Sqn to up stakes and return to the bosom of its former parent Regiment glorious 16 Signals. Had Op Resolute not intervened, the move would have happened much earlier, but clearly, 7 Sigs couldn't manage without us! In the weeks leading up to the move, we were in a position of flux, still part of 7 Sig Regt and also champing at the bit to get to JHQ with all the new challenges that would bring. We will be the largest field Squadron in 16 Sig Regt. The move took place during the 17-21 March after the Squadron was subjected to a Board of Officers to ensure we weren't running away with anything we shouldn't. The Squadron laid all its equipment out in hangars at Ayrshire Barracks in Moenchen Gladbach. The Squadron Commander was heard to comment; 'I didn't realise we had so much stuff!'

Coming so quickly on the heels of a massive operation, the move went surprisingly well and we are now settling ourselves into new offices and accommodation. With refurbishment work under way it looks as if we will be staying here for a few months at least. Goodbye and thanks to 7 Sigs and all the friends we've made in Krefeld, if you're ever down visiting the PX, come in and see us, cheers!

Lt Col M.J.M. Dyer, CO 7 Sig Regt, hands over command of 230 Sig Sqn and their pennant to Lt Col B. Hewitt, CO 16 Sig Regt, during the leaving parade at Krefeld.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Thorek Royal Australian Signals**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Naylor (more often SSgt James)**

A farewell to start with, to **Capt Cornell**, who is off to tackle Shrivenham. Apparently he thinks it might be a nice break. Good luck from the Squadron, Chopsy! In return, we will soon be meeting **Capt Heywood** who will be arriving from the Royal School of Signals. Congratulations to the SSM, who is now the proud father of a baby girl. What with rugby before that, he has not been seen since the Christmas party and we're all starting to forget what he looks like. Never mind, he'll be back just in time for exercise.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Farragher**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Halliday**

The start of the New Year brought many new faces to the Troop. Welcome to our new Tp Comd, **2Lt Farragher** fresh from the Tp Comds Course and also **Sig** 'Jibblet' **Ablott**. Also welcome to **Sgt** 'Taff' **Woolen** who has just passed his T1 at Blandford and about to do some proper work for a change, and **Sig** 'Jase' **Holt** straight from the factory.

The year ahead will be very hectic for the Troop with many exercises and adventure training planned. Farewell to **Cpl** 'Plug' **Turner** and **Lorraine** plus sprog who are off to 24 Bde Sig Sqn and **Sig** 'Spuggy' **Hetherington** and his wife **Lisa** who are off to 2 Sig Regt in sunny York. There has been a tearful separation for **Sig** 'Micky' **Durrant** and **Sig** 'Nutter' **Rutter**, who are finally getting their divorce from each other. 'Micky' moves down the road to 16 Sig Regt and 'Nutter' to 1 Mech Bde in Tidworth. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl Charlie** 'I play lots of rugby' **Kama** on his recent marriage to **Elizabeth**. Our sympathies go with her!

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Lloyd**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt D. Sloane**

The last few months have been very hectic for God's Children, the Troop formally known as Radio, now known as Romeo, soon to be known as Symbol. Having gone from having a Troop with more manpower than some of the other Squadrons in the Regiment, we are now in a situation where our compact leader, **SSgt Dave Sloane**, fresh from his swan to Australia, spends more time juggling names from det to det than a circus performer. The departures from the Troop have been too many to mention individually. For all those folks who have been part of Romeo/Radio/Radcon and have moved on to new Troops/Squadrons, thanks for your time and cheers easy. Notable farewells though have been **SSgt** 'Chalky' **White**, who has left us on promotion to WO2, **Sgt Chris Loughlin**, over to 231 Sqn, with the Soft Rover Group–enjoy. And finally, **Cpls Jim Toms**, **Col Richardson**, and **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Johnstone**, off on promotion to Cpl, and who have all been granted escape chitties. A big welcome goes to **2Lt** 'Beanie' **Lloyd**, our new Tp Comd, welcome to the big world of radio.

With the exercise season nearly upon us, things are becoming increasingly hectic. **Cpl Stu Fidler** seems to become more stressed with each passing day, and the only light at the end of his tunnel has been the appointment of **Sig Vicky Molyneux** as his crew. **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Pearson**, allegedly the Troops' radio technician, is as elusive as only a tech can be. Tales of his being related to Lord Lucan are, however, unfounded.

On the sporting front, several members of the troop were part of the Regiment Volleyball team, **LCpls Stu Hunt** and **Stu Stanway** being part of the team which won the BA(G) final, and are shortly off to the UK to take place in the Army finals. I hope that **Stu** 'Stilla' **Stanway** is happy now that he has finally had a mention in *The Wire*, bravo! Finally, welcome back to **LCpl Andy Bennett**, who, having being promoted, was promptly dispatched to work in the ration store, good career move. Can we have some more pies please? The fat lady sings, so it is time for this passage from Romeo Tp to end, where's Juliet?

SIERRA TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Richards**
Tp SSgt — **Sgts Good and Allen**

The newly formed Sierra Tp, has spent most of its time with Troop level re-organisation and maintenance tasks. The operational readiness of the Troop is the priority leading into a New Year of exercises. Despite the heavy maintenance work required by the satellites, the Troop have found time to take full advantage of the new Interactive Learning Centre at JHQ and are now certified computer whizkids.

A warm welcome is extended to the most recent members of the Troop, and also to the vehicles that they brought with them! Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Mahers** with the new addition to the family, a baby girl. Last but not least, a sad farewell must be said to **Sgt Ian Good** who will be leaving us this summer, with our congratulations on his promotion to Staff Sergeant.

TANGO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Harrild**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt James** (in reality, Cpl Moran)

Since the return of the Regiment from Bosnia at the end of last year, there have been many changes in the Squadron, including the formation of a new Troop, Tango (You KNOW when you've been Tangoed). Although still not quite 'officially opened', the Troop is starting to gain its own identity and should certainly be complete by the summer, in time to take part in one of **Maj** 'Skippy' **Thorek**'s real 'barbies'! **LCpl** 'Cheesey' **Helm** has had the unenviable job of taking on the stores and trying to work out why there are no tent poles for the tents. His desk is now two feet off the ground and he is requesting another room.

There are a number of new faces fresh from the UK to join the rest of the turmoil, including **Cpls** 'Bruce' **Findlay**, 'Taff' **John** and 'Moustache' **Fraser**, who have taken over the Sqn MT by force and are half way to finding all the Squadron vehicles. The technicians have gained **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Miller**, who is now old enough to be out until midnight without his mothers consent. Farewells go to **LCpl Kennett** and **Sig** 'H' **Harvey**, who managed to make a break for it before all the changes started. **LCpl Newman** is also off soon, on a Driving Instructor's Course before being posted to Blandford. Watch out over there!

TOT/TFC/FOFS/YOFS CONVENTION–MARCH 1997

Over the period 19-21 March 1997, 7 Sig Regt hosted the annual gathering of the bright and brainy at Bradbury Barracks, Krefeld. The 1997 TOT/Tfc/FofS/YofS convention was attended by ninety members of the Corps from Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Europe. The convention, opened by **Brig J. Shaw MBE**, Comd 1 Sig Bde was a thought provoking and interesting seminar for ideas and updates on how colleagues had, should or could address their unit and operational problems.

A dinner in the Regiment Sgts' Mess, by kind permission of **RSM Pete Griffiths**, allowed those attending to enjoy a long evening of merry making. It was also an opportunity for all to say a fond farewell to **Lt Col (Tfc) Jim Ross** upon his impending retirement following a long and distinguished career in the Corps. Day two dawned and a subdued audience was present in the convention centre (well some of them). Where were the TOTs and their teams from 2 and 15 Sig Regts? Refreshed and rejuvenated, everyone departed late on the Friday clutching their duty frees and looking forward to the 1998 meeting of the minds in UK.

9 Sig Regt (R)
BFPO 59

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Phil Daisey**
2IC/Regt Trg Offr — **Capt John Mullender**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Tony Slaney**

BUSINESS AS USUAL

by **LCpl** 'Tony' **Bennett**, QM Dept

HQ Sqn, perhaps due to its many differing Corps and Cap Badges has a wealth of experience and capabilities as well as competitive spirit that has not been matched by any of the other Squadrons of 9 Sig Regt (R).

We have yet again had a string of successes to date and we feel that these achievements make us a cut above the rest of the Regiment, for example,

Our victory roll is as follows:

Training Wing Trophy	Winners
Cross Country '96	Winners
Coomber Cup '96	Winners
Cross Country '97	Winners

To set the scene a little better, let me explain, the Coomber Cup is a challenge of five disciplines set out and fought for, by every Squadron within the Regiment, throughout the training year. The disciplines consist of the following: Athletics; Swimming; Cross Country; Orienteering; Training Wing Trophy (Military Skills).

1 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj John Watt**
2IC — **Flt Lt Frank Clifford** (RAF Regt)
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Bob Stanton**

TM TROOP

Tp Comd (TOT) — **Capt Marcus Sulivan**
(FofS) 1 — **WO1 (FofS) Phil McGiveron**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Stu Ryder**
Line SSgt — **SSgt Tony McClean**

MR 'MUZZIE' HASSAN'S RETIREMENT FUNCTION

On 31 January 1997, the Regiment said a sad farewell to **Mr** 'Muzzie' **Hassan** on his retirement after nearly 47 years of stirling work at 9 Sig Regt (R) in Ayios Nikolaos. He has spent the last 20 years of his service to us as the foreman in charge of the civilian aerial riggers and linemen, as well as a supplier of plants and excellent home-made lemonade. 'Muzzie' first started work in the Regiment on 15 March back in 1951 when he was just a young lad from the old city of Famagusta. As well as being well known for his helpful and cheerful character, 'Muzzie' is probably most famous for his annual 'Pig Roast', by all of the lucky people that have been invited over the years.

During his retirement function 'Muzzie' was presented with a microwave oven and a very nice engraved silver dish by the Commanding Officer **Lt Col Tim Inshaw**. After a round the world trip to see his relatives and friends in Turkey, England and anywhere else that takes his fancy, he plans on returning to Famagusta to spend the rest of his retirement with his wife.

COMMS TROOP
HELLO, GOODBYE AND CONGRATULATIONS

Comms Tp has gone posting mad with no fewer than eight postings in and out. The old hierarchy of **Capt (Tfc) Jim Sykes** and **WO1 (YofS)**

Pete Martin have departed. **Capt Sykes** goes to 11 Sig Bde in Donington and **YofS Martin** to CIS Engineering, Blandford. Farewell also to **Cpl Mandy Eardley**, **LCpl Lee Sutton**, **LCpl Mel Hemstead**, and newly promoted **LCpl Dave Clarke**. We wish you all the best of luck in your new units. Welcomes to the new Tp Comd/Yeoman **WO1 (YofS) Alan Patterson** who joins us from 16 Sig Regt and to **Sig Steve Vickers** who arrives from 238 Sig Sqn. Many congratulations to **Cpl Eddy Edwards** and wife **Jill** on the arrival of their son **Jack**, and also to **Cpl Kendra Hughes** and husband **Ian** on the arrival of their new bundle of fun **Callum**.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE TROOP

As you can imagine with so few arrivals and so many departures, organised chaos has reigned in Comms Tp over the past couple of months, although **SSgt Dave Cook** assures us this is coming to an end soon. Despite the hectic work schedule Comms Tp discovered a couple of unlikely athletes in **Sig Ian Slight** and **Sig** 'Rab' **Bell**. 'Slighty' who until recently struggled with his BFT and 'Rab' who at 31 and smoking 40 a day, have both entered the annual Ay Nik 15 mile road race. Who knows what their next crazy idea will be. Another Troop sportsman **Sig John Little** has just returned from playing Army U-23 basketball in the UK, or so he says! Could it be though he just wanted a three week swan in the UK whilst his wife just happened to be visiting home. Now it's almost time for the Dhekelia Motor Show so it's all hands on deck, to terrorise the rest of the island with the now infamous Comms Tp one liner 'Would you like to buy a raffle ticket'.

3 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Anthony Franks**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Martin Thirsk**

L TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Cheryl Durrant**
Ops WO	**WO2 Any Worsley**
Ops WO	**WO2 Mary Few**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Ewan Hall**

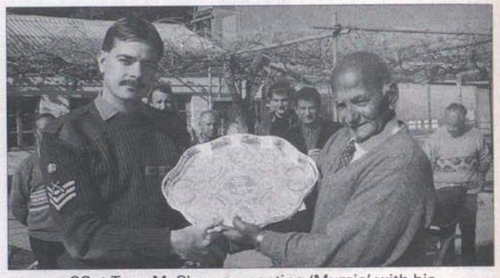
TROOP ARRIVALS

We are happy to announce the arrival of the following personnel into the fold of L Tp over the last few months. In February we said hello to **SSgt** 'Tigger' **Howarth** from 14 Sigs and fresh from the factory **LCpls Helen Bibby**, **Lisa Gibbons**, **Mark Lodge**, **Dean Messer**. March was a lean month on the arrivals side of life but in April we greeted **Sgt Tim Stevens** and his wife **Karen** from 14 Sigs and **LCpls Dave Halliday** and **Terry Bebbington** from CSG. To all of these new arrivals we wish them a very happy and productive tour.

LS & GC MEDAL PRESENTATION

LS & GC medals were presented to the following members of 9 Sig Regt (R) and 33 Sigs Unit in the WOs' & Sgts' Mess on 31 January 1997 by Dhekelia Garrison Commander **Col M. H. H. Brooke OBE**.

Front row (*L-R*): Mrs Bennett, Mrs Cundiff, Col Brooke OBE, Mrs Croft, Mrs Smith
Second Row (*L-R*): WO1 (RSM) J. B. Duckworth, Sgt Bennett, Sgt Cundiff (RLC), Cpl Carp (33SU), SSgt (SQMS) Croft, Cpl Smith, Lt Col T. G. Inshaw R Signals



SSgt Tony McClean presenting 'Muzzie' with his engraved silver dish

14 Sig Regt (EW)

CO'S CUP–4 MARCH 1997

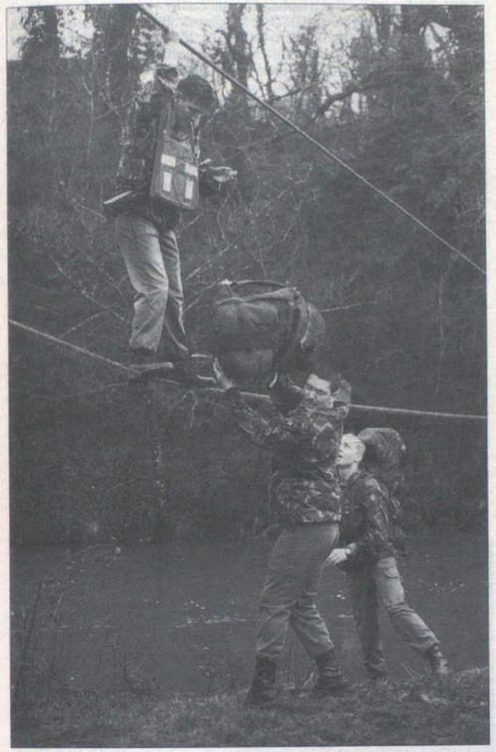
This was the first time 14 Sig Regt (EW) has held the CO's Cup Competition since moving back from Germany to Pembrokeshire. Each of the Regiment's four Squadrons entered three teams of ten in the March and Shoot Competition, the trophy being the most prestigious a Squadron can win.

Cpl Dawson lending a hand to Sig Efans at the end of his 'wet' river crossing

The gladiator teams, of which there were two per Squadron started from Haverfordwest Castle, seen off by the Mayoress, Town Sheriff and the CO. The countryside in Pembrokeshire was ideal(!) for the 12 mile route over cross country and country lanes. As if that were not challenging enough, the teams were faced with a 'dry' river crossing, and then a 'wet' river crossing. Techniques varied, from 226 Sig Sqn's fully clothed attempt to 237 Sig Sqn's berets and boxers approach. Arriving at the first aid stand, the teams encountered a vehicle that had been blown up by a mine, and they had to treat the casualties.

Sig Lovell setting the pace for his OC, Maj Whitehead, with Sig (now LCpl) Blowes in hot pursuit

The CO's handpicked teams started from St David's Cathedral covering a route of eight miles back to camp over similar terrain to the Gladiators. On arrival back at Brawdy, both teams donned their respirators for the final sprint to the ranges, for a falling plate competition. The winners of the CO's cup were 237 Sig Sqn A team, with 226 Sig Sqn A team being the runners up.



Cpl Kielly drops his bergan on Sgt Mumford, Cpl Hopkins watches with astonishment

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Whitehead**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Rouse**

INTER SQUADRON BOXING

Although the Squadron has been exceptionally busy over the last few months, we still managed to enter six boxers into the Inter Sqn Boxing Competition. After two months arduous training co-ordinated by **Sgt Mumford** RLC and **Cpl Fox**, the six boxers, **Cpl Owen**, **LCpl George** RLC, **Sig Brown**, **Sig Caine**, **Sig Lovell** and **Pte Foncette** AGC were ready for action.

Although narrowly beaten in the preliminary rounds, **Cpl Owen**, **Sig Lovell** and **Sig Caine** can be mighty proud of their efforts. In the finals **LCpl George** was narrowly beaten on points, **Pte Foncette** put on an outstanding show by stopping his opponent in the second round and **Sig Brown** won very convincingly on points.

REGIMENTAL MT
1 MILLION MILES PER YEAR

'RAF Brawdy. Where is RAF Brawdy?' I asked. 'It's in the middle of nowhere,' was the answer. They were wrong, it's not in the middle it's at the end. 136 miles to England and we travel there every day. The 1 million-mile point was met early in December 1996 and this was completed using only the white fleet and hire cars. The 1 million mile mark was made by **LCpl** 'Bamby' **Hambley** whilst returning from Brize, (another claim). In fact if it was not for the claims then most of the lads would be skint by the 10th of every month.

IFOR 2 have returned to the fold with **Cpl John Kielty** wondering why his in-tray is still fat. **Sgt Jim McNabb** has found his puppy has grown into a horse. We have had Falkland and Gulf babies, now we have Bosnia babies, so congratulations to **Sgt Paul Taylor** and his wife **Lyn**. Meanwhile the MTWO **WO2 Tony** 'Wallace' **Gaston** has got another vintage bike, (I wonder if any of them will ever run), and **SSgt Archie** 'Crash test dummie' **Fulton** has rolled another car making a record of two in two weeks, he has applied for a job with Volvo.

A very busy period for saying hellos and goodbye's. Welcome to **Sgt Phil Stroudly** and his wife **Debbie**, **Sigs Binham**, **Oldfield**, **Brown** and **Lovell** (no nicknames yet) hello and goodbye to **LCpl Billy Blackmore** off to Bosnia, and finally **LCpl Danny Rundell** and **LCpl** 'Bamby' **Hambley** both soon off to civvy street.

TM TROOP

TOT	**Capt Tim Prince**
FofS	**WO1 (FofS) Graham Blondell**

Things are beginning to take shape with new faces turning up to enhance our manning level to a staggering 55% of our true establishment. So a big welcome goes out to **Sgt** 'Smitty' **Smith** RLC, **LCpl** 'Shazza" **Bale**, **LCpl** 'Julian' **Dicks** and **Sig** 'Steep' **Clift**.

The boys (and girl) are doing us proud in Bosnia so we better give them a mention and get their names printed, **Sgt Bob Pace**, **Sgt** 'Pork' **Catlett**, **Cpl Hazel Beattie**, and **LCpl** 'Denno' **Dennis**. Well-done guys keep 'standing to' who knows maybe one day you'll be Rd's too.

Congratulations goes to **SSgt (FofS)** 'Zoo' **Williams** on being selected for promotion and also to **Sigs Mick Fernie** and **Gav** 'Pot Tech' **McArthur** who are now thrusting, Lance Corporals. Finally a few sad farewells go to **Sgt Ali Mepham** off to Cyprus and also to **Sig** 'Daz' **Smith** who is off to 7 Sigs, all the best for the future and thanks for your services

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. Clapp**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M. Couston**

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Roberts**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Heslop**

The past couple of months have been a turbulent time for Comms Tp. We have seen half of our manpower drafted away to Bowman trials down on Salisbury plain. What was left of the Troop ploughed on with maintaining our ancient fleet of vehicles and preparing them for the first Squadron exercise for some years. **Cpls** 'Airborne' **Blakeley** and 'Nice Ruby' **Woolley** transformed what was the Regiment paint store to what is now the Squadron command post box body. February came and so did the wind, the Troop was blown out of the camp gates to deploy on Ex Dragon's Dawn **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Parry** also deployed his corner shop, for which the night shift were grateful. The gale force winds accounted for some casualties with the cookhouse tent deciding to go for the record for the most back flips in succession. A couple of masts belonging to SCP had had enough and took a dive, or was it because **Sgt** 'Bri' **Heslop** had a hand in putting both of them up.

The Troop says a fond farewell to **SSgt** 'Danny' **Thornton** off on promotion to UOTC Glasgow. **LCpl Howell** is waxing his skis for a stint with 249 Sig Sqn and **LCpl** 'Pete' **Allan** who is going to see if the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. We say hello to **2Lt** 'Charlie' **Roberts** from his Tp Commander Course, **Cpl** 'Stu' **Lovely** from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig** 'Tank Girl (not)' **Ruck**. Congratulations to **LCpl Cavell** on her promotion which was well deserved

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Brown**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D. Dagnall**

The Troop would like to welcome **Lt Brown**, the new Tp Comd, **Sgt Andy Ball**, his wife **Jane** and of course the new Troop mascot **Ruby** the mutt. Also a warm welcome to **Cpl** 'Giant Haystacks' **Reeves**.

The BSV crew wishes to thank **Cpl** 'Ainsley' **Collins** for an excellent 10 days of cordon bleu cooking. The genes didn't work but what the heck we had full bellies. The Troop then won a resounding victory in the Squadron SOI competition, narrowly beating 640 Sig Tp with a total of nine people, four juniors and five seniors. Well done to everyone. The Troop placed six people on a power boat course, there were two boats used, one of which was bigger and faster thus each group of three took turns in both. **WO2** 'I can drive and comb my hair' **Ward**, **Sgt** 'power turns' **Fielder** and **Sig** 'sad singly in love' **Watson** were nearly wiped out by **Sig** 'look no hands' **Wilson** whilst trying to surf in their wake. This left **LCpl** 'H' **Honeywood** and **Cpl** 'receding hairline' **Mattacola** scrambling to grab the wheel so as not to totally decimate the Troop manpower. Luckily **SSgt Steve Roberts** (real name at last) saved us all. Last but not least we also say a fond farewell to **LCpl Albert Mersom** (or is it Radovan), the longest serving Troop member and Kingfisher expert. Look after him **Karen** and best wishes for your future in civvy street, fella. Keep in touch.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 Stapleton**
Tp OPSWO/SSgt	**SSgt (Supvr R) Fuller**

EXERCISE DRAGONS DAWN

The Troop deployed into the local area for ten days and fought off the incredible winds and storms. Eating large amounts of rations and drinking lots of brews consoled the crews. A big thanks to 'beady eyed' Alpha crew for the sabotage of Charlie Detachment whilst away visiting the camp for 'administration purposes'. A big thanks to the resupply for arriving in the middle of a crash out and insisting we load on the twenty jerry cans of fuel.

A fond farewell to two couples who are both off to sunnier climes, **Sgts Tim** and **Karen Stevens** and **Sgt Kev Taylor** and his wife **Andrea**, may your brandy sours stay chilled! A big hello goes to our new OC, **WO1 Dave Stapleton** and his wife **Julie**, who will be steering the helm over turbulent waters in the Squadron. Also hello to **Cpl Jim Byrne** and **LCpl** 'Bulldog' **Drummond**.

640 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt N. Stokoe**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Harriott**

EXERCISE DEVILS HORIZON–97

Over the last few weeks life had become somewhat mundane and monotonous in the garages. At last came our chance to deploy the Troop's ageing fleet of land rovers to the sunny climates of Cyprus under the command of **Capt Moir**, **2Lt Beckett** and not forgetting the Troops answer to Danny De Vito, **WO2 (Supvr R) Watton**.

The advance party, under the leadership of **SSgt Andy Harriott**, deployed on 14 February for Cyprus via the airhead at South Cerney to prepare the way for the remainder of the Troop, as would be done on an operational deployment. Having managed to arrange all the necessary accommodation and other admin points the advance party found themselves with time to spare. So it was a nice day on the beach for them. Unfortunately that was not the case for **Cpl Denton**, now known as 'Pebbles'. This is because when he decided to dive into the water, the water decided to go out leaving 'Pebbles' stranded on the beach like a beached whale with a grazed chest for his troubles.

On 17 February the main body departed Brawdy following the second chalk of vehicles, which had left some hours before. One of the vehicles was discovered on the hard shoulder in some bother and was to take no further part in the exercise. It was back to camp for the crew of that vehicle, **LCpls Andy Mcarthy** and **Mike Ilies**. At RAF Brize Norton it all looked well for a smooth ride to Cyprus but like most cases this was not to be. It all started to take a turn for the worse when the VC-10 initially took off and the cabin crew announced that the food would be served in just over two hours. At which there was a loud scream from **Sig Kelly O'Neill** who had starved herself for the luxury of the in-flight meal, or so she says. It wasn't long before we were back on the ground, as the plane had to make an emergency landing due to a fault of some kind. This warranted all the passengers having to wear the oxygen masks and the plane being escorted down the runway by a fleet of fire engines and ambulances. The nervous fliers of the Troop, **Sgt Maria Lester** and **LCpl** 'Deano' **Stewart** were given confidence by the cabin crews comforting words, 'There is no need to panic yet!!' However, it all came to nothing and we were on our way 24 hours later, in a different plane, for a smooth flight across.

Having arrived in Cyprus it was now time for the serious side of the exercise and start to set up the Troop complex and other detachments. During the hard working schedule enforced by the Troop OPSWO a lot of quality work was done and experience gained. A special mention goes to **Cpl Kelvin Jones** who despite the doubtful words of the Troop OPSWO managed to establish comms back to Brawdy leaving the speechless OPSWO with a forfeit to pay.

The time had come to start the move back to Brawdy but not before the Troop was invited to play a friendly football match against its hosts, 9 Sig Regt. The result was an amazing victory with the Troop coming out winners 4–3. All the goals coming from the elder members of the team, **WO2 Watton** with two goals, **Cpl Dave Rome** with the best of the four and **Cpl** 'Pebbles' **Denton** with the winner in the last few minutes of the game.

Farewells to **Capt Nick O'Kelly** who has now moved on to the dizzy heights of 2IC 237 Sig Sqn good luck. Also **2Lt** 'jungle fever' **Beckett** who leaves us to go to 245 Sig Sqn before leaving the Regiment altogether for her spell at university. Goodbye to **Cpl Paul Merchant** who has been tasked to pass the depths of his wisdom to the up and coming of the Corps at the Royal School of Signals, Blandford. New arrivals on the Troop are **SSgt Al Grundy** from PJHQ, London and **Cpls Si Green** and **Ady Patrick** both coming from 225 Sig Sqn as well as **LCpl Jay Aldred** from Comms & Sy group (UK), welcome to one and all and we hope you enjoy your time with 640 Sig Tp. Congratulations go to **LCpl Si Smith** and wife **Claire** on the birth of their son **Thomas** and to **LCpl Laura Shaw** on her promotion . . . at last.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

When **Lt Shirley Ballantyne** led his victorious Commander's Cup team through the finish line and into the annals of Squadron history, it was the vindication and climax of a highly auspicious couple of months. The CO's Cup came immediately after Ex Dragon's Dawn and the participants had hardly any time to wash their underpants before deploying on the march and shoot competition (rumours abound that **Lt Ballantyne** did not bother).

Ex Dragon's Dawn was the first motor deployment of the Squadron since the return from Bosnia and it was certainly evident in the early stages. The phenomenal Welsh weather did wonders for unit morale and the Squadron's kite flying team, gale force winds and urban cam combined superbly to make a circumnavigation balloon! As the exercise progressed the skill levels increased expotentially, and the new Barracuda Int/DF system emerged as a rather useful little toy–the operators were disappointed to learn that someone had taken Minesweeper from the computers. Despite cries of no sleep everyone enjoyed it especially **Sgt Sid Yule** who managed to break a Barracuda mast, **Sig Murphy** who bogged in a vehicle most days and managed to run out of petrol, and **Cpl Kev Hibberd** who spent most of his time changing generators.

The storming success of the A team of the CO's Cup–12 miles in the Haverfordwest area complete with two river crossings, a range stand and a First Aid stand–was matched by the high morale of the other two teams. **Lt** 'Ginger' **Stokoe** almost received a time penalty for excessively giggling throughout the competition and **LCpl** 'Swampy' **Dent** proved what a truly revolting man he is with a string of anecdotes which would make Bernard Manning blush! The OC's team was filled with mirth by the comedy of **Maj Alan Hill**'s and **WO2 Cox**'s little legs pumping twenty to the dozen! All in all, it was an excellent day. We looked forward to the article in the *Western Telegraph* and the last laugh was definitely on us. The local press had written an article mentioning **Lt Valentine** with a picture of 226 Sig Sqn as the winning team.

We welcome **Capt Nick O'Kelly**, **Capt** 'Taff' **Edwards**, **2Lt Rob Siffith**, **2Lt Michael Powell**, **WO2 Phil Ashworth**, **Sgt Bridget Jukes**, **Cpl** 'Taff' **Jones** and **Cpl Stephen Gronn**. Sadly we say goodbye to **Capt Robbie King** who goes to JDSC at Sandhurst. Those leaving include **Lt Niall Stokoe**, who takes over 640 Sig Tp, **LCpl Nicky Wilkie**, **LCpl** 'Chunks' **Spearpoint** and **Sig Mick Breydin**. The Squadron also congratulates **LCpl Dot Perkins**, **LCpl Adam Fairclough** and **LCpl** '635' **Smith** on their recent promotion.

The main achievement of the Squadron was the triumph in the Regiment Boxing competition as part of the Russ Cup. We had done well in the preliminary rounds and were set to win the event. The entire Regiment gathered to watch the ten fights but the team had trained for weeks and no one was going to back out now. Their courage was impressive. Boxers managed to stay in the ring for all three rounds despite a broken hand, pulverised faces and opponents that were twice their size. The evening also contained a kick boxing fight between the World Champion and the English Champion. A big thank you to our valiant team–**Cpl** 'Bish-Bosh' **Bishop**, **LCpl John Reardon**, **LCpl Kev Wakeford**, **LCpl** '310' **Smith**, **Sig** 'Taff' **Peacock**, **Sig** 'Taff' **Thomas**, **Sig Gaj Gajic** and **Sig** 'Willy' **Hayes**. **Cpl** 'Buz' **Burrows** also did a great job jumping in and out of the ring wiping blood and sweat from our team and providing the much needed encouragement. The evening finished with a meal and drinks in the Officer's Mess. **Sgt Sid Yule** thinks he got away with it but now everyone knows that his idea of an ashtray is to subtly drop the cigarette butt on the carpet and dig it in with his boot.

Victor Tp has been kept busy with the Barracuda trials. **Sgt Joyce Pankhurst** is slowly getting to grips with the Squadron's fire extinguishers and **Sgt Sid Yule** has had numerous comments about his new expensive mountain bike–apparently he did not know that it was a girl's bike when he bought it.

Tango Tp has split into two Troops, Tango Tp and Kilo Tp, the first as Comms Tp and the second as a Jammer Tp. Everyone has worked extremely hard on preparation for PREs and 1st lines but some also managed to do a bit of adventurous training. Ex Dragon's Egg was a climbing and caving package in Snowdonia that led **LCpl Al Doyle** to go on to complete a caving course. **Cpl Bishop** and **LCpl Doyle** also managed to gain a UEL qualification.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Davis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M. C. Fisher**

EXERCISE DRAGON'S DAWN

This was the Squadron's first major exercise of the year and, in keeping with the occasion, the Welsh weather did all that it could to destroy everyone's plans–particularly where camnets were concerned. Needless to say though, the Squadron prevailed and the 'friendly island of Pembronia' was liberated from the evil clutches of the 'Hibernian enemy forces' by the end of the 10 day exercise. Fortunately, inspired by **WO2 Phil** 'Let's pretend' **Churm** and his Inter Corps team, everyone was able to fully appreciate the exercise scenario and much "notional" good weather and sleep was enjoyed by all.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, Whiskey Tp experienced the unforgettable joys of an 'crash out' move between locations, resulting in a few extra grey hairs for **WO2 (OpsWO) Ian** 'DAMCON' **Harrison** and all at SHQ. Juliet and Zulu Tp battled on as usual, although minus their Tp Comds, both of whom had found warmer places to visit such as Cyprus and Iraq.

245 Sig Sqn (CO's Team) enjoy their run in the Pembrokeshire countryside

INTER-SQUADRON BOXING

It seemed at times as if half the Squadron was in training for this high-profile event, at least if the lack of bodies left working in the bays was anything to go by . . . Under the watchful eyes of **Sgt Bernie** 'Tuffarm' **Topham** and **Cpl Rob** 'Dolph Lundgren' **Tubbs**, the Squadron produced a number of budding Tysons, all of whom put in an enormous effort to avoid any real work for a period of several weeks. In the event, a total of four Squadron boxers made it as far as the Regt final: **LCpl Kenny** 'Klingonll' **Kendrick**, **Cpl Tim McCardie**, **LCpl** 'Del' **McCallion** and **JT John** 'Wipe 'em out' **Winwood**. All put in excellent performances, but the latter made a particularly impressive impact–certainly on his opponent–by not only breaking his hand in the first round, but by then going on to win conclusively!

With the Inter-Sqn swimming competition nearly upon us, the Squadron has put away its boxing gloves and skipping ropes in favour of some fairly offensive swimming trunks. Organised by **WO2 Phil** 'The Fish' **Churm** and trained by **LCpl Ian** 'Jeff' **Hurst**, the Squadron hopes to put together another fine performance in this round of the Russ Cup. **LCpl** 'Norman' **Burns** in particular should be guaranteed success in the 'Swims like a brick' event.

There have been several other notable individual sporting successes within the Squadron over recent weeks: **LCpl** 'Jinty' **Rigg** managed an impressive 3rd in the Army Ladies Badminton Championships. **Cpl** 'Ted' **Page** and **Capt** 'Catsuit' **Woods** came 66th and 67th respectively in the Army Alpine Ski Championships, and **Cpl Rob Tubbs** was the only soldier in the entire Corps to qualify for the Army Nordic Ski Championships.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Squadron life would not be the same without the usual round of 'Hellos' and 'Goodbyes', of which there have been plenty. Welcome then to **SSgt Evans**, **Sgt** 'Kev' **Stacey**, **Cpl Scott McKenzie**, **LCpls Lee Broughton**, 'Ned' **Kelly**, **Darren Whatmough** and **Daimon Williams**, and **JT Andy Dove**. Fond farewells have been said to **SSgt** 'Scouse' **Walsh**, **Cpl** 'Wes' **Simpson**, and **LCpls Manley-Hudson**, 'Peps' **Pepper**, **John** 'The Gifted' **Parker** and **Dom** 'The Not-So-Gifted Hoss' **Regan**. A more permanent goodbye was said to **Sig Shaun Brierley**, who found it difficult to contain his joy at leaving the Army the proud owner of a 245 Sig Sqn plaque.

Finally . . . congratulations to **Sgt Frank Strawn** and **Amanda** and to **Cpl** 'Jock' **Marshalsey** and **Mel** on the birth of their respective 'little bundles of joy'(!). Perhaps there will be similar good news on the way (?) for **Cpl Cam Logan** and **Sig Lyn Cairney** on their return from their wedding and honeymoon in the Dominican Republic . . .best wishes for your future together from us all.

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following: **ALL** PHOTOS accompanying Articles for *The Wire*, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they **MAY NOT BE USED**

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If you're visiting Bournemouth or Poole, why not combine it with a visit to **The Royal Signals Museum** Blandford Camp

16 Signal Regiment
BFPO 40

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The time has come again to put pen to paper and let everyone know a little of what's been happening in Regt HQ. Well, it has been a busy time in Regt HQ with the changeover of COs, this took place on 24 March when **Lt Col** 'Bernie' **Hewitt** handed command of the Regiment over to **Lt Col** 'Gordon' **James**. We wish **Lt Col Hewitt** and his family the best for his future tour at SHAPE, and we hope that **Lt Col James** and his wife have a successful and peaceful tour with us here in Rheindahlen. There has also been a few new faces posted in and some old ones departing. We say hello to **Sgt Steve Wetherill** and **Pte Paula Lanchester** now **Teasdale**, we say goodbye to **LCpl Shaun Ponton** who has been posted to HQ Scotland.

Lt Col Hewitt hands over the command of 16 Sig Regt to Lt Col James

Sir . . . Is that a rocket in your pocket or are you just pleased to be leaving?!!

Well, now on lighter note, we would like to congratulate the RSM **WO1 Jim Boyle** and his wife **Allison** on the birth of their son **James Michael** 'known as Damien by night' (well that's what the RSM tells us when we wake him up mid-morning with a coffee). We would also like to congratulate **Sig Jules Bennett** on her recent marriage and wish her all the best for the future.

Now on to adventure training and sports. The Adjt spent the month of February wandering around Kenya looking for something to do, and finally deciding that she wanted to end her holiday, 'sorry Exercise' by climbing Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro. She had a fantastic time and would recommend hill walking to anyone.

FOCUS ON SHQ 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Life in the Squadron is as busy as ever, we have recently said farewell to **LCpl Clair Bettle** who is now **Cpl Clair Bettle** in ES Branch, HQNI–Good luck to you. **Clair** has been replaced by **Cpl Paterson** who has recently completed 12 months service in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia for which she was awarded a well deserved COMMARRC's Commendation. **LCpl Jon Walsh** has recently been promoted and passed his APT course and is off to America soon on Ex Yosemite Backstop so life is all go for him. Congratulations to the 2IC, **Capt Steve Goodwin** from all members of the Squadron for becoming engaged to **Denise**, but did you have to go all the way to Prague to do it?! The SQMS **SSgt Dave Maw** has just gone through a series of Boards of Officers and is now sunning himself on a beach in Cyprus. The Sqn Comd, **Maj Thomas** is going through the trials and tribulations of house purchase in Dorset at the moment so that only leaves the SSM, apart from a little bit of leave the only place he has been is a two week Battlecamp in Haltern! Never mind he's got the Berlin 25km run to look forward to in May!

SYSTEMS TROOP'S BATTLECAMP BLUES
by Sig Jon Brotherston

The CO orders, 'Battlecamp'
But only when the ground is damp,
his motto is that if it's raining,
then that's the time to start the training.

It's true! It is only when a B.F.T starts to feel like a marathon, you can be sure that there is a Battlecamp just around the corner. But for two weeks during February this year the men and women of Sys Tp joined in with the rest of 16 Sig Regt for the Annual Battlecamp. However, this was no ordinary Battlecamp. Devised by the then CO (**Lt Col B. Hewitt**) the Battlecamp was designed not only to test the fighting abilities of the troops but also to train all of 16 Sig Regts' soldiers in their Navigational skills. Situated at Haltern Training Area, Germany, the Camp took the form of an informative and also totally enjoyable Exercise aimed at giving the troops the chance to navigate in all of the circumstances that they would be likely to encounter during service in an operational environment. To give the soldiers of Sys Tp, (and the rest of the Regiment) the chance to prove that they had learnt something in the classroom various orienteering exercises were created. Day and Night exercises were incorporated into the training and the skills that the soldiers had learnt were put to the test. A small mention has to go out to **Sig Finbar** 'Pathfinder' **Sanders** of Comms Tp who managed to accumulate a whopping great score of over–100 points on the first orienteering exercise. Well done?!!

As the week progressed morale was at an all time high, for any Battlecamp, and even **Sig** 'Home Sick' **Carlisle** finally stopped telling everyone that he wanted to go home to his wife. Thankfully there had been no injuries during the first phase of the Camp, even though the soldiers had been put to the test carrying out 'Live' section battle drills over arduous terrain. However the best was still to come . . .

All of the live firing ranges, section battle drills and navigational exercises that the troops had participated in had one thing in common. They were all designed to get us ready to spend the final 36 hours navigating our way to separate 'stands' located in the vast woodlands of the Training Area. One and a half (very wet) days later the soldiers of 16 Sig Regt had finally achieved their goal, all of the troops had proved that they now had the ability to navigate with and without the use of a compass to a competent and successful level. Even after all of the troops were back in their accommodation at JHQ and the Battlecamp was a part of the past there were still pleasant memories floating between people about the overall exercise.

Thanks go out to **Lt Col B. Hewitt** and all others who helped in creating a thoroughly enjoyable Battlecamp, we all hope the next one will be the same.

KOWLOON TROOP

There has been a fair amount of change to Kowloon Tp recently both in terms of personnel and status. Firstly we said farewell in March to our Tp Comd **Capt Stu** 'Airborne Warrior' **Gillespie** and his family. We are all sure he will love the JDSC prior to his posting to 216 Para Sqn. The Troop itself is now under new management having been absorbed by 252 Sig Sqn but this has not affected the working routine with **Lt Jack Jennings** (posted from 255 Sig Sqn) filling the Tp Comd shoes! **Sgt Ruth Downing** and her gang ran a Fun Day for the Troop on 20 March 1997. This consisted of an Easter Egg Treasure Hunt around Herford town. All, culminating in drinks and a meal, had a good day. New arrivals include **Sgts Andy Freeman** and **Mick Fawcett** fresh off their T1 to Tech Wksps. Also **Sig Sarah James** to Osnabruck, **Sig Zoe Jones** to Herford Det and **Sig** 'Peck' **Ramsden** to Tp HQ. Welcome! Congratulations to **LCpl Amanda Bulman** on passing her T2 Test. The Tech Wksps have looked deserted recently with all the manpower out ensuring all the sites are maintained.

Several of the Troop represented the Regt in the BA(G) Womens Hockey tournament. Unluckily the team finished joint third, just missing out on a trip to the UK Championships. **LCpl Amanda** 'FofS, can I have another day off' **Bulman** again represented the Regiment at cross-country, well done.

The attention of all the Troop is now focused on Ex Fresh Start that is to incorporate all the ATD's. This is to be held in Hohne in May. So watch this space.

Capt Sally Rees suffers the ordeals of Kenya!

The RSM spent two weeks in March Ski Biking in Bavaria. He returned with a nice suntan but no funny stories. On the sporting front **Sgt** 'OB' **O'Brien** was pleasantly surprised when the Adjt presented him with a medal for participating in the 1997 UKSC(G) Cross Country Challenge, and can be seen in and around RHQ trying to recruit new people to take part.

Well that's about it for this issue, except for one last item. The Chief Clerk **WO2 (SQMS) Jay Patel** has been inundated with telephone calls in response to the recent article placed in the Forces Weekly Echo with regard to the sale of his Mercedes and would like to inform all interested parties that the car has now been sold. (So that's why he has a big smile on his face.)

THE BRUGGEN 10
by Cpl Donna Nevens

The day Saturday 5 April was just like any other weekend except that the weather was atrocious, given a choice most people would opt to stay indoors on such a miserable afternoon. That wasn't the case with **Cpl Donna Scaife** and myself, for we were about to set off on a little jaunt around the exotic sights of RAF Bruggen, for 10 miles to be exact. At the start I felt better knowing that there was at least 800 other people who were as mad as ourselves. Well the pins were all in place, and our numbers all secure, then we were off. My aim was to get round in under 75 minutes so I could get my T- shirt and **Cpl Donna Scaife** to finish as this was her first 10 miler. The end result was I got round in 73 minutes, I'm now the proud owner of a sub 75 Bruggen T-shirt and **Cpl Donna Scaife** did an excellent time of 90 minutes. Whether or not we will be back next year , well we haven't decided yet, the mind has a habit of forgetting the bad points and only remembering the good!

THE REGIMENTAL SKI TEAM

The Regiment Ski team started its' rigorous training programme at the end of November preparing the team for the Corps and Divisional meetings. The team was captained by **Sgt** 'Oz' **Hewson**, and also consisted of **Cpl** 'Si' **Jervis**, **Cpl** 'Albert' **Tatlock**, **Cpl Steve Wilson** and **LCpl** 'Dunc' **Marsh**, all raced well and the team came 2nd in the Corps Championships in Kaprun, Austria. They then departed for the Divisional Championships, held in Les Contamanines in France, where the team continued to perform well. Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Oz' **Hewson** for falling off a Black run, and to **Cpl Steve Wilson** for trying for the Padre's post by getting himself a bigger, whiter dog collar.

The Regimental Ski Team
Cpl Steve Wilson, Cpl Si Jervis, LCpl 'Dunc' Marsh and Sgt 'Oz' Hewson.

EXERCISE GREEN GAMBIT
by Cpl Pat Howie

We knew it was going to be an exercise with a difference as soon as we stepped off the coaches at Lavesum Trg area, no shouting, no running around and a comfy bed for the night, what was going on! The insertion was by Chinook and was followed by a TAB that covered a number of military skills. One of the most memorable of these stands was **Sgt Mick Keeble**'s First Aid Stand which had **LCpl Cartwright** lying down for five hours with 'his' intestines realistically hanging out 'alles uber der Platz'. By the time teams reached the stretcher race fire teams had dwindled due to injury and **LCpl** 'Jock' **Warden** and **Sig Jamie Goulty** volunteered to make up the required numbers. Well done lads for completing the course a staggering seven times that night! **WO2s Oakley**, **McKenna** and **Sleightholme** (aided and abetted by **Cpl Mickey** 'Top Dog Navigator' **Yendell**) were the Map Reading Gurus and they went to great lengths/miles to ensure that we got it right. All this seemed to pay off when not one of the four man fire teams got lost on the two day patrol competition which was the climax of the week long exercise.

For me the most memorable stand was **RSM Boyle** and **WO2 (YofS) Love**'s survival stand. We were given a number of useful tips concerning avoiding capture, how to catch food and how to turn it into something tasty to eat. A few live cute fluffy bunny rabbits assisted them also a couple of old hard as nails chickens. The most exhilarating range of the week was the section in defence. I could not believe the amount of ammunition available, imagine being on a range for 20-25 minutes shooting everything in sight and not running out of rounds. The noise was incredible, especially from the GPMG, and it is a wonder that anyone heard the fire control orders being barked out by the section commanders. The winning fire team from week two consisted of: **Cpl** 'Taff' **Trafford**, **Cpl Dale Armitage**, **Cpl Pat Howie** and **Sig Dave Worrall**. The final words are that it was a great week, but really you had to be there to appreciate it.

255 SIG SQN REUNION/TEMPORARY DISBANDMENT DINNER

Following the storming success of the Games Night at the end of January, well done **LCpl** 'Chuck' **Berry**, **Sig Dave Storey** and the rest of the committee, it was time for the Squadron to 'go posh'. A superb formal dinner was organised by **Sgt Kev Roberts** at the end of February with the intention of celebrating the reunion of the Squadron following a year on Op Resolute. Unfortunately the week before the dinner the Squadron was temporarily sent into 'out of use' and a number of Squadron personnel received inter Sqn postings. A swift renaming of the event was called for to mark 255's last major function as an operational Squadron. Having donned suits and dresses the main problem was going to be holding out until the end of the meal before being allowed to go to the toilet, or was it **Cpl Howie**?!! **Sig Nikki Kenyon** did an outstanding job as Madam Vice although her after dinner joke telling was about as funny as a party political broadcast! With the port decanters empty and the tables cleared it was time to adjourn to the bar for a quick lemonade before early to bed–or maybe not! **Lt Jack Jennings** was initiated in time honored fashion by the lineys and then presented with his line belt for his endeavors during the tear down in Kiseljak. **WO2 (YofS)** 'Dr' **Love** had clearly enjoyed himself so much that he decided to spend the night in a particularly comfortable chair!

A big thank you goes to the JHQ Civilian Mess and its Staff for allowing a bunch of reprobates onto the premises. The evening was a storming success, shame about the sore heads the next morning. With the Sqn now intending to deploy on a Bde Comms Ex it would seem that we need another function to celebrate being taken out of 'out of use'.

THE FINAL WORDS

Congratulations: to **SSgt (FofS) Neil Taylor**, **Sgt Kev Roberts** and **Sig Al MacKay** on gaining promotion; to **Cpl Mark Richardson** and his new wife **Sharon** for getting married on 9 April. Also congratulations go to **LCpl Morrison** and **Val** for finally getting through the worry caused by a very premature set of twins and to **Sig Andy Nunns** and **Sig Holly Glen** on their engagement, and to **Cpl** 'Albert' **Tatlock** on your forthcoming marriage, days to do as a singley!

Don't be disappointed!

Matter for publication must reach the Editor six weeks before the publication date!

30 Sig Regt
Bramcote

FIVE YEARS IN THE BALKANS

April 1997 sees the Regiment celebrating its fifth year on operations in the Balkans, having deployed, it is estimated, 1000 personnel to the region over the period. April 1992 saw the initial deployment from the Regiment to Operation Hanwood in support of BRITMEDBAT in Croatia. The Squadron level deployment was led by **Maj Peter Telford**, lasted 16 months and eventually drew down to Tp size having been commanded by **Capt Neil Frazer** and finally by **Lt Peter Drew** (the Regiment's current Adjt). The bulk of the Troops deploying from the Regiment have been sent on Operations Grapple, Resolute and Lodestar, which the Regiment has supported continuously through all the transitions and changes in command. The first Troops deployed to Bosnia on Operation Grapple in October 1992 in support of UNPROFOR and since that date the majority of ranks within the Regiment have carried out at least one tour (the CO having completed a tour in December 1996).

As five years in theatre passes a visit by Commander 11Sig Bde as well as the CO is scheduled to mark the deployment of the Royal Signals Contingency Communications Regiment on an operation which has lasted longer than World War I!

Det Comd Radio Relay Site Vitorog
Cpl Surendra feeling the chill
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Signaller O'Rourke–502 Operator Livno
'I'm sure you can get BFBS on this.'
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Waiting for a Cabby–YofS Jim Knight and Team
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Still Smiling–Sig Harris 501 Operator
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Winter Inspections YofS Jim Knight
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Cpl Timms–Expert INMARSAT Operator
(Printed courtesy of the Coventry Evening Telegraph)

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Pete Doherty**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Ellis**

We start by welcoming back to the fold the SQMS, **SSgt Robbie Carroll**, after his six months sojourn to the Balkans. Much delighted by the return of the SQMS is **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Dixon** who has been covering in his absence. 'Geordie' in giving his farewell interview was heard to comment, 'As much as I will miss the money my attention is firmly set on helping Newcastle achieve a place in Europe next year.' Funny, accent aside, we thought that Newcastle was in Europe! Those who take time to visit the Sqn HQ would have been somewhat taken aback by the sweeping changes that have been in evidence. No this is not as a huge underspend in the Propman budget and last minute panic spending, it is as a result of a change of Orderly Room NCO. It is a hearty welcome to **Cpl Robin Alien** and his family from BFG and a sad farewell to **LCpl Sean Whelan** who is posted all the way across the passage to the fighting 256 Sqn. Many thanks go to **Sean** for all his efforts and good luck in his new appointment.

INTER SQUADRON ORIENTEERING

Those who study this journal avidly, will of course be aware, that the Squadron again secured the Champion Squadron Competition by doing slightly better than the rest in a miscellany of chosen sports. I am delighted to report that the new competition has now got under way with the Squadron winning the orienteering. Runners up were 258 Sqn and in third place was 250 Sqn with 256 Sqn very much the bridesmaids. The event took place courtesy of our friends Comms and Security Group, in Loughborough, and many thanks to **SSgts Jenson** and **McGowan** for their planning and organisation. Top man on the day was **2Lt John Collyer** who pipped the CO by three minutes (silly boy) with **Capt Deb Sunderland** retaining the Ladies title. The runner up in the ladies competition was **Sig Clare Allsop**.

NEWS FROM TM TROOP

Perhaps one of the more difficult tasks is finding someone in the TM Tp to write *The Wire* notes, as the majority of the members have been otherwise indisposed of late. For instance; **Cpl Steve Robinson** has been ice picking his way over the Canadian Rockies on Exercise Ice Monkey whilst **Cpl Phil Davies** is sampling the somewhat more appealing climate in equatorial Africa on Exercise Mono Prix in Kenya. Not a million miles away is **LCpl Fin Struthers**, who having only just returned from a nine months tour in Bosnia, is swanning at the British Embassy in Kinshasa, having deployed with the Spearhead Detatchment. **Sig Jase West** is enjoying the delights of Gibraltar as a member of Ex Cygnet Rock while, not to be outdone, **SSgt Chris Higgins** is on a two months excursion to Brunei. Freshly arrived in the Troop and eagerly awaiting their opportunity to embark to exotic climes are **SSgts Yam** and **Glover**, **Cpls Huxtable** and **Brooks**–it's a big hello to them. Recent departures have been **FofS Martin Drake** and **Sgt Mark Evans** who both moved down the road to 35 Sig Regt and **Cpls Max Challis** and **Dennis Sutherland** who have departed to the parish of Blandford for their T1 course–good luck to all.

COMIC RELIEF

Lots of red faces and red noses were apparent recently when the wives of the Regiment locked horns with the men in a charity netball match. The match was to raise money for Comic Relief. Many congratulations go to all those who participated, in particular **Maxine Boase**, **Nikki Bain** and **Sharon Knight** and all the other ladies who were involved in the organisation. The grand sum of £150 was raised. WELL DONE!!

Comic Relief–Support Squadron Netball Team

Wives Club Netball Team

Capt Deb Sunderland retains the title of
Regimental Orienteering Champion (Female)

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj N. P. Metcalfe**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Lockwood**

ARRIVALS, DEPARTURES AND CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to **Sgt John Penrose** and **Sig Devine** from 14 Sig Regt; **Cpl Andy Lockyer** from 7 Sig Regt; **LCpl Grist** from 1 Div; **LCpl Morgan** from Sp Sqn; **Cpl Harding** from HQ North and **Cpl MacDonald**; **Sigs Gibney**, **Fairbairn** and **Pope** from the factory; **Sig Colwell** from 216 Sqn and **LCpl Dummett** and **Sig Claypole** from 264 Sqn.

Farewell to **Cpl** 'Ness' **Nesbitt**, **LCpl Cowan**, **Cpl Steve** 'blah' **Smith**, and **Cpl** 'Spike' **Poole** all posted; **Cpl Parkinson** who has left on promotion for 35 Sig Regt; **Cpl Monger** who is now at 3 Cdo Bde and **Sgt Rouse** who has left on promotion for the Royal School of Signals. The new SSM, **WO2 Banner** has already left, on promotion to WO1 to be a Tp Comd at Blandford. Finally, **Capt Richard Newhouse** has left to take command of 1 Tp, 15 Sig Regt. Good luck to you all. Congratulations to **Cpl Wrenn** and **Sig Humphries** for passing 264 Sqn probation and to **Sig James** who also passed and was promoted.

Promotions: Congratulations to **LCpls Bond**, **Burton**, **Dyble**, **Hunt**, **Knowler**, **Nolan**, **McMullen** and **Smith**. Also to **SSgt Lockwood** on his promotion to WO2.

DIVING AT FORT BOVISAND
by Sig Dickinson

If you can swim fairly well, pass a diving medical and you don't mind sharks, then maybe a place on the novice divers' course is for you.

The course lasts four days and in that time you learn most of the basic aspects of diving and how to avoid burst lungs, exploding teeth and the bends.

The first day is basically a lecture day when you are shown videos of people diving in hot places. The closest you actually get to that is Bovisand Harbour. However, it is just a basic course. After a day of lectures on pressure, safety and decompression, we were ready to dive into the pool. Then later it was off to the bar (say no more)! Next day was practical training in the pool. It was then that we discovered that if you don't get the right amount of air in your stab jacket you'll either float to the surface or smash your face into the bottom. But you soon get used to it and your nose will stop bleeding in a few minutes. The following day was the same. After two hours of mask clearing, sharing air and emergency drills we were ready to go in the sea. We had an early start on the last day and by 0900 we were all ready to go. The water was initially very cold but after a few minutes it warms up. Whilst in the water we carried out all of the emergency drills and I received a lung full of water because my partner panicked! When all is said and done I really enjoyed the course. Anyone who hasn't tried diving should give it a go. As for me, I'm on my sport diving course in a few months and then off to Bermuda for a three-week diving expedition.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Gary Smith**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM)** 'Shark' **Hitchen**

SHQ

Recent months have seen a considerable rotation around the Squadron hierarchy. We are imminently awaiting the return of **Maj Gary Smith** from his Bosnia tour where he has left **SSgt Hubble** to soldier on in Comms Ops, Banja Luka until May. **Capt Andy Mould** has had to take two weeks leave to get over the shock to his system of losing his POHR. **Capt Alan Owen** has now returned from his post operational leave and is now training heavily for P Coy/the Lanyard Trophy before his departure to SORLS in June. Congratulations to **WO2 Steven Holt** on his recent selection for promotion to WO1.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Ian Hargreaves**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kev Belam**

Delta Tp gives a warm welcome to **Sigs Cole** and **Hardy**. Congratulations to **SSgt Kev Belam** on his well deserved selection to Warrant Officer, even if you still don't know where you are posted to yet! We eagerly await the return of **Capt Ian Hargreaves** from Op Lodestar together with **Sgt Cossie Calabrese**–30 Sig Regt's answer to Little and Large or perhaps Short and Tall would be more appropriate!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt John Collyer**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Ian Carter**

At the time of writing another frantic month for Echo Tp draws to a close. A month which has seen crews and individuals from the Troop operating in Kenya, Cyprus, Germany, the Falkland Islands, Brunei, America, Bosnia and . . . Otterburn. Talk about join the Army and see the world! All this hard work in working hours has been mirrored out of hours judging by the number of new arrivals to doting fathers and mothers in the Troop. Many congratulations to **SSgt Ian Carter** (also on your recent promotion to WO2), **Cpl Jenny Scott**, **LCpl Ian Waterworth** and **Sig Lee Stutchbury**. Military matters demand congratulations be sent to the crew of 521 Red for achieving almost an hour of comms in Nessciff recently during Ex Certain Wetting AKA and Ex Diamond Swan. Routine thanks must go to the Tp GC, **Cpl Pollock** and **LCpl Robinson** for volunteering for a few extra guards and duties throughout the month. The Echo ban on parties goes on! A handful of comings and goings deserve a mention. Fond farewells to **Cpl Steve** 'Chinese Geezer' **Croft** to 3 Div, enjoy the Falklands. Bye also to **Sigs Smith** and **Dann** to Civ Div; remember guys if all else fails there is always, 'Is that fries with your order Sir?' New arrivals to the Troop are **Sigs Wing**, **Black** and **Lane**. Good luck and enjoy yourselves.

EXERCISE BEAR'S NAVIGATOR 97
by LCpl Ashcroft

Ex Bear's Navigator is the Squadron's annual navigation exercise (feet only no Landrovers) undertaken by members of 258 Sig Sqn during March 97. Otterburn Training Area was selected by the powers that be to be the best suited to our needs; contours close, tracks few and lots of sheep. The main body deployed to Carshope and met up with the advance party who had deployed on the Sunday under **SSgt Kev Belam** to set up the admin. The next three days saw us covering approximately 20kms a day up hill and down dale, as the locals put it. The six teams were assessed on navigation between the days' checkpoints. There were designated questions at each one to prevent cheating! Extra points could be gained for leadership and basher building skills while spending the nights under our ponchos. Despite **Sig Frankie Eversfield**'s insistence there were no points available for the largest collection of sheep skulls! **Cpl Tag Lean** was the team Capt of the winning team that consisted of **LCpl Steve Binks**, **Sig Danbir** and **Sig Andy Barrow**. The week was ended with a barbecue and a decent nights' sleep inside a house for a change. Thanks to the organisers and in particular to **SSgt Belam** for all his hard work.

REGIMENTAL BATTLECAMP 17-21 MARCH 1997
A SIGNALLERS' VIEW
by Sig 'Woolly' **Woollard**

Battlecamp started with several 10km night navigation recce patrols. These turned in to seven-hour tabs through the sticks and around most of the exercise area of Thetford due to some navigational embarrassments. These recces put us in the position to carry out a fighting patrol the following night. A shorter and more direct route saw my patrol encounter an enemy position of four men in a trench complex. **Cpl** 'Ackers' **Ackland** organised a hasty attack upon the enemy and captured them. Unfortunately, enemy they might have been, but not for our exercise. I don't think the Army Air Corps will ever be the same again. DOH! Still we continued onwards and destroyed our intended target before returning to the hide area. Little did we know that the enemy (ours this time), were about to man an attack of their own and we bugged out in total confusion to our ERV before setting up our hasty harbour elsewhere.

The next day saw the start of the OIBUA (Fibua is now operations in a built up area to those in the know). Lessons included barbed wire crossing and removal, grenade throwing, tactics, building entry and other lessons. **QMSI Morton** took the Troops through the confidence course in the village. In the afternoon we did dry run throughs and found just how good **Sig Toni Eckersley** was at grenade throwing! Thursday and Friday saw dawn platoon and company attacks on the village, lots of shouting (particularly by **Capt Owen**), shooting, explosions and lots of other good stuff. The filming of the attacks means that Squadron funds should benefit from the payments from You've Been Framed. Grappling hook throwing was not our thing and we had to resort to the old ladder as plan number 2. Many thanks go to **YofS Guy** (He's soon to be a Rodney and has already got the Range Rover) **Benson** and his staff for an excellent week.

REGIMENTAL SOCCER 96/97 SEASON

I suppose the opening game of the season was the one against RAF Cosford. When we lost six nil having the Team Capt, **Sgt Mark Palmer**, sent off and having to resort to bringing **Maj Pete Doherty** on as a substitute, gave us an indication as to what sort of a season we were going to experience. Unfortunately all sorts of commitments made team selection a bit of a lottery and after the loss of the team manager and coach, **SSgt (FofS) Paul Hubble** to Bosnia, halfway through the season the team was on the point of collapse. Enter the soccer impresario, **WO1 (RSM) Paul Horton** who took control and using his many years of experience in watching Manchester United play, soon had us back to winning ways (well almost). Having won our first round Army Cup match against the much fancied REME Workshops from Colchester we were drawn against the Queen's Own Hussars from Catterick. They were a fairly well organised bunch and before we even had a chance to order our Aldershot suits we were deposited out of the competition on the wrong end of a four-two defeat. The only solace being that OC Support Sqn managed to solicit the loan of a Challenger Tank for the Regiment Open Day. Sadly the two local Cup competitions proved no more successful, again coming up against two strong infantry sides; ATR Lichfield and the Staffords. Overall we finished fourth in the league and congratulations go to **Sig** 'Tubsy' **Tubbs** for his gallant performances up front as leading goal scorer and **Cpl** 'Brummie' **Ford** for all his enthusiasm on the administrative side.

The Queens Gurkha Sig Regt
Hong Kong

Comd	**Lt Col R. J. J. Ellis**
Adjt	**Capt G. W. Wilson**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Omparkask Gurung**

HONG KONG GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj T. R. Craven**
SQGO	**Capt (QGO) Navindrabikrum Gurung**

'HIKE THE HILLS FOR HOSPICE'
by Capt A .P. Ferris

'Hike the Hills for Hospice' is an annual charity walk that is fully supported and organised by QG Signals. The hike is organised on behalf of the Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care (SPHC) which focuses on patient care for terminally ill cancer patients. SPHC also provides related training for medical professionals and volunteers.

This year's hike was held on Sunday 26 January 1997 in the Sai Kung West Country Park over a route of approximately 16.5kms. It was an excellent day for a hike as it was clear and sunny but not too hot. Over 2.5 million HK$ were raised for this worthy cause and we were only too pleased to be able to assist.

QG Signals support took the form of:

Finding a suitable route (I used this as an excuse on many occasions to escape from my office and get up into the hills of the New Territories); Manning the Start/Finish Point and five Check Points; Providing a Clansman VHF Safety Net; Providing a well earned 'bhat' for all hikers upon completing the Hike; Providing stores and equipment.

As the Hike is for a good cause and attracts some of the elite of Hong Kong society, we were able to entice CBF, **Maj Gen Bryan Dutton CBE**, to lead a Press Conference in the build up to the event.

CBF and Mrs Ann Cole, Chairperson of Hike the Hills for Hospice, helping themselves to a 'bhat' that was on offer during the Press Conference.

DEPLOYMENT OF THE MOST SATELLITE STATION TO HONG KONG
by Maj Alan Eames

A decision was taken by the MoD last year that a MOST Satellite Station would be deployed to Hong Kong to provide essential communications to the United Kingdom during the withdrawal phase from the Colony. **Sgt Peter Doherty** returned to Bramcote once the MOST Satellite had been delivered to 30 Sig Regt from Matra Marconi Space. There he met up with the experienced MOST trained team that were tasked to deploy to Hong Kong to install, set up communications and assist with the training of the HKGSS operators and technicians who would look after the system.

The complete satellite system was tested before being crated for despatch by air. This large and heavy consignment of thirteen boxes were delivered to the Prince of Wales Building from Kai Tak Airport by truck. It became evident that some of these boxes would not fit into the service lift and none of the assembled Squadron personnel was likely to volunteer for a hernia! Obviously then it was time to call in the RAF to lift the MOST to the roof of the Prince of Wales Building by Wessex. The local and ever helpful Joint Air Tasking Cell, in the guise of **WO Bob Todd** RAF, intervened and after a recce the Helicopter Sqn at Kai Tak was tasked with the lift. At the appointed hour the Wessex lifted the MOST boxes in nets hanging 80 feet below it to the roof on the 29th floor some 120m above sea level! There were some very hairy moments during the three lifts but a combination of pilot skill and divine intervention saw the satellite safely delivered to the Chief of Staff's Penthouse.

Cpls Steve Bishop, 'Hux' **Huxtable** and **Sgts Peter Doherty** and **Buddhibahadur Gurung** then proceeded to set up the MOST while the HKGSS technicians knitted the rest of the system together. They in turn were ably assisted by our CPD colleagues **Mr** 'Wan Chai' **Sandy McNeil** and **Sgt Martin Aubrey**. **Sgts Tony Osborn** and **Keith Robinson** provided all the local expertise with assistance to the Serco contract staff **Mr Neil** 'The Wanch' **O'Dell** and **Alan Batin** who flew in to install one of the data systems.

Access to Skynet 4B was gained after a short delay and the system is now extended to the Permanent Joint Headquarters via the largest wok in the Central District of Hong Kong. The 30 Sig Regt team has now returned to Bramcote having completed their tasks. They both left Hong Kong with our thanks for a professional job very well done.

With the withdrawal drawing ever closer attention must now be given to getting the MOST back off the roof! This special deployment represented a new and interesting challenge to Hong Kong Gurkha Sig Sqn. The overall collective effort of all concerned has ensured the challenge was met successfully.

SQN COMD'S FINAL WITHDRAWAL VEHICLE INSPECTION
by LCpl Tesharjang Gurung

As the handover of the sovereignty of Hong Kong draws closer day by day, everything from equipment to vehicles had to be prepared for the withdrawal. The A and MT Tp of Hong Kong Gurkha Sig Sqn was in no way an exception. A and MT Tp were extremely busy with this preparation and our Comd, **Maj Tim Craven** was only too eager to see that the vehicles were in tiptop condition before their back-loading.

On 16 January 1997, all the vehicles ranging from Toyota Corollas to 4 Tonner Bedfords were exquisitely laid out for his Inspection outside the Prince of Wales Building. All the transport details were reduced to zero for the day. The Sqn Comd, **Maj T. R. Craven** accompanied by the Sqn 2IC **Capt (QGO) Navindrabikruin Gurung**, Op Officer **Capt Paul Ferris**, **SSM WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung** arrived punctually at 0900 hours. As can be seen, the Inspecting Team comprised of people with diverse skills and the chances of a detail being overlooked was very slim. The Comd quickly slipped into an overall and began inspecting each and every vehicle.

The outcome of the Inspection was very impressive despite some minor faults and the Comd congratulated the Troop for their hard work and effort. It is hoped that the back-loading of the vehicles will now go smoothly.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj S .P. Davies MBE LD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) J. S. Dibben D and D**

COOL RUN

The 31 January saw another CO's 'Cool Run'. Although this time the run would be far from Cool!

The Organiser **WO2 (SSM) J. S. Dibben D and D** was pulled between loyalties when initially planning the event. **Lt Col Ellis** briefed the SSM, the words arduous, hills and long popped up. After the CO's brief **Maj Davis LD** briefed the SSM, the words easy, flat and short popped up. Only one way out of this situation if the SSM is to keep the bosses happy, plan more than one course. The ground around the Tai Tam Reservoir lent itself to the task of providing more than one course. In all three courses were set up, 13.7km long, 11km medium and 8.7km short, distance measured as the 'crow flies'. The long and medium courses contained 'The Twins' all 953 steps, up. The short course was by Cool Run standards FLAT. On the day however the run was far from Cool.

Due to draw down and the shortage of transport the run had to take place later in the day than is normal, much to the pleasure of the conducting staff, who could get out of bed at a more civilised hour. Temperature rose to a very hot 24 Centigrade, which is unusually high for this time of year. Some of the old and bold set off ahead of the pack, this gave the younger members someone to chase. The CO took up his usual position, starting a few minutes later than everyone else, then picking his way though the Regt along the route, said it was not a race.

The first man in was **Cpl Lalbahadur Gurung** from J Tp HKGSS. He completed the 13.7km route in 1hr 17min, which is by anyone's standards an excellent time. The rest of the runners started to arrive after this, with everyone in under two hours. **SSgt Manbahadur Gurung** SQMS and **Sgt Lilbahadur Gurung** had with their staff prepared hot tea/coffee and breakfast for all. This was up to the usual excellent standard and much appreciated by all.

After a good hard run in which no one got lost, due to some excellent route marking by **Cpl Brenton AGC**, and a first class breakfast, it was back to the barracks and real work! Quite a few individuals were requesting dates for the next run, mostly I must add from those guest runners who can if they do not feel up to it stay at home. It seems their will be time for one more Regt run before the sun gets too hot and the Union Flag is lowered in Hong Kong.

Maj Steve Davies and Adjt Capt Greg Wilson discussing the finer points of the run

Breakfast in the field

31 Sig Regt (V)
Southfields

CO — **Lt Col R. T. Weston**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) D .E. Hall**

PERMANENT STAFF COMING AND GOINGS

The Permanent Staff say farewell to **WO2 (YofS) Byron Sinclair** at the end of his Army career. He will be especially missed by **SSgt (FofS) Bob Wymer** who has now taken over his duties as PA to the Trg Maj whilst we await a replacement.

HQ SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj M. Jackson**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) J. J. McMahon**

CONGRATULATIONS

A very well done goes to **Capt Dave Parr** on his recent commissioning and also for the award of his Accumulated Campaign and Service Medal. Similar praise goes to **Capt Don Pawlow** for the award of the same medal. **SSgt** 'Art Veh' **Pete Jones** from the LAD on the presentation of his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, **WO2 John Hickey** on the presentation of the TA Efficiency Medal, and finally to **Sgt Chrissie Mills** on the presentation of the Bar to her TA Efficiency Medal.

REGIMENTAL CADRE COURSE

The first Cadre Course of the year took place on the training areas of Aldershot. It was run by 'The Badge' **(WO1 (RSM) Hall)** who was ably assisted by his merry men including **SSgt Jack** 'Airborne' **Hawkins**, **SSgt Craig Bruce** BEM and **SSgt** 'Where's my Weapon' **Stanton**. Run over two weekends, the first element of the course concentrated on Mil Skills (**SSgt Hawkins**' favourite subject), followed by development of Det Drills required by effective crewmembers and future Det Comds. The RSM decided to bog down a landrover and trailer and after some quick thinking announced to the course students that he had set up some sort of command task. Once the vehicle was removed, some 'off road' driving was enjoyed by all. On returning to the TAC, the instructors had the difficult job of selecting a Top Student–a prize eventually awarded to both **LCpl Ford** and **LCpl May**.

The RSM prepares the landrover extraction command task!

EXERCISE APOLLO RAG

The first Regiment Exercise of the year saw HQ Sqn get off to a flyer with everyone making it to the training area without breaking down! The two D Tp dets (with brand new Det Comds) had a few first night nerves on the move in after dark, but under the careful watch of **WO2 (SSM) Jim** 'I'm going to have to shout soon' **McMahon** and **SSgt Chrissie Stanton** they made it. **LCpl James Colley** now knows what an upside down cam net looks like and we don't think he'll have that problem again! **LCpl Curtin**'s det had a very large crew consisting of PSI **SSgt Craig** 'This is like being on holiday' **Bruce** BEM, **SSgt Bob** 'Pass me that screwdriver again' **Wymer**, **SSgt Chrissie Stanton** who were trying to get the equipment to work. **Sigs Winmill** and **Delaney** were the real crewmembers and made copious amounts of tea to keep everyone going. To the satisfaction of the PSI, comms were established between the dets.

The latter part of the exercise was the patrol phase, the part that everyone was really looking forward to. The patrol was led by **Lt Anna Darnell**, ably assisted by **Sigs** 'Gung-ho' **Roberts**, **McKay** and **Winmill**, plus most of the remaining seniors. Although going on a fighting patrol, it took 30 minutes to leave the site! When the enemy location was found, all our rehearsals went out of the window as we really let them have it. Afterwards, there was some doubt if this was the enemy we were meant to attack however they reacted well and came after us. Luckily we were too quick and made a safe exit.

We returned to our site exhausted but pleased with ourselves and looking forward to a good nights kip as the cut off time for attacks, 2300hrs, had passed. However, 10 minutes after we had all got into our bashas we were bumped. NFI was much in evidence from some tents so it was left to the SSM and the remaining stalwarts of D Tp to see the enemy off.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj S. Baker**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paine**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

The Squadron bids a sad farewell to their OC, **Maj Bob Davis TD**, who left Coulsdon on 1 April 1997 to take up the position of Regt 21C. A warm welcome is extended to **Maj Steve Baker** who, after just a short time as Sqn 21C, has taken over the reins.

EXERCISE COURAGE TROPHY 21-23 MARCH 1997

The Squadron excelled itself in this years Ex Courage Trophy. Not only did we run the Signals Stand, but we also entered a team into the Shield Competition. The stand, run by **Maj Bob Davis TD**, tested the London District teams on their voice procedure and Batco skills. **Lt Liz Fitzpatrick** led the Squadron team that consisted of soldiers experiencing their first exposure to this demanding competition. They were **Cpls Amie McAuliffe**, and **Tanya Camphell**, **LCpls Paul Sturbrook**, and **Paul Davis**, **Sigs Warren O'Driscoll**, **Martin Renson**, and **Chris Hunter**. The team worked hard returning to the TAC with bruises and blisters but morale was high after a very exhausting weekend. Well done to all those involved.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Squadron wishes to extend their congratulations to **LCpl Steven Hook** of 202 Sqn (3 (UK) ADSR) and **LCpl Jo Ogle** on their recent engagement. They first met on a rebro site in Bosnia last year but despite separations managed to keep in touch! Best wishes for the future.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj J. Irvine**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) R. Harding**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

It was only in the last issue of *The Wire* that the Squadron said welcome to **Capt John Russell** back from Bosnia, but he now leaves us for the regulars and joins 7 Sig Regt in Krefeld, good luck. We have also welcomed back **Sig Sully Sullivan** from his tour of Bosnia. Hellos are also extended to **Capt Mike Lansdown** our new Sqn 21C, and **Lt Pete Evans** RA Signals (V). Fond farewells are sent to two more of the Squadron bound for Bosnia. Good luck to **Cpl** 'Ginge' **Platts** and **LCpl Ken Blackburn**.

EXERCISE CRYSTAL COCKNEY

The Squadron deployed North in search of snow, comms and the comet Hale Bop (two out of three is not bad). The deployment of the advance party went well, with most people sticking to the route card, produced by computer which only caused one minor problem–two vehicles travelling North on the A1 and 3 vehicles travelling North on the M1. The party finally arrived in Ballater some 12 hours after leaving Sloane Square and the Comms base site and comms were then checked.

The main party arrived the following day, led by **Capt Mike Lansdown** with some 20 other soldiers who had suffered the journey to Scotland on the overnight sleeper from Euston. Our newly arrived exchange officer, **Lt Pete Evans**, was included in this party in the hope that he could play snow balls and see the dreaded white stuff for the first time. The exercise went well with all detachments communicating with our sister Squadron back in Coulsdon, and with each other in numerous locations in the Highlands using all types of antenna. Free time was spent low level walking and sampling the local brew. On arrival back from Scotland the Squadron was visited by Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, who presented medals to members of the Regiment, including our very own **LCpl Dana Grills**, who was presented with his well earned TA Efficiency Medal.

Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde presents LCpl Dana Grills with his TA Efficiency medal.

32 Sig Regt (V)
Glasgow

CO — **Lt Col A. C. C. Lapsley**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) J. McLachlan**

HQ SQUADRON
DEPARTURES

The Regiment said farewell to the Adjt, **Capt Gray** in the Sergeants' Mess where he was presented with his QUAICH, he was so overcome he nearly bought a round, but just managed to regain his composure. We wish him well in his new posting.

DINING IN OF THE RSM

The Sergeants' Mess held a Dinner on 22 March 1997 to dine in the new TARA. It took place at the Drummond Arms Hotel on the shores of Loch Earn in Perthshire. The evening was superbly put together by **WO2 (AQMS) Davidson** and **SSgt Niblock**. All who attended were very impressed by their attention to detail and in the grand manner in which we were treated, the food and the wines were in keeping with the fine tradition of the Sergeants' Mess. They have set a high standard for future Dinners. A special thank-you for the guests who travelled from all over the UK to attend. You enhanced an already special occasion. Hurry back.

51(H) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd — **Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Ian Walker**

ALLIED DUNBAR TROPHIES

Our latest winners of the Allied Dunbar trophies for the most improved soldier in 51 Sqn were **Sig Shona Anderson** and **Sig Dermott Morton**. The decisions to award the trophies were unanimous and both recipients are excellent examples of the dedicated young soldiers that we have in the Sqn at the present. Our photograph shows **Sig Anderson** (left) and **Sig Morton** (right) with our OC, **Maj Morna Strachan**.

ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND 21/22 FEBRUARY 1997

SSgt Karen Paterson and **Sgt John Gorman** (Tech PSI) organised the above weekend at Aviemore. Whilst it was originally planned as a skiing weekend the man upstairs never got the warning order in time and the snow never turned up until the Monday (he must have the same RQMS as we have). Still the lack of snow did not deter the adventurous spirits of the Squadron and our photograph shows the Highland record breaking pack a rover team in training. Also featured is **SSgt Russ Lindsay** showing why he is the Squadron off road champion–he drives like that during the week as well!!

ON TOUR

Our representatives abroad are still flying the flag for the Squadron. In Bosnia, **Capt Dan Robertson**, **LCpls John MacDonald**, and **Jimmy Douglas** are holding the fort, whilst recently returned from a tour in the Falkland Islands is **LCpl Stuart Bonar**. We look forward to his return to the Squadron after a spot of well-deserved leave.

To show that war is not hell all the time–our last photgraph shows **Capt Dan Robertson** and **Sgt Jackie Smith** of 61 (City of Edinburgh) Sig Sqn (V) who were on a swan onboard HMS *Birmingham* off the coast near Split during their tour in Bosnia.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd — **Maj Andrews**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) McKay**

It has been very quiet for the last two months in 52 Sqn. The few weekends away involved Regiment training at Cultybraggan. Most of the effort was spent in recruiting both soldiers and officers by **Capt Sutherland**. The next period looks like being a busier time working up to Ex Deep Gorge, but more of that in the next issue. Congratulations to **SSgt Harrison** PSI on the birth of a baby girl, mother and daughter are doing fine.

61 SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Fiona Farquharson**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Gary Garland**

SOCIAL EVENTS
CHAMPAGNE SUPPER

The 1 March saw the annual return to Chester of the retired members of the Squadron for the 1997 Champagne Supper. This annual extravaganza was originally intended as a quiet reunion for those who have served in the Squadron in the past. This year, as ever, the old and the bold proved that although they may no longer be young enough to serve in the TA, they can still party with the best of them. In fact it was the serving members who flagged first with the main organiser **Maj Brian Murray** enquiring at around 2am, 'Have you lot not got homes to go to?' Once again the Willy Barron trophy was up for grabs. This is awarded annually to the mess member who brings the worst behaved guest. This year the Ops Officer, **Maj Jan McClean** was disqualified on a technicality–the prize is only awarded if a guest behaves badly.

TEN PIN BOWLING NIGHT

As a reward for all the hard work put in this year by the Squadron, the PSI **SSgt John** 'Jimmy Corkhill' **Leach** and **2IC Capt Domhnall** 'Can I sell you a telephone' **Dods** decided to organise a ten pin bowling night. **Sig Bobby** 'Gladiator's Ready!' **Munro** arranged entry to a local bowling club and a good night was had by all–even if the first team took so long to complete their game that no-one else managed to play! Next time we book more lanes. Next time the 2IC has also made a note not to tell the RSM when he rings that 'the PSI's gone bowling with the soldiers'–stunned silence from the new RSM.

WELCOME

As well as the usual trickle of new recruits too numerous to mention we have also welcomed a number of 'recruits' with 'previous experience'. Welcome to **LCpl Suzanne Malloch** who joins us from the Intelligence Corps, and **Sgt** 'Do you know I captured the first Iraqi prisoners in the Gulf' **Garner** who joins us from goodness only knows where. (As soon as we find out he's getting sent back.)

DEPARTURES

WO2 Billy 'the Noose' **Strachan**, our erstwhile SSM has been called in to sort things out in Glasgow where he takes up a post as TA MTWO. Rumours that a spate of hangings is in the offing are entirely unfounded. **WO2 Strachan** overcame his childhood ambition of being a hangman many years ago . . . allegedly.

Cpl Ian Dickinson will go down in history as our shortest ever serving PSI. Best wishes go to him in his new role jumping out of perfectly serviceable aircraft. His replacement is **Cpl Box** who joins us from RSS on completion of his T1 course, welcome aboard!

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to **LCpl Jamie Venerus** on his recent promotion. Contrary to popular belief this has nothing to do with all the work he and his fellow students have been doing on a recruiting study for the TA in Scotland. He's getting promoted to the Sergeants' Mess on completion of the report! The Squadron has a new SSM with effect from 1 April–this is not an April fool. Congratulations to **WO2 Gary Garland** on his promotion–the only Glaswegian in living memory to hold the post.

TRADE TRAINING WEEK

A very successful trade-training week was held at Cultybraggan in March, the climax of which was the dining out of the Adjt, **Capt Ian Gray**. The young Officers of 52 and 61 Sqns presented **Ian** with a bewildering array of gifts. As well as a tablemat for his new home he received a very artistic wall hanging and even a T-shirt all courtesy of the Pirelli Tyre Company. Best wishes to **Ian** in his new posting. Other gossip and photographs from the trade week have yet to arrive back in Edinburgh–further details will follow in the next issue.

33 Sig Regt (V)
Liverpool

RHQ

CO — **Lt Col J. P. Moreland**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) D. Ikin**

After the Christmas stand down, the Regiment resumed work with a vengeance, looking forward to the challenges of 1997! RHQ itself is as busy as ever, losing documents, mis-filing posting orders and so on (only joking!) The corridor has seen **Capt Phil Baker**, the erstwhile Adjutant, going back to school at Staff College. All the best for the future from everyone, **Phil**. A warm welcome goes to the 'new' Adjt **Capt Andy Parsons**, and his wife **Karen**. Let's hope he'll be gentle with us! Finally, welcome back to the fold to **Capt Nick Deacon** (Tech Adjt), fresh from a spell in Bosnia. However, the word on the street is that he might be off again shortly. He is rumoured to have mumbled, 'It's hardly worth unpacking'.

The Regiment as a whole has been very busy; a number of soldiers have completed extremely successful 'S' Type engagements in places as far apart as the Falkland Islands and Bosnia, and the commitment to the Corsham Satellite Hub continues. Now, on with the news from the Squadrons . . .

42 (MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Brian Kennedy TD**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

EXERCISE MANCUNIAN DRAGON 6-9 FEBRUARY 1997

Twenty-three members of the Squadron undertook winter adventurous training in the heart of the Cairngorms. They were based at the Rothiemurchus Lodge, which is situated in a remote section of the Rothiemurchus estate some seven miles from Aviemore. It provides accommodation for parties of Regular, Reserves and Cadets from all three services and their families. The Lodge is ideally situated for outdoor pursuits ranging from skiing, walking, sailing, canoeing, windsurfing and mountain biking.

Leading by example the SSM, WO2 Paul Williams prepares to take some of the novice skiers onto the icy slopes of the Lecht near Aviemore.
(*L-R*): WO2 Paul Williams, Cpl Kenny McRae, Sig H Griffiths, LCpl Stu Green, LCpl Andy Connell.

Due to the limited time available the emphasis was on skiing and in particular on introducing our novice skiers to the delight of 'wipe outs' and multi coloured bruises. Although ferocious winds and icy slopes prevented all but the more experienced skiers taking to the slopes on Day One, Day Two saw an improvement in the weather and a good day's skiing was enjoyed by all. Our PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, who had been on the piste all weekend (I think that's what the SSM said), had persuaded **Cpls Hazel Trotman** and **Alison Coburn**, who were less than enthusiastic, to risk smearing their make-up and have a go on the slopes. Happily, they rose to the challenge and were led away by the SSM, **WO2 Paul Williams** and along with all the novices, mastered the basics so well that they had to be dragged off the slopes at the end of the day. Such was the success of the trip that the Squadron is hoping to repeat the Exercise next year and persuade many more members of the Squadron to participate in some training of a character building nature as well as enjoying the excellent Apres Ski activities which were available.

80 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj C. Fidler**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Taylor**

Firstly, we'd like to welcome **Sgt Jimmy Guilfoyle** who has travelled all the way from 59 Sig Sqn (V), and **SSgt Sammy** '2-3' **Collister**, from the 1 Bn The Irish Guards. I suppose we'll have to get his drill back up to scratch now! We recently said farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Rob** 'Where are we?' **Young** to 11 Sig Regt, who was the master at getting geographically embarrassed whilst taking the troops for a run. We also lost **Cpl** 'sorry, that should be Mr' **Dave** 'I love me' **Miller** to the terrors of Civvy Street. Farewell also (temporarily) to **LCpl Chris Glennard**, who's off on his Radio Relay Class 1 course after (finally) passing the entrance test! Finally, farewell **Cpl Jackie Harrison**, who leaves us to put her feet up. A welcome goes out to **Sgt John Evans**, followed swiftly by an adieu as he sets of for a stint on the Corsham satellite hub. Now on with what's been happening:

After a relaxing and quiet Christmas break, the recruiting team have failed to stop a desperate attempt to boost our numbers, led by **SSgt Terry Owens** with his side kick **Cpl Thomo** 'But you can call me Paul' **Thompson**. A trade training weekend has been and gone (we are now a Squadron of master tradesmen), which leads me neatly on to . . .

EXERCISE YEOMANRY CHARGE

Devised by **Cpl Pete Burgess** and **Cpl Jackie Harrison**
Devilishly executed (murdered?) by **Cpl Jase** 'I want to be a Yeoman' **Cade.**

The exercise was run at sunny Nescliffe, for that 'classroom in the field' feel. All the training events went well with **Sgt Andy Foster** and **SSgt (FofS) Mick** 'Handsome' **Swift** to provide any troubleshooting cover. **SSgt Mo Lyons** provided the yellow pages! Sunday's highlight was **Sig Tony Carmon**, whose 30min lecture on generators only lasted 90secs before he fell apart with a fit of nerves and stage fright. Fortunately for him **LCpl Brian Sherman** was there with a lecture he had prepared earlier. Blue Peter would have been proud.

LS & GC MEDAL PRESENTATION 23 JANUARY 1997

SSgt A. Keen SSI 42 Sig Sqn (V) **Sgt N. Goodwin** PSI 59 Sig Sqn (V)

SSgt Al Keen and **Sgt Nick Goodwin** have, apparently, both completed 15 years of undetected crime. On 23 January 1997 the DCOS 5 Div, **Col M. J. Dent MBE**, awarded them the LS & GC medal. **SSgt Keen** is the popular SSI for 42 Sig Sqn (V) with a fondness for orienteering and marathon running. He joined the Army as a boy soldier in 1976 carrying out his basic training at Albermarle Barracks, Newcastle and trained as a Combat Radioman. He has been a BAOR soldier, having served at 4 Armd Div, 22 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and 7 Sig Regt before joining 42 Sig Sqn (V) at Manchester as the SSI in November 1995. Manchester appears to suit him as he has bought a home nearby at Ashton under Lyne in which his wife **Julie** and daughter **Katy** are happily settled.

Sgt Goodwin joined the Army as an apprentice in 1979. He has served in GB, BAOR, the Falkland Islands, NI and Belize (twice) with 211, 227 and 251 Sig Sqns, 8 Sig Regt and 16 Sig Regt and JCUNI. He also attended the Ace High Course in Latina in 1989. He took up his post as a PSI at 59 Sig Sqn in February 1996. **Sgt Goodwin** is married to **Vivienne** and they live in married accommodation in Warrington.

The Medal recipients and their ladies with the DCOS HQ 5 Div, Col M.J. Dent MBE.
Back Row (*L-R*): SSgt Keen, Sgt Goodwin
Front Row (*L-R*): Mrs Keen, Col M.Dent, Lt Col Moreland, Mrs Goodwin

THE SIR RANULPH FIENNES CHALLENGE TRIATHLON LANZAROTE–JANUARY 1997

Warp factor six, wheel wobble and still accelerating! Whose idea was this anyway? I remember now; the CO thought it would be a good idea to enter a young, fit female 2Lt and an ageing, balding, once upon a time fit PSAO into this gruelling event. How did it all begin? Lunch in the Officers Mess at Regt HQ in Liverpool, to which **Arthur Surch**, the most charming Fund Raising Director for the David Lewis Organisation for Epilepsy had been invited. A couple of minutes to weave his magic spell over the CO and 'Bobs your Uncle', two volunteers produced out of the proverbial hat!

So it was that **2Lt Cheryl James** and **Capt Chris Hopkins** met up with members of other army units at Manchester Airport for the flight to Lanzarote. Why Lanzarote? Part of the challenge was to complete this gruelling event without acclimatisation.

After one day to settle in at the Club La Santa the event began. First of all a 1500 metre swim in the club's 50 metre Olympic pool. An energy sapping experience compounded by the combination of cold water and warm sunshine (and lily-white bodies!). Next the 40km bicycle race; a true test of stamina, determination and most certainly on the way back–BOTTLE! The 20km route out was a non stop climb from La Santa to the turn around point high up in the Fire Mountains. (The long burnt out volcanoes, which stand like sentinels all over the island). Most of this thigh-straining climb was spent out of the saddle and out of breath! The return journey was an exhilarating downhill blur over the same route. This is where bottle was tested, buttocks clenched and warp factor was reached! Everyone completed the descent in one piece with only the run left to do.

ONLY the run left to do, what an understatement! They say that halfway round a triathlon is halfway through the run and in this case it was to prove particularly true. The route out was the same as for the cycle but in this case 5km out and 5km back. Back up the same hill (The Grand Old Duke of York would have been proud of us), this time on foot with the leg muscles still in cycling mode and refusing to accept that they were now off the bike. A couple of lung busting km's later and dehydrated bodies and weary legs have settled into something of a routine. At last, the turnaround point and some welcome water to drink or pour over once white now pink bodies. 5km to go and what a sight as we turn round for the last leg. There in the distance, 5km away–Club La Santa, against a backdrop of blue sea and foaming surf. This made it all worthwhile and produced the necessary adrenaline rush to finish the race.

Flushed, exhausted, but with a great sense of achievement both officers finished in commendable times with **2Lt James** coming in second in the female category and **Capt Hopkins** coming 5th overall. (There were no prizes for the over 47's).

The rest of the week was spent using the many sports facilities available at La Santa. The club is used by many world class sportsmen and women and we were privileged to share the same amenities as **Linford Christie**, **Colin Jackson**, **John Regis** and many national cycling and swimming teams, **Daley Thompson** was also there coaching. All that remains is to raise £1,800 each for the David Lewis Organisation for Epilepsy and the Army Benevolent Fund. All donations will be gratefully received and can be sent to 33 Sig Regt.

Finally; would we do it again next year? ONLY if the CO volunteers us!

2Lt Cheryl James and Capt Chris Hopkins in one of their more relaxed moments in Lanzarote.

CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate **Cpl Jimmy Frew** on his marriage to one of our more eligible girls **LCpl Gaynor Kelly**. They did it in style, with the marriage and honeymoon taking place in Jamaica. His imminent posting brings him down to earth with a bump as he contemplates the prospect of a tour at Bulford with 3 Div. **Cpl Nick Wray** is also to be congratulated on his marriage to the lovely **Andrea**. We wish both of them the best of good luck in their future lives together. Waiting in the wings is **Cpl Dougie Pepper** who has recently become engaged to **Sig Christine Jackson**. No doubt this will be yet another regular taking away one of our best girls on eventual posting.

Cpl Dave Dawson is wearing a grin for the first time since he has been here. The reason is that his wife, **Sue**, produced a bouncing baby daughter on New Year's Eve. We congratulate them and also wish them luck on their future posting to 7 Sig Regt in Bradbury barracks. Finally we congratulate **LCpl Green**, **LCpl Connell** and **LCpl Heaps** on their recent promotion.

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING–PIRBRIGHT

While the sporting world held its breath at the Grand National, members of the Regimental shooting team had more serious matters on their minds. Two hundred and twenty miles south of Aintree, the splendid Ash and Pirbright Ranges provided an idyllic setting for the Corps competition, fiercely competed by more than four hundred and fifty Corps personnel. The week prior to the competition had seen **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams** frantically trying to find replacements for team members who, for one reason or another, were unable to attend. Two dozen phone calls and a couple of grey hairs later, the two teams captained by **WO2 Williams** and **WO2 (QMSI) Tony MacFarlane** had been selected to represent the Regiment at the meeting.

The teams, made up of members from all four of the Regiments' Squadrons and their LAD met early on the Friday morning and once weapons checks were complete, set off to meet up with the rest of the competitors at Alexander Barracks, Pirbright. What should have been a leisurely three and a half-hour drive south, was transformed into a seven and a half-hour slog, due to motorway closures. The teams arrived somewhat jaded, though none the less determined and settled into their accommodation, ready for the forthcoming competition.

Saturdays' shoots although fiercely competed, were not fired on a head-to-head basis and tended to lack the adrenaline surge that direct competition invokes. Fortunately we did not have long to wait for that to be remedied. Although Sundays' start was no earlier than the previous day, there was a distinct edge in the air. Today would provide the head-to-head confrontation that had been missing yesterday, as the falling plate competition got under way. It had been decided that due to the number of teams entered, each unit could enter only one team for both the falling plate and the team combat snap. The previous days' shooting had made the decision easy for the team captains and **Capt Wyper**, **Lt Dixon**, **WO2 Williams** and **SSgt Alden** were chosen to carry the flag for the Regiment. The CO, **Lt Col Moreland** set off from home at half-past five on Sunday morning to make sure that he would be in time to watch his Regiment Team take part in the competition. His early morning start was justified as he arrived in time to see them progress through to the quarter-finals of the Corps falling plate.

The Regiments' Shooting Team were Brigade Champions last year and were keen to add more silverware to the trophy cabinet, this they did in fine style. They brushed aside competition as they won the Corps falling plate, the victory giving them the honour of representing the Corps in the Inter-Corps competition. They swept aside their competitors in the semi-final, clearing the plates in a very respectable time of 34 seconds and winning a place against the RLC in the final. Unfortunately, second place was all there was to be for them as the RLC took the Inter-Corps title, but they had not finished.

The Regiment took first place in the team combat snap, as well as individual medals for **Lt Bill Dixon**–FIBUA, **WO2 (QMSI) Tony McFarlane**–Association Cup and **SSgt** 'Taff' **Alden**–APWT. After prize-giving the team captains were joined by their COs for a curry buffet, which brought an end to a very enjoyable and rewarding Corps meeting and promises of greater things at the next BSAAM. Our thanks to 32 Sig Regt (V) for their excellent administration and finally to **Col Peck**, **Maj Body** and just about everybody at the ARA that 'Taff' **Alden** knows!

XXXV

35 Sig Regt (V)
Sutton Coldfield

WINTER BLUES I'M SAD TO SAY . . .

Following a long Christmas break you would expect that batteries would be recharged and the New Year approached with a renewed and vigorous energy. Unfortunately the winter months take their toll and it takes a special effort to break free from the SAD syndrome. Even the sword drill, which caused a few close shaves, especially for **Lt Jane England**, who during the Officer Training weekend failed to raise a smile probably because an alternate APWT towards bounty was not awarded as a result. The situation was not helped during the Service Letter Writing period conducted by the Adjt, **Capt Graham Inglis**. Although in an imperative and accommodating mood he was faced with a listless and passive audience who, he later exclaimed, left him with the feeling of being awarded a long sentence and an acute pain in the colon! Needless to say he put a full stop to the lesson and routinely called a halt 30 loose minutes early–this semi-official end to the lesson caused a bold dash for the door! I'm told the weekend ended on a successful note with a Burnt Supper. (Needless to say the Officer Training Weekend was a huge and enjoyable success.)

WIRELESS

A humble and sincere apology is extended to our large company of avid readers of Regimental Notes. For the first time in eight years the Regiments' notes failed to appear in the April Edition of *The Wire* for reasons beyond our control. Some of the more interesting and meaningful articles that would have appeared in that edition are included here.

SPRING IN THE AIR

During the last few months the Regiment has taken full advantage of the unseasonably mild weather by engaging in a number of external activities from adventure training, skiing, communication exercises and leadership training. It seemed inconceivable that during Ex Winter Eagle we were enjoying temperatures of up to 16 degrees when at the very least we were expecting severe frost or snow. I suppose this final bounty-earning weekend could have been described as RED-hot! The glorious weather continued right through March and early April much to the relief of those Warrant Officers and SNCO's who were attending the leadership weekend organised by the RSM. The weekend at Swynerton saw this intrepid group undergo a variety of situations and assignments that were skilfully designed to improve their leadership and management skills.

Interesting activities included a novel approach to bayonet drill utilising a No 1 Dress Hat belonging to **Sgt Tatt** (now hatless) **Butlin**, which had seen much better days. This was **RQMS Clive Sear**'s humorous and unusual way of telling him that it was overdue replacement but what **Sgt Albert Mayer** thinks of his new nickname 'Bungalow Bill' cannot be printed here! The RQMS insists that it is simply a term of endearment. The weekend though was a resounding success and all who attended agreed unanimously that they are now much better prepared to deal with the many different situations and challenges that occur daily in their own Squadrons. As we go to press we are still basking cheerfully in the sun whilst the Regiment prepares for PRE–as vehicles are being serviced, repainted, greased etc everyone is actually smiling. Even trade training has moved outside! If this is a side effect of global warming perhaps we should embrace and welcome it!

Trade Trainees having fun in the sun!

SHINE ON!

Picture a visit to Packington Hall, a resplendent and beautiful stately home in the West Midlands, steeped in history and owned by **Lord** and **Lady Guernsey**. The home is full of priceless treasures, works of art and many antiques, but regrettably is not open to the public. This is to be the venue of a Beating Retreat Ceremony later in the year in celebration of our 30th Anniversary. The RSM, **WOI Phil Clifford** and the YofS, **WO2 Terry Burbidge** were invited along by the Estate Manager to conduct a recce in late Feb. On arrival they were shown around the grounds and given a grand tour of the home including **Lord** and **Lady Guernsey**'s private quarters.

On entry to the magnificent Music Room the Yeoman was mesmerised by the Grand Piano, which as the Estate Manager explained, had not been played for at least 30 years. The Yeoman asked if he could play it and was duly given permission by a rather bemused Manager. What followed was a glorious piano recital that would not have been out of place in the Albert Hall–the RSM and Estate Manager were stunned–**Yeoman Terry Burbidge** was an accomplished pianist! This was a day full of surprises and the final surprise left the Yeoman speechless when he was presented with an upright piano as a reward for his impromptu concert. Significantly the RSM and YofS left the estate at 1812 hours. All future bookings, through the RSM please!

A PHASE WORTH GOING THROUGH

The Course Photographs

Following a dip in recruiting early last year the Regiments' recruiting fortunes turned around in late summer. Since then many recruits have completed their Phase 1 training and are now fully integrated in their Squadrons. The latest two courses were particularly successful, as the standard of recruit was exceptionally high. The fact that all who started these courses also finished them, is a testament to the quality of the instructors and the determination and resilience of all recruits who can be equally proud of their joint achievement. The Pass Off Parades took place at Cateswell House and were viewed by many proud parents and friends. The CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston** was the inspecting officer. He presented the Best Recruit Awards to a delighted **Sig Adrian Proffitt** (a former Best Post Office Cadet) of 89 Sig Sqn and to **Sig Lucy Fish** of 95 Sig Sqn. At a reception following the Pass Off Parades the CO paid tribute to all the recruits and thanked family and friends for their unstinting support.

Sig Lucy Fish together with her proud mum

PERMANENT STAFF ROUNDUP

Before we extend our traditional welcomes and bid our sad farewells we offer our commiseration's to **WO2 John Midler**, the Regiments' SFA, on the shock he received on return from his skiing trip on Sunday 16 February. **John**, before he went skiing, unfortunately left his car in the area in which the recruit pass off parade was to take place, but forgot to leave his keys. Rather than march over the car, a rather jacked off (or jacked up), OC RTW summoned the assistance of the LAD who, using their collective initiative and ably led by OC LAD, repositioned the car using a 10 tonne hydraulic jack. The LAD Recovery/Disposal team was grateful for the practice but **WO2 Midler** was speechless as he was convinced that someone, somehow had managed to steal his car from a secure compound. It wasn't long before he was laughing again but has stated it was a moving experience he wouldn't like to repeat!

A moving experience

Moving quickly on to our gains and losses during the past few months. We have welcomed our new Regimental FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Martin Drake** and also extended a welcome to **Sgt Dave Yeoman** our new armourer. Also we welcome **SSgt Barry Osmond** the new REME NRPS, **Sgt Sean Davis** who joins 48 Sig Sqn, **Sgts Mark Evans** and **Kev Parkinson** who join 89 Sqn and finally **Cpl Martin Yelland** who joins 58 Sqn.

To all our new arrivals we extend a warm welcome to them and their families and wish them a happy and rewarding tour of duty. On a sadder note we have said farewell to **Sgts Brian Pitt** and **Spike Dewing** and family. Also to **Cpl** 'Mouse' **Fieldhouse** (who has left on a well deserved promotion to Sgt), to **Cpl Paul Kay**, on discharge and finally to **Cpl Tim Treadwell** who leaves us on posting to the School of Signals. We wish them all well in their new profession/appointments.

CONGRATULATIONS

Now that the results of various promotion boards have been announced we can offer congratulations to **WO2 (FofS) Martin Drake** on his selection for promotion to WO1–clearly he is not here to stay. Also congratulations to **SSgt (FofS) John Whitty** on his selection for promotion to WO2 and posting to RSIT and finally to our 'Tiffy' **SSgt Gary Connolly** on his selection for promotion to WO2 by the REME selection board. Very well done. On the maternal side **Sig Lindsay Morris** and **Sig Terry Spicer** are congratulated on the birth of their lovely baby daughter **Abigail**.

AN EXPLOSIVE EXPERIENCE

Lt Helen Molyneux having served five years with the TA was determined to realise her ambition of observing the dramatic effects of a firepower demonstration. Her dream came true when she was offered a place on the Weapons Effect Demonstration at Warminster. What follows is her vivid account of a rather clamorous and fascinating day on the range.

I have to confess that my knowledge of the weapons systems used by the Army is quite limited although I was given some insight into their power during officer training, but had never been privileged to witness a full battlefield demonstration. When the day finally came the fog that persisted almost all the way to Warminster dulled my excitement, fortunately it cleared and on arrival I quickly found my way to my allotted seat. For one who has not seen the majority of the infantry arsenal and whose only sights of Challenger has been the occasional glimpse as they roar past over cross country circuits, the Weapons Effect Demo can only be described as astonishing.

Each weapon from the smallest grenade through to LAW was displayed and demonstrated, each time with deadly accuracy. It was during this phase of the demonstration that Warrior was put through its paces and basic section drills displayed in a fanfare of pyrotechnics to achieve maximum dramatic effect. After a short explosive display of cratering and 30mm cannon it was time for Challenger to 'strut its stuff', impressive, excellent, sensational–words fail me, the agility and power of this machine was unbelievable; at this point I was mesmerised and literally glued to my seat! What on earth was coming next? The answer came quickly with MILAN at only £10.000 a round–before my ears could adjust a Jaguar and a Harrier using SNEB and 30mm Cannon erupted on the scene; my eyelids were now firmly stuck to my forehead following this spectacular and electrifying finale!

Forty-five minutes went in an instant and the demonstration has left an indelible impression and a determination to repeat the trip, only this time with my Troop. After note: 50 places have been booked for a full firepower demonstration that is taking place on Thursday 4 September. If you want to go contact **Lt Helen Molyneux** at 89 Sig Sqn!

ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE

A Regiment without humour is a Regiment without life and at a low ebb; fortunately this is a charge that cannot be upheld against this Regiment as morale boosting humour and humorous incidents are infectious and flourish and touch us all in every corner of the unit. Even those at whose expense we can chuckle, find the funny side of Regiment life in all its shapes and forms. The always reliable **Capt Martin Pulwer** provided the first tasty bite when he reported that he was bitten by a dog on his BFT. At first glance I thought this was part of his anatomy until it was realised that an aggressive dog bit **Martin** while he was attempting his BFT. Happily the dog has now recovered from the encounter while **Martin** is still licking his wounds. Turning now to the Chief Clerk, **WO2 Richard Wilson**, who up until now has appeared immune to humorous assaults, we have learnt however, much to his chagrin that the local police have invited him to join the noise abatement society. The Chief Clerk is remaining surprisingly muted about the whole affair and is claiming his right to silence and reportedly has taken up night clubbing as an alternative hobby although he had to be told that the Hale Bop is not a new dance!

ENTER THE DRAGON

Ex's Silver Dragon, Annapurna Dragon, Welsh Dragon suggest by their titles that there is some connection and you would be correct, if only loosely, as they are all Adventure Training exercises or expeditions of one nature or another that have either taken place or are planned for the future. To complete the theme all we need now is one called Pete's Dragon but the Trg Maj, **Maj Paul** 'Dragonmaster' **Ford** and the Disney empire are naturally dragon their heels over this title! Ex Silver Dragon, the Regiments annual skiing exercise, broke with tradition this year by swapping the Haggis and Scotch at Avie no more for Bratwurst and Schnapps on the ski slopes in Bavaria. The change of venue generated great interest throughout the Regiment and as expected the exercise was vastly oversubscribed and many hopeful skiers were bitterly disappointed. For the chosen few it proved to be the experience of a lifetime thanks to the professional instructional skills of **Maj Paul Ford** and **Sgts** 'Dobbo' **Dobson** and 'Geordie' **Crawford** who were seconded from the Army Women's Skiing Team. Their patience, experience and good humour made for a great time on the slopes and were used to tremendous effect when the whole party was stranded in a blizzard. They skilfully kept the party in high spirits until rescued by a fleet of snowmobiles. The chilling pain of icy wind blasting through every pore of the body was swiftly forgotten after a few glasses of Gluwein, quaffed instantly in the nearest guesthouse. The blizzard unfortunately persisted over night that scotched any hopes of skiing the following day but the unplanned excursion to Munich proved highly entertaining.

The one advantage of the poor weather was that fresh snow fell on the Piste, so that when skiing resumed the conditions were much better for training novices. Thankfully all members of the party either gained their Silver or Bronze awards before the end of the exercise and are to be congratulated on their achievement and for having to endure such miserable and unbearable conditions so far away from home! The whole party who cannot wait to repeat the exercise next year enjoyed this unforgettable experience. In particular **SSgt Rod Shelton-Smith** can't stop talking about the Fräuleins who revived him following a nasty fall–was he pushed or did his knees buckle voluntarily when he saw them? **Sig Liz Judge** meanwhile would prefer for you not to mention the prehistoric inconvenience arrangements during the journey through France

On the Piste

and where on earth did she vanish to on arrival at the German border? Ex Annapurna Dragon is the Regiments ambitious expedition to Nepal which takes place later in the year and is to be led by **Lt Ian Cassell**. Intensive training has already begun and is apparently going well, now we are looking forward to receiving and publishing **Ian**'s final report during October.

A FATHER FIGURE

To end on a rather sad note, at a special Regimental Dinner Night, held in the Officers' Mess on Saturday 5 April, the Regt Officers dined out **Maj Paul Fathers**. **Paul** has had a long and distinguished career with the Regiment and held many appointments including Sqn Comd and 2IC and indeed would eventually have been honoured with Comd.

This would have been quite an achievement for one who joined as a Signalman in 1980 and whose only ambition at that time was to get an HGV qualification an ambition, much to his irritation he never did realise. Destined for greater things his officer potential was quickly realised and he was commissioned in May '83 and his service since then has been exemplary and he has championed the Regiments' cause in many ways. He will be sadly missed by all ranks that have sought his counsel and trust and admired his professionalism and dedication. We all wish him well in his expected new appointment with the RLC.

36 (E) Sig Regt (V)
Ilford

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Dave Watson**
PSAO	**Capt Len Carr**

There have been a number of changes in the Squadron recently. Farewells go to **SSgt** 'Bruce' **Lee** who is off to REME Workshop at Minley on a well earned promotion to AQMS; he will be particularly missed by the LAD for his sense of humour. Welcomes are extended to **SSgt Paul Haggett** who joins us from 36 Eng Wksp at Maidstone to replace **SSgt Lee**. **Sgt** 'Dutch' **Hollands** moves on a short term loan from TM Tp to fill the SPSI spot. Finally, **Sgt Ian Chappell** goes to the MT.

SPORTS

London District held its annual Cross Country meet (for both Regulars and TA) on Sunday 26 January 1997. A female and a male team were entered with the female team performing much better than their male counterparts, who finished 11th overall. **Sgt Jahan McCready** (10) and **LCpl Greta Jenkins** (2) have both qualified for the Army finals due to be held in Catterick on the 15 March 1997.

NUPTIALS

LCpl Flynn Burke has finally married **Miss Manisha Vyas**. He arranged this so that he could be in Tenerife during a Regimental Exercise. We offer them our best wishes for the future.

LCpl Flynn Burke and Mrs Manisha Burke during the Cake Cutting Ceremony

CORPSAM 1997

Shooting Team:	**Capt White**	44 Sqn	(Team Captain)
	Cpl Byrne	44 Sqn	
	Cpl Child	44 Sqn	
	Sig Gowers	44 Sqn	
	Sig Harper	44 Sqn	
Support Staff:	**SSgt Haynes**	44 Sqn	(Team Manager)
	Sgt Nicholls	44 Sqn	
	Sig Cole	44 Sqn	

After three weekends on the ranges over a three-month period, the weekend of the competition drew inevitably nearer. On Friday night **Capt White** went down to Pirbright early to attend the Team Captains' meeting, while **SSgt Haynes** organised the team parade at Grays TAC. Accommodation was in the infamous D Lines, Pirbright and all the shooting was at Ash Ranges, apart from the FIBUA match that was held on Nelson Range at Pirbright. **Sgt Nicholls** and **Sig Cole** had been entered as individuals, however due to the overwhelming response from Regiments this year, there was unfortunately no range space for them to fire and so they became IC Regt tent and transport for the weekend. Matches to be fired on Saturday that counted towards the individual championship were the APWT Practices 4 to 9, the Association and the FIBUA. A pistol team of 3 firers was entered as well as an LSW team of two. On Sunday the Combat Snap and Falling Plate took place, which required teams of 4.

Saturday morning started out encouragingly as the team arrived at Nelson Range for the FIBUA shoot on time at 0940. Unfortunately, half the targetry then decided to pack up reducing the range capacity from 30 lanes to 15 and the targets on the remaining lanes had a habit of blowing off in the rather stiff wind. Just a bit disconcerting, especially when you were firing on it! **Capt White** finally left the range at 1320 after two re-shoots. At the Team Captains' briefing on Saturday evening, stats were handed out which only gave half the scores, as some cards had not been handed in. This left most of the teams in suspense as they waited to see what the results were on Sunday morning. A smoker was organised on the Saturday night for all team members in the ARA clubhouse at Bisley Camp which was well attended, although apparently some teams later made their way to local watering holes.

Sunday dawned with the realisation that: 0600 is not a good time to wake up and but the end of the competition was in sight. Sad to say, our valiant attempts at the Falling Plate were in vain. In the first round we were beaten by 55 Sig Sqn by one plate–very frustrating. As for the Combat Snap, the least said the better, The CO, **Lt Col Scott-Morton**, and the RSM, **WO1 Bywater MBE**, visited on Sunday morning to offer moral support and attend the VIP curry lunch. By 1100, rumours of whom had won what were doing the circuit, although the stats team were still busy processing cards. It was especially nice to have our own Brigade Commander, **Brig David Wills**, present the prizes. The team was delighted to find that they had achieved the following successes:

Individual Winner–FIBUA Match	**Capt White**	Medal
Individual Winner–LSW Match	**Cpl Byrne**	Medal
Team Winner–Pistol Match	**Capt White**	Trophy
	Cpl Byrne	
	Cpl Child	
Individual Runner-Up–Pistol Match	**Capt White**	Medal

In recognition of the fact that all the team members were from 44 Sqn, it has been agreed that the trophy for the Pistol Match will be shared between RHQ at Ilford and 44 Sqn at Grays on a six monthly basis. Although the complete stats have not been released as yet, we know that the team finished fifth overall from over 20 teams, a very creditable result.

37 Sig Regt (V)
Redditch

CO	**Lt Col Stamford Cartwright**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Paul Edwards**

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We welcome new Training Major **Maj Stewart McConnell**, wife **Karen** and daughter **Sophie**. **Stewart** replaces **Maj Tony Shaw** after a gap of a few months. In the meantime, **WO2 (YofS) Steve Townsend** comprehensively re-wrote week two of Camp whilst whipping up the trade trainers and students to produce some excellent results in the trade boards. HQ Sqn Comd **Maj Les Porter** also stood in for part of the Trg Maj's duties while Adjt **Capt Steve Williamson** shouldered much of the extra paperwork. We now wish **Steve, Sarah** and son **Thomas** a happy posting to Blandford and welcome **Capt Sarah Copley** from Germany as the new Adjutant. We hope that both **Stewart** and **Sarah** will enjoy their posts and not get too exasperated at the unconventional way some things are done! The officers mess dined out both **Tony** and **Steve** at a formal dinner in Redditch TAC. Sadly PMC **Maj Andrew Cornish** could not persuade some other members who have left in recent years to also attend to be dined out but those present enjoyed an excellent meal.

The winter training cycle concluded not only with some good trade board results but two rather different weekends for the officers. On one Sunday morning, Adjt **Capt Steve Williamson** planned an officers' ramble around the Cotswold foothills near Long Marston, finishing at his house, where he and **Sarah** provided a most welcome lunch. A few weeks later, 67 Sqn Comd **Maj Roy Naylor** organised a black tie dinner at Stratford TAC. It was remarkable how the usual 10-12 regular attendees for the officer training suddenly trebled on the Saturday evening for a most enjoyable function. Thanks go to the chefs and the admin staff at Stratford, not only for this occasion but also for their hospitality through the winter cycle.

(L to R) 2IC Maj Andrew Cornish, Adjt and CO compare maps before setting out.

REGIMENTAL WOs & SGTs MESS DINNER

The mess held a formal dinner at Coventry TAC to dine out **WO2 (SSM) Newton**, **WO2 (RQMS) Dubique** and **Sgt Dubique**. **WO2 (SSM) Fred Newton** completed a full TA career with 53 (Welsh) Sig Sqn as SSM, after a regular career in the Parachute Regt. We wish him all the very best for the future. We also said farewell to **WO2 (RQMS) Charlie Dubique** and **Sgt Sarah Dubique** as they left us to join 14 Sig Regt (EW). They were both well-liked characters and will be missed by all. The bulk of the admin required to put the function together fell upon the able shoulders of 96 Sqn's **SSgt (SQMS) Mick Stone**, whose hairline receded considerably more than normal. Throughout the evening it became apparent that the mess has a penchant for communicating with non-regulation equipment, ie. the dreaded name card! Once the RSM had sifted through the many invites for lunch, among other things, he had no hesitation in adding to the mess's port reservoir with donations from the kind offenders. Finally, a mention must go to the chefs, led by **Cpl Ian Ross**, for their efforts on the night that contributed to an excellent evening, enjoyed by all.

EXERCISE COMBAT CATERER

Three of the Regiment's chefs, plus one supporting team member, entered the 143 (West Highland) Bde section of Ex Combat Caterer and were delighted to beat six other teams. Tests of military skills including first aid, assault course, NBC drills and shooting were interspersed through the weekend. The set-piece test was to prepare a 3-course meal for 20 men using one No. 5 cooker in two hours flat. The menu started with fish tagliatelle, followed by lamb chop in a delectable sauce and a vegetable melee. Cooked apple slices rounded of the meal that delighted the judges. At the time of writing, the team are looking forward to the national finals at Grantham, though Master Chef **WO2 Neil Burgin** is trying to work out how to feed the Regiment on exercise on the same weekend.

WO2 (RQMS) Charlie Dubique and Sgt Sarah Dubique compare their gifts from the mess.

SSgt Alan Pearmain, Cpl Ian Ross and Cpl Rod Powell display their winning dishes
Cpl 'Bel' Bellamy provides the support for the team.

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Les Porter**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian**

The Squadron deployed to Saighton Training Camp, near Chester for an intensive training weekend which started on the Saturday with Signalling Skills, Vehicle marshalling techniques and Vehicle Recovery procedures. On the Sunday the Squadron were roused early and put through a series of command tasks to challenge leadership and teamwork skills. The most challenging of these was the Ski obstacle course that was organised by **SSgt Pete Dawson**; the object was to negotiate a series of obstacles. Easier said than done as it required a team of three to be strapped to one set of skis with the middle team member facing the opposite direction to the other members, confused? Team dexterity was really put to the test with more than a few stumbles, resulting in uncontrollable laughter. The weekend was successful and enjoyed by all. However, thanks once again to all the DS and Admin staff for their hard work.

You may have heard of the Jamaican Bobsleigh team, well this is HQ Squadron's Skiing team. The only problem is that the PRI could only fund one set of skis. **LCpl** 'Splinter' **Dolan** is the team leader but **LCpl Mark Reynolds** wants to go his own way, while **Pte Mick Turnbull** doesn't mind who leads.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

EXERCISE MORRIS DANCER 2

Members of 67 Sig Sqn braved the February weather to embark on an adventure training exercise in the Lake District. The weekend was organised by **Cpl John Philips**, an old hand at adventure training. The team made their way to Helvellyn youth hostel, the five-star base for the weekend, well it seemed to be after each days gruelling activities! Day one was spent winter mountaineering training and the weather obliged in making the day as authentic as possible–the higher the group climbed, the more bitter the wind became as it rose to gale force and the temperature dropped dramatically. Just below the summit the group were taught the basics of mountaineering–cutting steps in the ice, walking up very steep icy slopes and, most dramatic of all ice-braking. This involved sliding feet and headfirst down the slope and using an ice axe to brake–**LCpl Tom Phalp** became most proficient at this in a very short space of time!

The security on snow and ice lesson was very sobering as the Squadron learnt to use a dead body and descend using a horizontal ice anchor. I'm not sure if anyone volunteered for the part of the dead body, but the lesson was quickly learnt as the last minutes of the England/Scotland rugby match were beckoning back at the nice, warm hostel. Sunday saw the tackling of Scarfell Pike. Despite the excesses of the previous evening, (well we needed to eat and drink lots to warm up!) the Squadron made good headway across the windy ice and snow covered boulder fields, before heading up the final climb to the cairn at the summit. At 978m above sea level the cloud cleared to allow a brilliant view, which suddenly made the whole weekend worthwhile.

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

PSAO, **Capt Len Yates**, enlisted a new recruit to the Squadron recently. A normal task for a PSAO, you may say, but in this case **Rct Yates** happened to be his son, **Warren Yates**, an ex-regular and now a University student. During his regular service he completed tours of South Georgia in the Falkland Islands, Cyprus and Norway. We hope he serves as many years with us as his father completed in his regular career.

CO	**Lt Col I. W. Griffiths**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M. P. Boyle**

15 (NE) BRIGADE ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Brigade Orienteering Championships took place in glorious sunshine on 8 March in Hamsterley Forest, Weardale. Unfortunately, due to a Squadron Commex, we couldn't enter a male team and a female team represented the Regiment. **Lt Jill Hamlin**, **OCdt Helen Smail** and **Cpl Sue Wright** all volunteered at short notice to take part, and were rewarded by a fine victory that made them the Brigade Champions 1997. Special mention goes to **Lt Hamlin** who took first place in the females' competition. Next stop–Corps Champions?

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Bill Evans**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Gary Cundy**

HQ Sqn got back into shape and shook off the excesses of the Christmas period with an intensive military training weekend at Beckingham Training Camp. The main aim of the weekend was to provide a full programme of military training, ensuring all members of the Squadron were suitably qualified and fit for role. Secondly, but no less important, it presented an ideal opportunity for the Squadron to say a sad farewell to our recently retired OC, **Maj David Rigley**.

Beckingham Camp gave the Squadron the opportunity to hone its shooting skills on the nearby ETR range. Excellent range facilities enabled the APWT to be conducted with significant success by many of the shooters. It also permitted OC LAD, **Capt Phil Simmons** to keep a sharp eye out for potential shooting team members before the Regt SAAM in April. The Squadron hopes to retain the Champion Squadron Trophy.

Recently back from two tours in Bosnia, PTI, **Sgt Frank Reid** put the Squadron through its paces around the BFT course. Fortunately, Beckingham Camp is located on the flat part of Lincolnshire and the well-planned course posed no problems.

Back in the camp itself, **Cpl Sally Burton** and **LCpl Jan** 'Bob' **Barrington** gave instruction in and demonstrations of First Aid techniques. Everybody was then invited to practice. Needless to say, the instructors' demonstrations were somewhat better than our efforts on the unfortunate casualties. The Squadrons' NBC instructor, **Cpl Barry** 'Pitprop' **Baldwin**, ensured everybody was up-to-date with the 'Survive to Fight' pamphlet, and a visit to the CS chamber confirmed this. Saturday evening saw the whole Squadron relaxing at a sit down meal in honour of our previous OC, **Maj David Rigley**. His successor, **Maj Bill Evans** recounted many of the highlights of the former OC's career, spanning some 22 years of regular service and over 12 years in the TA with 38 Sig Regt. The highlights in the TA included 2IC of 46 Sig Sqn and OC of 87 Sig, 64 Sig and HQ Sqns. Whilst at each of the Squadrons, he engendered a competitive and team spirit, especially in shooting and sports competitions. So successful was **Maj Rigley** at this, that he became known as the 'Trophy Collector', a name **Maj Bill Evans** has inherited. As a reminder of his time with the Regiment, **Maj David Rigley** was presented with each of the Squadrons' insignia in a framed mount, and a fine pen. We all wish him well in his retirement and hope to see him in the not-too-distant future.

Once again, a well planned and executed weekend provided a valuable, beneficial and most enjoyable time for the Squadron. We all look forward to our return to Beckingham.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Ross Parsell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Joe Walshe**

MEDAL PRESENTATION

Everyone loves a parade and what better excuse than a medal presentation? Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, kindly agreed to present the medals following his inspection of the Squadron. Adjt, **Capt Steve Williamson**, came along on the night to read the citations. Those receiving medals and bars are pictured below (left to right):

WO2 (YofS) Marcus Cosgrove	TEM
SSgt Heather Kenny	TEM
Sgt Donna Scott	TEM
SSgt Diane Feest	BEM Bar to TEM
Cpl Sue Cornthwaite	TEM
SSgt Dave Rigby (Retd)	TEM
LCpl Tony Windle	GSM (NI)

The Squadron congratulates them all.

38 Sig Regt (V)
Sheffield

Maj Bill Evans presenting Maj David Rigley with a memento of his time with the Regiment

46 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Roy Szulakowski**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Alan Whittaker**

808 ARCTIC AND MOUNTAIN WARFARE TROOP BOLDLY GOING . . .

It had been planned that the Troop would undergo a map reading and compass exercise based in the Derbyshire Peak District. The aim of the exercise was to find three aircraft wrecks at various grid references on the hills.

We arrived at our start at the Snake Pass, only to find that the landscape resembled the North Pole. Undaunted, the Troop carried on as planned; **Sig** 'Gazelle' **Philpott** leading, **Sgt Snow** navigating, whilst the remainder of the Troop took turns in bog-hopping and disappearing down snow holes. Our navigation skills had to take second place to practicalities when we found that the raging torrent that had formerly been a tiny stream could not be crossed to gain access to the first wreck. Consequently, we moved on to the second grid via a 1:1 hill that some people climbed on all fours. Having located the exact grid with the use of **Sig Magellan**, we found it to be a crater full of snow, underneath which was the remains of a Lancaster. Not wishing to 'dig-in', we made for the final grid where, at last, we were successful in finding the wreck of a Superfortress. We returned to Base via The Pennine Way (or 'River' as it was nicknamed by the Troop), all in all, a very interesting, eventful and exhausting day.

64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Stan Fitzgerald**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jimmy Mees**

EXERCISE WHITE APPLE

The first field training exercise of 1997 saw our two new PSIs, **SSgt** 'Stan' **Kelly** and **Sgt Mick King**, out with the Squadron for the first time. The exercise was a tactical one with a communications overlay.

Capt Lawrence McCourt and 902 Tp carried out stout and aggressive patrolling all weekend, which culminated in the capture of the enemy's leader, one **Ram-Pinki**. **LCpl Fraser Newton** was the poor unfortunate who bore the responsibility for allowing this 'Wangan Miscreant' to escape and take the OC, **Maj Stan Fitzgerald**, as hostage. Mercifully, both **LCpl Newton** and **Cpl Paul O'Malley** managed to follow them to the enemy hideout, then organise a Squadron assault to recover the said Major.

The high wind that had prevailed during the weekend took its toll on the NCRS part of the exercise. **Cpl Steve Robert**'s detachment proved that an NCRS mast will go up in a steady 55 mph wind; **Sgt Ellie Hardy**'s mast, however, needed nine people to drag it down, the wind being so powerful that the mast was near impossible to topple.

'Man of the Match' for this exercise goes to **2Lt Andy Whalen**, who found that one of his detachments was under attack by the enemy just as he returned from a 'portaloo run'. As **Cpl Steve Roberts** and **Cpl** 'Jacko' **Jackson** did their best to conduct a stout defence in the dark, **Andy** surveyed the scene from his landrover, adding later, 'There was no point in going down as I could see they were all busy.'

The CO, **Lt Col Ian Griffiths**, paid the Squadron an official visit and was rather impressed with the giant Yorkshire puddings served for lunch. **Cpl Ann Simmons**, our chef, failed to convince him that they were part of the compo ration issue. On a serious note, however, a sincere welcome to our two new PSIs from the Regular Corps, and we hope they will learn as much from us as we can from them.

LCpl Dave Hineson keeping an eye on the NCRS generator

Congratulations to the 64 Sig Sqn football team on winning the TA Cup (North-East) 1996-97. The Final Score was: 64 Sig Sqn (V) 3–2 D Coy Queens Own Yeomanry (V). **Sig Carl Hudson** scored two goals and **SSgt (SPSI) Stan Kelly** scored the other.

64 Signal Squadron's Winning Football Team.
Back Row (*L-R*): Lt Col Roger Davenport, Maj Stan Fitzgerald, SSgt (FofS) Steve Erskine (Player/Manager), SSgt Kev Clarke, SSgt (SPSI) Stan Kelly, WO2 (RQMS) Bob Ingham (Capt), Sgt Gary Owen, WO1(RSM) Mick Boyle, Sgt Pete Szeremeta,
Front Row (*L-R*): Capt Lawrence McCourt, Cpl Andy Hall, Sig Carl Hudson, Cpl Wayne Thorp, Sig Ian Russell, Sgt Rick Birch, SSgt Vic Worrall

20 Kilometre Ski and Shoot Race

EXERCISE BUTTERBEANS III
SQN COMMEX–GRANTHAM 7-9 MARCH 1997
by Sgt Mandy Jones

Ex preparation on Tuesday was spent loading the vehicles and dusting all the cobwebs off our trends, modems and Bid 950s ready for the weekend. Our mission was to set up a trade training exercise. Since the arrival of our NCRS trailers our training has been dedicated to 'green field' exercises using the new equipment. For the operators, the weekend was split into three parts; data and security, HF antennas, and Mould. On a 'round robin' basis, groups went to each stand and were taught how to open safes, antenna theory, mast erecting, and using Mould equipment. For most of us, it was a case of becoming familiar with the equipment and getting to used it again. For the newer members of the Squadron, it was an opportunity for them to see and to use some of the data and radio equipment that we use in the Regiment. For the other non-operators they were lucky enough to have MTWO with them and take part in cross-country driving in the 110 Landrovers, on the cross-country course at Grantham Training Camp. Unfortunately, they had to spend the rest of the weekend trying to get the vehicles clean again.

Sunday morning was a continuation of the training, followed by a BFT to round off the weekend. Overall, we achieved all we set out to do, and hope that we did not baffle the new members too much.

87 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Tom McCappin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) N. Caldicott**

EXERCISE HARDFALL–FRIDAY 10 JANUARY-SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY 97
by Sgt Mandy Jones

My tour with 29 Commando Regt RA started at 0700 hours when I met the Sergeant Major of Signals. After a long wait, we finally departed from Brize Norton bound for Norway. On arrival, we had a six hour coach journey to Andelsness, which was to be my home for the next six weeks. The camp itself consisted of wooden buildings and was situated in a valley surrounded by mountains. The scenery was spectacular. However, the camp was nicknamed 'Windy City', the cold wind blowing through the camp and quite literally taking your breath away.

On Saturday morning three other naval COMMCEN workers and myself set up the COMMCEN. We then had to draw out our Arctic Weather Kit. We were also issued with two avalanche warning devices that were to be attached to our clothing–a little disconcerting! My next task was to learn the 'lingo' that the Marines used. I had to get used to the cookhouse being the 'galley', a 'whet' being a drink, and various other naval terms. On the communications side, the COMMCEN was kept very busy. We worked two-man shifts and when we were not working we had the opportunity to go cross-country skiing. The skis felt very much like planks of wood attached to my feet–they were very heavy and very long. I found cross-country skiing much harder and tiring than downhill skiing. On Sundays we went 'Ski Sunday'–a coach journey to Bjorli Ski Centre to buy a ski pass and go downhill skiing–only to be put to shame by Norwegian children who I believe must have been born on skis!

Whilst we and other members of RHQ were working, the rest of the Regiment were on various courses which included continuation courses and a novice course for those Commandos who had never been to Norway before. The courses included skiing, Arctic survival training, living in snowholes, and the final part of the course was to 'break ice'. This is where the courses ski into a hole cut in a fjord and has to swim and get themselves out using their ski poles. When they have finished they are given a tot of rum and changed into dry clothing. We were asked if we wanted to have a go, but even the tot of rum could not tempt me.

Andlesness itself was a very small town. It had just a few shops, two bars and a couple of cafes–where we would escape to have a cup of hot chocolate. It was very quiet and not many people were out. This could have been due to the fact that it was so expensive to drink and eat out (a pint of beer would cost around £4.00). However, on Friday and Saturday evenings there was a small disco bar that would get very busy with 29 Cdo Regt, The Clogs (Dutch marines) and some Norwegians.

The second part of the tour for the Commandos was a two week live firing exercise in a training area named Hjerkin (where the original 'Star Wars' was filmed). We managed to spend some time with the Gun Batteries and fired the guns. Hjerkin itself was extremely cold, with temperatures dropping down to -30˚C and -40˚C. The area was very bleak with nothing but mountains and snow for miles, but an amazing sight nevertheless.

The final part of the tour was really a clean up and loading up the ships. There was also a 20km Ski and Shoot biathlon on cross country skis with a prizegiving for the winners. Overall, I had a great tour, gained a lot of experience, made a lot of friends and thoroughly enjoyed myself. Next year, the tour will be for three months starting in Norway and finishing in France. I would recommend it to anyone.

39 (Skinners) Sig Regt

CO — **Lt Col H. A. R. Hancock**
Trg Maj — **Maj A. J. Shaw**

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the **RSM Pete McElwee** on his recent commissioning. We wish him, his wife **Melanie** and his two sons well as they now move northwards into Wales, to be with the 30th Cadet Training Team. We also offer a warm welcome to **Maj Tony Shaw** who joins us as the new training major, replacing **Maj Hugh Bardell**.

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj G. P. Nash**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) J. Bloomer**

PROMOTIONS AND CHANGES

There were several personnel changes straight after camp. **Lt** (now Capt) **Paul Fowler-Smith** moved to HQ/57 Sqn Recruit Training Team. Newly commissioned **Capt Rich Belbin** was appointed Sqn 2IC/QM(V), being replaced by **WO2 Steve Cocksedge** as RQMS (V). **WO2 Dickie Lee** relinquished his appointment as SSM to take on the role of Officers Mess Manager. **SSgt Jim Bloomer** was promoted to WO2, into the SSM slot, being replaced by **SSgt Phil Smith** as SQMS.

EXERCISE FAST BALL

Ex Fast Ball was a Squadron military skills weekend based at Yoxter Training Camp on the Mendips, over the weekend 11-12 January 1997, consisting of several varied phases. The first on the Friday evening was Ex Question Mark, a ten round quiz requiring a wide military knowledge. It was apparently rumoured afterward that a knowledge of the complete works of Walt Disney would have helped considerably.

Despite an early start, the Mendip fog got the better of us, needing an anticipated change around of the programme. There was time allocated for both Browning and rifle familiarisation. Some members of the Squadron were squeaky and new. Our NRPS armourer, **Sgt George Williams**, gave them excellent tuition. Before lunch, there was an Orienteering phase around the training area. **Cfns Roberts** and **Whereat**, relative newcomers to the Squadron and orienteering, completed all 11 checkpoints in only 61 mins. It was rumoured that the OC and SSM spent 20 mins trying to find checkpoints 13 & 14 . . . In the afternoon the fog had given way to cloud, and we were able to get some short range shooting in. We were also very grateful for the existence of the pipe range, which during such inclement weather provided us with a brilliant range. Poor **Sgt Williams** couldn't get rid of the youngsters even when the Squadron Smoker (aka SSMs Challenge!) was already underway!

On Sunday we were up early to clean up and return the camp ready for a unit coming in at 9.00am. We were out of camp as soon as we could and ready for the short trip back to the TAC. Here we had a good frank discussion about the Squadron, and what the newcomers/youngsters were looking for from the TA and from the Squadron. Everyone agreed that the weekend was a success and is looking forward to the next one.

5 (QOOH) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Wenlock**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) G. Simpson**

The New Year began with a Squadron NCRS commex in Bicester on a bleak February weekend. The forecasters were predicting gale force winds, snow, rain and anything else that can be found, but worst of all the avid rugby fans were going to miss the battle between the Jocks and the English at Murrayfield. The main activity of the weekend was to practise NCRS det procedures in preparation for a busy year ahead and to shake off the cobwebs that would have undoubtedly sprung up over the Xmas period. Everybody was kept busy under the watchful eyes of **SSgt (Yofs) Debbie Frankham** and the PSI's **SSgt Andy Baird** and **Sgt Robbie Hall**. As a concurrent activity **LCpl Danny** 'I've got another black eye' **Palmer** carried out instruction on erecting the Traffic antenna, and even managed to erect it! Beginners luck!

To add excitement **SSgt Ray Phillips** was in the background wheeling and dealing with people from the local Gliding school but unhappily it never got off the ground. I think a tour of a NCRS trailer wasn't enough bargaining power for a trip in the gliders! As always, our resident chefs **Sgt Les** 'Chelsea for the cup' **Kavanagh** and **Cpl Davie Jarvis-Cleaver**, played blinders in the kitchen serving up their delicacies, but on Saturday afternoon they were overwhelmed with helpers, only to find live coverage of the rugger match being shown. Our resident Scottish mascot **Cpl** 'Gordie' **Shields** wasn't much pleased with the result. One incident that stood out was the theatrical performance by our resident tech **LCpl Steve Brady** on the sighting of six large rats in one of the bunkers that was being used for accommodation. On closer perusal by half the Squadron it was discovered they were only tiny field mice. Anyone with any spare glasses or books on the rodent species, please send to **Steve**, care of 5 Sqn! Despite the fun and frolics a lot was learnt, a lot of cobwebs shaken off, and once again a good weekend was had by all.

57 (CITY & COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj H. Aston**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) P. Packer**

The Squadron has had a quiet although rewarding start to 1997, both recruiting and attendance figures are on the increase, so things look promising for the remainder of the year. Events have consisted mainly of Trade Training and the one Regiment NCRS Exercise (noted below). With regard to changes in appointments **WO2 (SSM) Phil Packer** is now fully entrenched with **WO2 Stan Gane** having relinquished that post still being with us in a training capacity.

Finally a warm welcome home to **Sigs Murrey Stevens** and **Ian Foster** on their return from Bosnia. Both of them had excellent reports and were a credit to the Squadron.

MY FIRST REGIMENTAL EXERCISE
by Sig Victoria Hawkins

Sig Victoria Hawkins

Hullavington Airfield, Ex Farne Deep my first Regiment Exercise Weekend, after leaving the relative security of the recruit training cycle. It was to be tactical so lots of climbing around on landrovers and NCRS trailers trying to get cam netting up was expected. I managed to show it who was the boss, eventually! It was harder than I thought it would be.

My weekend consisted of sitting in the back of an FFR waiting for messages to come through on the radio and sending back replies etc. The first radio-check call was quite daunting, but I think I am going to enjoy it. When I arrived at the TA Centre on the Friday night I had been unsure of what to expect. What would I be doing? Would I be thrown in at the deep end? I have to admit I thoroughly enjoyed myself, I learnt a lot, hands on experience proved very valuable and the other people in my detachment were great, all willing to impart their knowledge to the new boy (so to speak)!

Oh and by the way, escaping a guard duty and the fact that the weather was good helped as well, but I was still pretty tired come Sunday evening but satisfied with my first exercise weekend.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SQUADRON 25TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

In November 1996 the Squadron held its 25th Anniversary Dinner at the Banbury House Hotel. On the night, 96 serving and past members of the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars sat down to a scrumptious meal. Principle guests were **Brig Bob Long**, Secretary Eastern Wessex TAVRA and the Squadron Honorary Colonel, **John Bridgeman**. Due to the sterling efforts of **Nick Nicholls** of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry Old Comrades Association we were honoured to be able to display a large bronze statue of a Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussar Mounted Officer currently the possession of Oxfordshire County Council.

TERRITORIAL DECORATION

Congratulations to **SSgt (YofS) Debbie Frankham** on the award of her TEM.

SSgt Debbie Frankham receiving her TEM from the Honorary Col John Bridgeman

CONGRATULATIONS

LCpl Marcus Spurgeon on his engagement to **Julie** on his R & R leave from Bosnia.

VISIT BY THE MAYOR AND CHARTER TRUSTEES OF BANBURY

On 28 January the Squadron played host to the Mayor and Charter Trustees of Banbury. The visit was combined with the presentation of National Employers Liaison Certificates (ATELC) to three local employers. The evening started with a Squadron Parade and presentation of the TEM to **SSgt Debbie Frankham** and the ATELC Certificates. The Sqn Comd, **Maj Paul Wenlock** then briefed the visitors on the Sqn's Role with an overview of TA Recruiting from **Lt Ruth Empson**. The guests then had the opportunity to see the evening training events. These were followed by a buffet supper in the Squadron Social Club.

The Town Mayor, Cllr Richard Collins and Cpl Chris Minchella

71 Sig Regt (V)
Bexleyheath

CO — **Lt Col R. K. Wilkinson TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) A. S. Dos-Martyres**

The Regiment wishes **WO1 (RSM) Mal Geer** and his family the best for the future after completion of 22 years service. A warm welcome goes out to **WO1 (RSM) Sandy Dos-Martyres** from 11 Sig Regt.

WO1 Sandy Dos-Martyres (Left) takes over the RSMPS post from WO1 Mal Geer

VISIT OF POLISH CHILDREN TO 71 (Y) SIGNAL REGIMENT–BEXLEYHEATH

The CO had been approached by a local charity, asking for the loan of 50 camp beds, to sleep a group of under privileged Polish children, who were visiting Bexleyheath in a couple of weeks. The CO, **Lt Col R.K. Wilkinson** thought it would be a good exercise for the Regiment to host the children for the day. A programme of events as told by **SSgt Boyle** follows:

The Chief Clerk, **WO2 Val Ramsay**, RHQ's clerk **Sue Hooper** and myself **SSgt Andy Boyle**, met the kids at 0830 and took them by bus to 1 RSME, Chatham, where **QMSI Mick Stott** and his PTI's laid on a challenging and thoroughly enjoyable Potted Sports activity. Our RSM, **WO1 Sandy Dos-Martyres** was accompanied by a local reporter who took some photos for the local newspaper. There followed a visit to historic Rochester Castle with lunch at MacDonalds, Stroud, where the staff didn't bat an eyelid at the request of 156 burgers and fries please.

We then returned to Bexleyheath where **WO2 Val Ramsay**, laid on a disco and our barman **Mr Ernie Sevenoaks**, kept the kids supplied with coke and lemonade. At the end there was time for a presentation of a few games to the group, from the Trg Maj, **Maj Andy Johnstone** and a couple of rather fine bottles of Polish Vodka were presented to the Regt from the group.

The day was enjoyed by everyone who took part. Its success was due to the efforts of many. Particular thanks must go to 1 RSME for the use of their gymnasium, **QMSI Stott** and his team, MacDonalds, Stroud, for the free drinks, and to all who donated towards the presentation. Thanks also to Bexley Police Dog Handlers section for the loan of the table tennis/pool tables, and the local council information Press Officer, **Emma Stewart** for coverage of the events. The CO was pleased and wants us to host the Polish children again next year.

Maj Andy Johnstone presents the children with games for evening activities

Sqn Comd — **Maj Simon Palmer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Richard Pieper**

CHANGE OF COMMAND

The Essex Yeomanry Sig Sqn bids farewell to **Maj Jonathan Pyman** and wish him well in his new appointment as a Staff Officer with London District and welcome **Maj Simon Palmer** as the new officer commanding on promotion from Second in Command.

EXERCISE PURPLE DUSTER

As part of Annual Camp this year the Squadron participated in the 2 (NC) Sig Bde Exercise, Ex Purple Duster. Our NCRS dets were deployed in North Yorkshire and the North East Coast. The distances covered and continuous comms made this a most useful and rewarding exercise providing valued experience for newly qualified operators.

The Squadron also provided the control Staff of 71 (Y) Sig Regt ACON. They were based at Warcop and dispatched teams of umpires/enemy to monitor NCRS dets of 32 Sig Regt. The Control Staff were commanded by **Maj Jonathan Pyman**, ably assisted by **Capt Simon Palmer** and the Squadron PSI, **SSgt George Farrar**.

RSM'S PATROL COMPETITION

One of the last acts of **WO1 (RSM) Mal Geer** before retiring was to organise a Regiment Patrol Competition in the Sandhurst Area. It was agreed by all that this was a great test of military training standards and required a good standard of fitness. A team from 882 Sig Tp led by **Lt Michael Wood** came runners up in the March and Shoot phase of the competition and achieved third place overall.

Lt Michael Wood and his Team, who achieved third place in the RSM's Patrol Competition

CROSS COUNTRY

Congratulations to both the Female and Male Teams of 71 Sig Regt (V), for coming first and third respectively in the London District Cross Country Championships, held at Woolwich on Sunday 19 January.

The Ladies Team had a 'storming' race and won the event comfortably. Indeed, each runner beat every other team's opposite number into position places. A special mention must go to **LCpl Donahue** who won the event for the second consecutive year and finished up an amazing 1min 35secs in front of the second placed runner. Even the jet lag and flight back from Australia the previous day did not manage to slow her down.

Both Teams are training hard for the National Cross Country Championships, to be held at Catterick on 15 March 1997. Watch this space . . .

The Ladies Team
(*L-R*): Sigs Gomersall and Wheeler, SSgt Murphy, LCpl Donohue, Cpl Ireland, Sig King

PRESENTATIONS

At a recent ceremony **Col Castles TD DL** (Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex and former CO of 71 (Y) Sig Regt), along with **Brig Brown** (Hon Col and former Comd 2 Sig Bde), presented **Mr Ian Metcalfe** (formerly **SSgt Metcalfe**) with the first Clasp to his Territorial Efficiency Medal. Also **Miss Sharon Burton** (formerly **Sgt Burton**) and **Cpl Nick Wilks'** were presented with The Lord Lieutenant's of Essex Certificates of Meritorious Service.

Col Castles, SSgt Ian Metcalfe, Cpl Nick Wilks, Miss Sharon Burton and Brig Brown (ADC) during the presentation ceremony

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj P. B. Corfield**
SSM **WO2 (RQMS) D. Taylor**

The Squadron following 32 years of Regular and TA service has just dined out **WO2 (SSM) Gribble**. **Peter** will be missed by all who served with him and remembered for his unique way of looking at the challenges the Squadron has to meet. During his time with HQ Sqn he served as SQMS and SSM. Prior to that he held a variety of posts and gained a number of qualifications with 68 (IC&CY) Sqn and the Quartermaster dept at RHQ, but he claims that the only course he remembers was his Ski Instructors course. We have also dined out **WO2 (RQMS) Sue Holmes**. **Sue** has served for 23 years with 265 (KCLY) Sqn and HQ Sqn. **Sue** 'RQ' **Holmes** originally qualified as a Data Telegraphist and over the years has updated her skills to include becoming an HGV driver and passing out on the first female TA Royal Signals Staff Sergeants course. Sue's most recent appointments have been as HQ Sqn and SQMS and then as RQMS on promotion to WO2. The Squadron has also dined out **Maj Brenda Traylen** TD who has relinquished her post as Sqn Comd (following a six month tour of Bosnia), to take on a role at Corsham as a Watchkeeper. **Maj T** joined HQ Sqn in 1990 as Sqn 2IC. She will be remembered for her wonderful sense of humour, her 'Can do. Will do.' approach to any challenge faced by the Squadron and her determination to succeed which even included leading the Squadron team in the Camp Regimental Patrol Race.

We hope that our retiring comrades will keep in touch and would like to warmly welcome **Cpl Jackie Smoker** who has just transferred to HQ from 265 (KCLY), our sister Squadron.

68 INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY SIGNAL SQUADRON–ASPECTS OF BEATTIE'S BOSNIA TOUR 96 BOSNIA A SUMMER TOUR

I went to Bosnia as part of the TA's support for Operation Resolute. I volunteered earlier in the year but had not expected my basic trade skills to be required, so I was very excited when I received my call up papers in late April. During my duties as radio operator and driver around the Brigade HQ, I would do sketches of my comrades and the spectacular country side. It was not much more than a month before I was called to see the Brigadier to be informed that I was to become the Brigade War Artist. My six month tour was a very rich experience where I spent most of the time with the Artillery, Air Corps, Engineers, Mechanised Infantry, (R.G.J. W.F.R.) Ambulance, RMP REME. The Royal Horse Artillery managed to bag me for the longest period being particularly proud of their A.S. 90,'s and of having their portraits drawn!

Bosnia's landscape and populace often seemed to be a film set for two types of picture. Reincarnations of John Mills and Richard Attenborough would often pop round the corner in a tank or appear from under a bush dirty faced and thirsty, doing the old officer/soldier repartee. I was privileged enough to see another side to Bosnia closer at hand than the average soldier. My watercolour paintings and drawings were shown at an exhibition during two weeks in April at the Isle of Dogs in London.

If anyone would like more information on my work then contact the RHQ at my Regiment for further details.

70 (EY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Simon Palmer**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The Essex Yeomanry Sig Sqn bids farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Richard Pieper** who joins RHQ Bexleyheath in his new appointment of Military Training Warrant Officer. We thank him for all his service to the Squadron and wish him well in his appointment. The Squadron welcomes and congratulates **WO2 Paul Humphreys** on his promotion and appointment as our SSM.

COURAGE TROPHY

The Annual Military Skills competition for London District, sponsored by Courage Brewers, took place at Longmoor Training Camp and the surrounding Training Areas. The Squadron entered a team that included **Sig Chris Archer** of 265(KCLY) to represent the Regiment. The team was well led by **Lt Andy Austin** and **Sgt Brian Malyon**. The team came a creditable nineteenth in spite of very stiff competition, from the thirty three teams competing.

EXERCISE MARCH HARE

The Squadron deployed to Bramley Common for Ex March Hare an HF Comms Ex testing the Squadron's ability to deploy as single comms dets operating several nets. The weather was kind to the Squadron and many lessons were learnt by both the experienced operators and those about to sit trade boards. The Exercise was controlled by the Sqn Ops Team of **Maj David Swann**, **Lt Andy Austin** and **WO2 (YofS) Mark Bell** and agreed by all those who participated that it was demanding but worthwhile.

The Squadron Radio Operators relax after Ex March Hare.

265 (KCLY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Malik**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mustoe**

The Squadron welcomes **Sgt Norma Orr** from 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn and says farewell to **Lt Sarah Shelton** who goes to RHQ, and **LCpl Gary Guest** who is off to BATUS in Canada for a year. Brighton's new Troop Leader is **Lt Penny Wood**, who is fresh from the Squadron's recruiting team and her Captain's exams. she hands over in turn to **OCdt Julia Lattaway**. Finally, we welcome back the last of our 'Bosnia Babes' and look forward to making use of their experiences in the field.

At the end of February, **Capt (Tfc) Pam Suddens** took a party from the Squadron to Bavaria for a fortnight's winter training and skiing with 3 Sig Regt. The visit, arranged with the assistance of **WOI (RSM) Frank Evans**, included Nordic skiing, avalanche awareness and snow holes. Participants gained a variety of bronze qualifications in Nordic, downhill and alpine skiing and all want to go back next year.

Winter training with the new PLCE included the annual Sqn Inter Tp contest which was held at Crowborough and pitted both Troops against each other in a battle to find the other's HQ. 884 Tp swiftly pulled into the lead when **LCpl King**'s section stumbled upon their opponents' base early on Saturday morning. The advantage was, however, cancelled by **Sgt Steve Sefer** of 887 who used the confusion to acquire 884's frequency. He was then able to track their every move from then on, proving that, while the best usually win, being devious helps too.

Winter training
Sig Kenny Foxell, Sgt Martin Feather, Sig Bart Dunsieth, Sig John Duran and Sig John Harvey show off their first igloo.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204) BFPO 538

BLACK RATS GO WHITE IN THE POWDER OF THE ALPS EXERCISE RATASTIC DIAMOND

0800, 3 January 1997, six soldiers, loads of kit, accommodation booked and a ski championship to win. Only one problem: the KRH had just written off the PRI minibus that was to be our transport to the glacier at Kaprun, 800km further south. Well thanks to 1 (UK) ADSR taking our kit plus a few lads and **Capt Ayers**' Renault 19, we reached the Alps.

Sigs 'SS' **Smale Saunders** and **Mark Ellis** began to doubt the wisdom of leaving an officer to do all the planning, when the accommodation proved difficult to find. Having parked in numerous Austrian citizens' drives in search of the illusive apartment, we were all surprised, not least **Capt Ayers**, to find a comfortable home for the next 10 days. Having settled in, **LCpl** 'Stu' **Foster**–the team's ski instructor, set about fitting boots and skis. It soon became apparent that the unit was the pauper ski team of the Corps. Much of our equipment was either personal (thanks **Stu**) or from the pooled Adventure Training stores at Dulmen, all of which had seen better days. To make matters worse, on the second day, **Capt Ayers** and **Sig Andy Higgins** were forced to descend early with equipment problems, a broken ski binding and ill-fitting boots respectively. Top crashes and falls were registered by all bar **LCpl Stu Foster**, who only fell whilst racing.

Our late arrival, **SSgt Jon Heaton**, on viewing the apartment was shocked to see a dishwasher and washing machine in the kitchen. Better than his pad house. **Sigs** 'SS' **Smale Saunders** and **Mark Ellis** proved their culinary ability: pizzas or bratwurst and chips.

The racing proved to be an amusing distraction during the second week. Early form suggested that we were contenders for the champion's trophy. Both **Capt Ayers** and **LCpl Foster**, were well up in the seedings. **Sigs Higgins** and **Ellis** were not far behind and **SSgt Heaton** and **Sig** 'SS' were the pick of the novices. Unbelievably, despite the promising start to the championships, the team fell (literally!!) away and dropped out of contention. Even **SSgt Jon Heaton**, until the last race, a screaming certainty for the novice prize, proceeded to have the most hilarious set of disasters on his last run. Amazingly this only just left him out of contention for the novice prize but gained him the 'best fall' prize. The team was kept together by an excellent performance by **LCpl Stu Foster** who won three individual ski prizes. **Sig Mark Ellis** won the prize for the skinniest chicken legs ever seen on a slope. **Sig Andy Higgins** was successful at swallowing a metre of beer on the last night at the Boom Bar. **Capt Ayers**, apart from keeping the motley rabble in line, succeeded to hit his thumb rather than the nail with a hammer whilst playing the Nails game. Finally **Sig** 'SS' **Smale Saunders**, despite his best efforts, was unsuccessful at improving inter-unit liaisons with 2 Sigs.

Part two of the ski odyssey saw four members of the ski team qualify for the Div Ski Championships at Les Contamines. Here the competition was far fiercer and sadly some teams with more Deutsch Marks than spirit sacrificed some of the camaraderie. If the team had felt like paupers at the Corps, the Divs proved to be 50% worse.

The racing got off well with all of the team completing the first few runs. Sadly experience and time on snow began to show and much of the team began to slip down the seedings. **LCpl Foster** proved to be a consistent skier and was rewarded with a place at the Army Championships at St Moritz. Next year he would do even better, if he kept off the lard and beer! **Sig Higgins**, after his new purchase, stood out amongst all of the skiers in his luminous yellow ski suit. **Capt Ayers** had a torrid 12 hours during which he pranged his car during a snow storm, whilst collecting the Sqn Comd from the train station and then fell in a white-out, dislocating his shoulder. Who said that we were on holiday? Finally **Sig Ellis**, so wonderfully inconsistent on the slopes, was consistently voted chef of the tour.

OPFOR–EXERCISE PRAIRIE EAGLE

Ex Prairie Eagle was a Battle Group size exercise designed for the KRH Battle Group. This comprised of the KRH, augmented by a company of the Coldstream Guards.

Against this formidable force, 204 Sabre Sqn fielded a force of 35 men on six 432's, four landrovers, one GS rover and two motor bikes. The exercise area used was the Drawsko Pomorski training area in Poland. For the drivers and commanders of the FFR's and the GS rovers this amounted to a mammoth road move of around 36 hours. Whereas for the A vehicles the journey was somewhat easier, with the vehicles being low-loaded to a train station and then carried to Poland, complete with crews. By the time that the vehicles arrived everyone was exhausted. However, despite a few close shaves there were no accidents and everyone arrived safely.

On the morning of the Friday 14 March, the exercise started in earnest, with the OPFOR HQ moving into a non tactical admin area, from where all operations were conducted, whilst the Battle Group underwent battle preparation. People soon got into the swing of things and became very enthusiastic about the task set before us. **Cpl Craig Elsdon** and some budding 'mobility troopers' ripped apart the GS rover, attached a cammnet and mounted a GPMG onto the rollbar. From that point on the rover became affectionately known as the 'TUM' and deployed on as many tasks as physically possible. The 432's were cammed in a similar manner and by the Friday evening we were ready for our first task. This was to be a recce patrol to show a presence on the ground. It was a fairly routine patrol however and unfortunately nothing significant happened. The following day **Cpl Jim Mason** then took delivery of more ammunition than was fired in the Gulf War and things really started to warm up. The men got kitted out and bombed up with bullets and pyro and that day there were two fighting recce patrols. After the first 3-4 days low intensity phase people really began to warm to their task. One person of particular note was **Sig** 'Paddy' 'Mad Dog' **Grills**, who handed in his SA80 and took the GPMG and as many rounds as he could physically carry whenever he could. Also of note were the Sqn tank busters **Cpls** 'Get Some!' **Christie** and **Craig** 'This fun Gaz?' **Elsdon**. They were seldom seen, without a box of thunderflashes and a GPMG each.

Once the high intensity phase came our first task was to defend a hill-top and a wooded location. This was no mean feat in itself. Although the Battle Group was very slow to react during the build up phase, the lessons were learnt well and a noticeable improvement was seen. In fact on the second day when the KRH attacked, they were upon us before we had even reacted. On the third and fourth days of the high intensity phase we dug into a couple of positions and did our best to defend against a larger, better equipped and more experienced force than us.

Also during this phase several recce patrols were sent out, in particular **Cpl** 'Storeman Norman' **Mason**, who when captured by the KRH's RSM had a fully marked map and CEI in his pocket and thus sold out the rest of the patrols for that night. Sadly all good things must come to an end and the Coldstream Guards left us lying, beeping, on the barren Polish plain for the last time on the morning of 25 March. At the end of the exercise the KRH, the Coldstream Guards and CAFTG were overly impressed by our efforts and determination to provide them with a worthwhile enemy. I am happy to say that although OPFOR were totally annihilated by a superior force, they were buried with full military honours and returned home happy and contented, to look forward to a long weekend.

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite the continuous flow of exercises over the past few months the Squadron has also been successful on the sports field. In particular the Squadron Rugby and Football teams:

FOOTBALL

The Football teams' road to Army Cup glory began in September 1996, unfortunately it was a bye into the quarterfinals. However, our opponents were then the Cup favourites, 12 Sp Regt RLC.

In a hard fought game the two teams were level after 90mins and despite a further 30mins nothing could separate the two teams. In the resultant penalties both teams scored the first four penalties, however, 12 Sp Regt missed their fifth. It was then up to **Cpl Andy MacMullen** to take the last penalty for the Squadron. Despite encouragement such as; Score this and we've won and, miss this and it will cost you a crate, the penalty was converted. The Squadron were in the semi-finals.

The Squadron then had a long wait before they found out who their next opponents were. Eventually the Cup Secretary informed the RSM, **WO1 Evans** that we had qualified for the final due to a team being disqualified (Sorry about that 7 Bde!). However, it had to be played within seven days. Due to Exercise commitments the team had only one training session together and even that was without half the team. **Sgt Al Duffus** was tasked with getting the team in camp ready, and according to **Sig Steve Bradbury** it was more like an SAS Selection course than the light training it was meant to be.

Despite being underdogs the teams' confidence was high. This confidence was further boosted after only eight minutes when **Sig Kev Liddle** latched on to a long pass from **Cpl Jim Mason**, to open the scoring. However, that only shocked 14 SP Regt into action and they quickly scored three goals and by half time they were in control of the game. The second half saw a Squadron revival, however possession and pressure could not be converted into goals. The game was eventually ended as a contest when 14 SP Regt broke away and scored a fourth goal. The team were disappointed having been so close to emulating the Squadron Rugby team, however they are now looking forward to finishing in a respectable place in the league.

RUGBY

Wednesday 4 December was a triumphant day for the Squadron as they returned victorious from the BA(G) Minor Units Rugby finals. This is the first time since 1972 one of the Bde Sig Sqns has won this title and so it was fitting that the CO 1 Sig Bde, **Brig J. N. Shaw MBE** was guest of honour and presented the winners' trophy.

The final was against BMH Rinteln and held on neutral territory in Gutersloh. The opposition had a strong reputation and certainly played with determination. However, the training by coach **Sgt Stu Leadbeater** and team Captain **YofS Steve Firth** paid off with a hard earned 25–3 result. First to put the Squadron on the scoreboard with a try just before half time was the Bde DCOS, **Maj Simon Marr**. In the second half the lead was extended by further tries from **LCpl Si Launder** and **RQMS Vince** 'What a gift of a try' **McNaught**. **LCpl** 'Woody' **Wooldland**, who also added a penalty to his tally, successfully converted all these.

The team earned their place in the final by beating 14 Topo Sqn (RE) 24–7 and 3 AFA 19–12 in the semi and quarterfinals. Despite this good performance the Squadron could not repeat their efforts and were unfortunately beaten in the UK semi-finals, going down to a well coached side from 29 Regt RLC.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!

COPY MUST BE RECEIVED SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE PUBLICATION DATE

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) BFPO 30

HELLOS AND FAREWELLS

The Squadron welcomes **Capt Julius Caesar**, who joins us as the new Ops Officer following the departure of **Capt Fred Hargreaves**. **RSM Kev Fitzpatrick** and **Debbie** left for Bulford last December following a memorable dining out in the Sergeants' Mess. **Sig Alston** gave us a 'lorra laughs' and the Officers gave a 'lorra port!' Good luck and have a happy tour with 3 (UK) Div. Meanwhile, we welcome **RSM Phil Atkinson** and family to Hohne; he arrived just in time to do Christmas duty. As usual, the Christmas social scene was hectic but was highlighted by the Squadron 'Bad Taste' Christmas Party organised by **Cpl Dave Langridge**. **Sig Pink** was the fancy dress winner after donning a few items from his wardrobe. Fortunately, the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Keith Mannings**, was kind enough to leave a couple of prizes for the rest of the Squadron to win on the raffle.

SUPPORT TROOP

There have been a few changes in Support Tp. First of all we say a fond farewell to **Sgt Martin Gear** on completion of 22 years service and goodbye to **Sig** 'Jacko' **Jackson** and his wife **Nicki** as they leave for Herford. Hellos go to **Sgt English** (The Fat Controller) who is constantly stating, 'It's my train set!', to **Sig** 'Blodwin' **Davies** and a welcome return for **Sgt** 'Jock' **Kenny** and his family. Sqn MT sees the arrival of **Sgt** 'Barney' **Barnard** and family.

ALPHA AND BRAVO TROOP

The two Troops have seen a few farewells over the last few weeks. 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt seem to have done rather well out of us with **Cpl Pete Gibbons** and **LCpl Matt Kutzner** off to Canada and the Falklands, then there's **LCpl Dean Rawlings** who's going to 30 Sig Regt all of them are promoted on posting. We wish **Cpl Ian Galloway** and his wife, **Sue**, all the best in Northern Ireland with 15 Sig Regt, **LCpl Lee Benson** with 8 Inf Bde. **Sgt Martin Allwork** is off to 7 Sig Regt and **Sgt** 'Taff' **Phillips** is going to Blandford. **LCpls Steve Girling** and **Brian Butters** and **Sigs Raf Sorribas** and **Carl Harris** leave us for the delights of Civvy Street. Congratulations to **Cpl Adam Harvey** who arrived in December and to his wife, **Wendy**, who promptly gave birth to a son.

ARMY MINOR UNIT FINALS
NOVICE GRADE 3 TEAM BOXING CHAMPIONS

The Squadron boxing team and three mini buses worth of supporters made their way to Aldershot for the successful boxing finals against 216 Para Sig Sqn. The team were led by **SSgt Si Murray** and the rest of his training team consisting of **LCpl Steve Girling** and **LCpl** 'Tommo' **Thomas**.

The first bout was an exhibition fight where **LCpl John Ford** had the decision go against him. Team Captain, **Cpl Tony Caulfield**, fought an impressive fight with his victory winning him £100 for the best boxer on the night. **Sig** 'Gaza' **Woolley** was a 'man possessed' and beat a tough opponent, as did **LCpl** 'Titch The Tasmanian Devil' **Meakin** stopping his opponent in the first round. **LCpl Carl Harris** was also successful and had his bout stopped by the referee giving us the Championship with three bouts to go. In the final three, **Sig Dave Wheeler** was stopped by a very strong boxer whilst **Sig Chris** 'you've got to be happy with that' **Moore** dug deep to win by a majority verdict. **Sgt** 'Naz' **Yafai** fought a hard fight but the decision went the other way. The final score was 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn 5–216 Para Sig Sqn 2. The conduct of all boxers was outstanding–thanks to **Capt Fred Payet** and 216 Para Sig Sqn for their hospitality.

Well done **Cpl Neil Pollitt**–British SkiBiking Champion for the second year running, and now into the World Championship. The Squadron Team, which he is captaining, is currently competing in the Army championship in St Moritz. Those who say his career is going rapidly downhill are just jealous.

LCpl Mick Hatton captained the volleyball team in the Hohne Garrison Championships and managed to come away as Minor Unit Champions (we were the only minor unit!). **Sgt** 'Fish' **Ellams** ran a successful Squadron swimming competition that was won by the Ops/ES team.

WO2 (YofS) Pardews' cross-country team continues to do well. The Team won the Hohne Garrison Minor Unit title. In the 1 Div League, the Minor Unit title will go to either 2AFA or ourselves.

The football team improves with every game. **2Lt Carter** and 'the Yeoman' were on the score sheet in the 2–1 win over 16 Tk Tpt Sqn in the quarter finals of the 1Div Minor Unit Cup. In the semi-finals against 12Bty, 12 Regt RA, in Sennelager, **Sig Knights'** first half 'screamer' and **Sig Zimmermans'** second half goal were enough to take us through to the final, hopefully before deployment. After four gruelling 40 minute games, the Team would have won the Garrison Football Competition in Fallingbostel on goal difference but came second on goals scored!

BOSNIA TRAINING

The lead up to Op Lodestar has been hectic and has meant that Sennelager Training Centre has become our second home. The ATD/live firing package at Haltern went smoothly with the exception of **Sgt McGiffens'** misuse of the civilian range staff on APWT, **2Lt Carter** getting lost on a BFT and **SSgt Roome** only being 'an innocent spectator' to the burning down of a range hut on his range.

The Military Skills Package at Sennelager was uneventful although enjoyable. However, **Sig Gwinnel**, without any thought to his own safety, took the full impact of a thunderflash to protect the rest of his fire team during a night shoot. This act of bravery has meant that he has only just been able to sit down again. It was also brave of **2Lt Woodbridge** to kindly volunteer to take on an Alsation 'war dog' during a presentation. Although she wore the protective clothing, bite marks were still evident!

Ex Green Star, in Sennelager, provided us with an ideal opportunity to complete some driver training. **SSgt Ferris** and **LCpl Rawlings** managed to get seven Squadron personnel their coveted H-licence.

Sig White and SSgt Ferris
displaying the amphibious capabilities of a FV 432

Highlights of the training were **Sigs White** and **Danter** learning the meaning of a 'bow wave' and **LCpl MacGillivray** attempting to get his 432 airborne. Meanwhile, **Sig Doughty**, who thought he might get his head down whilst the rest of the Squadron were waking up, was shown the error of his ways by doing a grand tour of the camp ably led by **Cpl Caulfield**. The two of them left an alcoholic vapour trail wherever they went. It was such a shame that **Cpl Caulfield** lost his voice for a couple of days. It was also rumoured that a couple of local frauleins had fallen for Squadron pin-ups, **Sig** 'Harold' **Broderick** and **Sig Zimmerman**. **Sig Zimmerman** was later admitted into hospital with a throat infection.

A BBGT exercise, in Sennelager, marked the end of our Bosnia training and we look forward to vaccinations, dental checks, documentation, painting SFOR on vehicles and finally to deployment to relieve 20 Bde in Banja Luka.

LCpls Swayne, MacGillivray and Rawlings, Sigs Moore, Danter, Broderick and White with SSgt Ferris

19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) Catterick

Sqn Comd **Maj Nick Pope**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Dave Showell**

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS AND ALL THAT!

The year started with an almighty upheaval and a change in OCs. On his way to 'developing' thoughts at Blandford is **Maj Paul Towers**. Taking over the hot seat is **Maj Nick Pope**. Due to unforeseen arrangements the full handover programme of visits, briefings and inspections was curtailed somewhat to the obligatory exchange of the unit symbol–a pint! Pictured outside the OCs office are the drinking (sorry, driving) force in the Squadron (L-R) **RQMS John Gibson**, **Maj Nick Pope**, **FofS Mark Edwards**, **RSM Dave Showell**, **Maj Paul Towers** and **YofS Keith Emmerson**.

Also pictured with the two OCs at the ceremony of 'The Handing Over of the 103 3' is the QM with what must surely be the biggest cap badge in the Corps!

A final congratulations to **Paul**, for a successful tenure, and best wishes to you, **Sue** and the family in the future. Welcome also to **Nick** and **Joanna**.

MR JACK MORRIS

On Saturday 21 December 1996 **WO1 (RSM) Dave Showell**, on behalf of the Corps Sgt's Mess, presented **Mr Jack Morris** with a Christmas Hamper. (Pictured below)

Many of the 'old and bold' will remember **Jack** as the Sgt's Mess Manager of 11 Sig Regt, also known as the HQ Sergeants' Mess Royal Signals, between 1967-1978. In November 1978 Jack was dined out of the Sgt's Mess, on his retirement, and was graciously awarded Honorary Life Membership of the HQ Sergeants' Mess Royal Signals.

Jack is now residing in the St John of God Hospital Scorton, near Richmond, and I can report that he is in good health and still has a keen sense of humour. I am sure that he would be delighted to hear from many of his old friends who passed through the Sgt's Mess during his time as Mess Manager. He can be contacted on 01748 824847.

SUPPORT TROOP

Prior to block leave and despite the scepticism that the holiday was a rumour started by the QM the Troop, in anticipation of time off, celebrated with the traditional Rugby football match and numerous social occasions. The Squadron Christmas dinner will be fondly remembered as the Admin Officer's nightmare. **Maj Ron Hails** is to be congratulated on his choice of alcoholic beverage. However, all members of Support Tp would like to remind him that when under 50 you can drink beer that has an alcoholic strength that exceeds 2%. As usual the MT were well represented at all events and **Sgt** 'Sid' **Davies**, a Corps rugby player, excelled himself both on the field of play and at the Christmas bash. In fact he gained a new nickname with his outstanding performance of line dancing, whilst under the influence and will fondly be remembered from this day as 'Yee Ha!' **Davies**.

On a recent visit to Bde HQ **WO2 (RQMS) John Gibson**, after waiting five minutes to gain entrance, decided that enough was enough and rang the bell. Unfortunately for him he chose the attack alarm and quickly got the undivided attention of the Garrison Sergeant Major who, on rushing out to investigate, forgot that the door was self-locking. **John** now realises that the GSM speaks fluent French and that Garrison duties are not that difficult, just very time consuming.

After an extremely busy year the backbone of the Squadron, those who work at least five days a week, departed on leave. The frequently asked questions 'Would it really happen?' and 'Are we really getting time off?' were overpowered by the sound of revving engines and squealing tyres as individuals departed from Gaza Barracks. Since returning from their well earned leave the Troop has moved up a gear and is working flat out to impress the new Sqn Comd and prepare for the forthcoming exercise season and deployment on Op Lodestar. The 1997 forecast of events continues to fill up at a rate that exceeds belief and the question at the end of everyone's tongue is now, 'Can we really do all of that in one year?' Life is hectic in this busy Northern Outpost but the soldiers of all arms belonging to this Troop would like to welcome all newcomers and thank all those people that have departed for their friendship and wish them well for the future.

ALPHA TROOP

The Troop ended an eventful year with the legendary Alpha Tp Christmas Party that was held at CJs (part of the Scorpion 'leisure' complex). The evening was a complete success and thanks must go to **LCpl Nick Ions** and **Sig** 'Bob' **Duckering** for organising a great night. Extended appreciation to the OC, **Maj Paul Towers**, for limiting himself to one rendition on the Karaoke! Rumour has it that Take That will reform next year with a new member.

In January the Troop held a formal dinner night. It's alleged aim was to provide the Troop JNCO's and Signallers the opportunity to be on the receiving end of a formal dinner and not just an excuse for **Lt Paul Griffiths** and **SSgt Gaz Steel** to sit on the top table and dish out extras! From the complaints at PT the following day the evening was judged a great success and many thanks to **Sgt Lenny Martin** for organising it.

A few hellos and goodbyes. Farewell and the best of luck to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Jones** and **Lesley** who go to 14 Sig Regt, **LCpl Dougie Icke** goes to 280 Sig Sqn and to **Sig** (now LCpl) **Lee James** off to 1 ADSR. Hello to **Cpls Phil Howes** and **Ian Tait**, also **LCpl Alex Alexander**. We hope you enjoy your time with the Troop.

BRAVO TROOP

Ex Bravo Leader was an opportunity for most of the Troop to get out of the garages for a few days or so we thought. An exercise to develop and test 'leadership, character, command and control' **Lt Peden** told us. What waited ahead of us we did not know. For four cold days in December we were billeted at RNAS Yeovilton. After travelling down and prepping our kit and propping up the bar, we had a good night's sleep, ready to spring into action the following morning.

Day one found us at the Dorset Fire Brigade Training Centre at Westmoors where we underwent a morning of classroom instruction on firefighting. After lunch this, and some NCOs, were thoroughly put to the test during a practical exercise on the purpose built 'firepan'–an assortment of fuelled mock-up installations such as packed fuel, a DAF truck and a helicopter. **Cpls Fardy** and **Davis** were first to take on the roles of 'Sicknote' and 'Bayleaf' and what a fine job they did too. Unflustered (well, not much!) by the raging fire, they calmly undertook the onerous task of commanding Bluewatch, Bravo Tp, on their first 'shout'. Starting with the small fires, we soon moved up the scale of devastation culminating with a raging inferno from a gas tower installation which took the whole Tp over 20 minutes to get under control.

What do you mean, our hose is plugged to a UBRE?

A spare hour or two was spent wandering around the Tank Museum at Bovington before returning to Yeovilton where we were fortunate enough to be invited to HMS Heron's Christmas function. Remembering, as always, that we are ambassadors for the Corps, we conducted ourselves in true R Signals style–great food, great entertainment and great beer. No sooner did our heads hit the pillow, than the next day was upon us and the event that we had all been looking forward to–the 'Heli-abseil'. With initial training on a 35ft practise tower, we began to sort the wheat from the chaff. The prize for the longest delaying tactic went to **Sig** 'Dicko' **Dickinson**. In the end 16 out of 21 plucked up the courage to throw themselves out of a Sea King helicopter hovering at 180ft. As scary as it was the loadie had a difficult time trying to stop us going up for another go. Mention must go to **Cpl** 'Taff' 'As long as I don't look down I'll be all right' **Mailaney**, **Sig Mary** 'It's quite high, isn't it Sir' **Anderson**, and **Cpl Dave** 'No problem' **Allen** whose rate of descent was weight-assisted.

Where's the safety rope?

Unfortunately a higher priority unit took the final day's activity–the 'Heli-dunker', at the Underwater Escape Training Unit from us. A huge sigh of relief went round the Troop as **Lt Peden** scowled at this news. All in all it was an excellent week, when the Troop learnt a lot about themselves and each other. Many thanks go to **Cpl Allen** for providing an exercise with a difference. What sort of swan will they have for us next . . .?

EXERCISE RED TRICORN/EXERCISE FIRST FORAY

Sunday 2 February 1997 duly arrived with the Squadron deploying to Knook Camp, Salisbury Plain to take part in Ex Red Tricorn and Ex First Foray. Each of one week's duration, they ended up being like chalk and cheese.

Although predominantly a 3 DSR driven exercise, Ex Red Tricorn was used for Squadron level training, utilising the Ptarmigan deployed on the Plain. It was a rare opportunity for everyone to train in their primary role and with a lot of people new to the job it provided an ideal opportunity to 'blood' them into life as a R Signals soldier in 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Although lasting only three days the radio troops managed to get in more moves than the average Russian chess player, and in half the time! Pause for thought for the rolling replen boys who, at one stage, did 5 replens in 12 hours. Additional duties for the complex sentry included trying to spot the soldiers on their Close Target Recce course. It's amazing how quickly an hour goes when someone gives you a thermal sight and mini flares. As most of the Squadron rapidly became zombies with the lack of sleep, one man remained fresh and alert, **Sgt Rob Enderby**. He puts it down to extremely good admin learnt with 3 Cdo Bde but, as he would find out later, it doesn't matter how fresh (or tired) you are, when you fall into a mud bath your teddy goes flying too!

The Squadron was honoured with a flying visit by the SOinC (A) and Corps RSM who saw the full Bde Main and Lt HQs in operation and had the opportunity to speak with all ranks in their armoured vehicles. An energy sapping 72 hours soon (?) came to an end and the techs and linemen rushed off to Warminster to build the Div Alt HQ and Excon for Ex First Foray.

Ex First Foray proved a similarly tiring experience with the Squadron manning the radio rooms, and Excon syscon and ATACS terminal for the exercise. With some Squadron members sloping back to Catterick to construct shelving, those who remained witnessed a real comms experience. The conversation of the week between 3 DSR Regt YofS and **Sgt Enderby**, a radio op, went as follows:

YofS 'The switch 083 is broken'
Sgt E 'Switch . . .? Is that the one on your kettle?'
YofS 'What trade are you? Don't you know anything about Ptarmigan?'
Sgt E 'A Radio Op, and that's a bird isn't it, Sir?'
YofS 'Please tell me there is somebody else there and you are not in charge of the Comms Ops, EXCON and Real Comms of a Div level exercise!'

EXERCISE GRAND PRIX II
by Sig Atkinson and **Sig Banks**

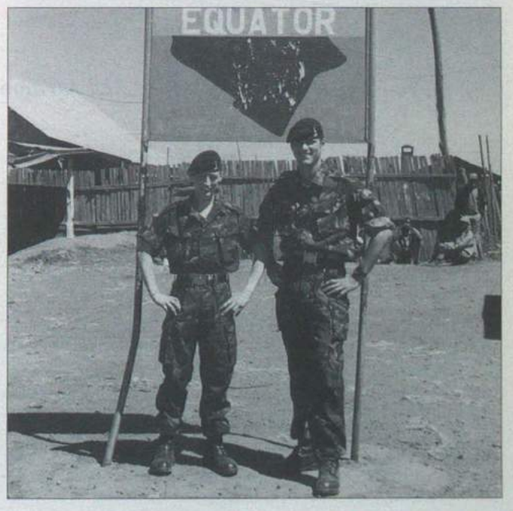
Just before the Christmas grant period the offer of a lifetime was offered! How about taking a six week holiday in Kenya? Sounds great, but what's the catch? Keen to volunteer for just about anything we put our names down without expectation. As soon as New Year had been celebrated, and losing some of the grant, we departed for Kenya with the lst Battalion, The Royal Scots.

Attached to the Signals Platoon we assisted in establishing and maintaining HF communications from the radio room in Nanyuki to the out station detachments at Ol Pejeta, Impala Farm, Lake Navashsia and Solso ranch. Thankfully there were no major problems and comms ran smoothly throughout the exercise leaving plenty of time for R & R. In addition to the comms there were plenty of opportunities to tour around the surrounding countryside which we always took advantage of. The range of different types of wildlife was fantastic, every animal you can see in a zoo in their natural environment.

During the six weeks there we also participated in some of the numerous adventure-training packages on offer. These included white water rafting, paragliding, a camel safari and horse riding.

We both agreed that the camel safari was the best, we felt strangely at one with nature with the ride being about as comfortable as one of the Sqns' armoured vehicles.

There was a little free time during all the arduous adventure training, so we spent it visiting the equator and shopping in Nanyuki for souvenirs. Haggling became second nature to us in the shops when buying anything, a new experience to us, but one that we apparently became experts at. By the end of the shopping trip all we had was a little bag of junk and very little money! We did, however, cheer ourselves up and life seemed rosy again after a quick dip in the Sportsmans Arms Hotel pool!



We advise anyone with the opportunity to take part in an exercise like this to grab it with both hands. The opportunity to serve with an infantry battalion exercising in Africa opened our eyes to the wider Army and the chance to explore the country is not one to be missed.

EXERCISE PANTHER'S PAGODA–NATO UNIT OET 17/18 MARCH 1997

The NATO Operational Evaluation Test (OET) is a standard inspection designed to assess the readiness of a unit. Throughout the training year all of 19 Mech Bdes' manoeuvre units and its Sig Sqn have been subjected to an OET.

The Bde staff conducted assessment was with external validation by a NATO representative. **Lt Col Tappee** of the German Army performed this task for the Sig Sqn. R Signals representation was in the form of the Ops Offr and Tech Adjt from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

DON'T PANIC!

On the 7 March 1997 the OET was initiated with a warning order–'The Squadron is to be ready to deploy to South Korea in 10 days.'

The hierarchy soon found that this apparently simple statement creates enough work to fill a month, let alone a week. So we set to the tasks in hand. First things first put the kettle on. Then a short brain storming session by the head sheds identified the key tasks. As the OET is also an inspection the action points were split between reality and notional planning:

Real Tasks to Complete–Produce Inspection Documents including

Manning Summary	including deficiencies and Recall Plan
Training Summary	Individual (ATDS, trade skills)
	Collective (ops and exercises)
Logistics Concerns	Additional Vehicle Requirement
	Special to Theatre Equipment
	Reports and Returns System
	Mission Essential Equipment Summary
	Unit Equipment Care Directive
	BERR
	Servicing Schedules
	Supporting Reports (eg: LSAI, PRE, RSIT)

Deploy Sqn assets to be tested on procedures including
- Replenishment and Casevac
- Cam and concealment
- Defence–ground, air and NBC

Notional Tasks Identified
- Recall unit personnel and request additional manpower
- Plan for Air and Sea Movement of Sqn manpower, vehicles and equipment to S Korea
- Vaccinations, Dental Inspections and Administration of all personnel
- Deployment order including In Country Brief
- Administration order
- Movement Order
- Training Programme.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

With the size of the task now identified, preparations commenced. Paperwork flew here and there, lap-tops worked into the early hours of the morning; everything else took second place. Ten days after receipt of the warning order judgment day came.

A brief on the 'real' and 'notional' tasks by the OC, 2IC and QM during an hour long presentation to **Brig Duncan** (Comd 19 Mech Bde) and **Lt Col Tappee** summarised the enormous amount of paperwork that had been produced by all unit members in the preceding 10 days. Concurrently inspections and audits by Bde staff officers of unit departments were conducted. By the time the fine tooth combs had been put away the Squadron was ready to be tested as a deployed unit (at war establishment for once!). This amounted to examining unit actions from the initial location recce by the 2IC, to the Tp Comd recce and replenishment of the Troop, to occupation, setting up and operation of the HQ including defence and sentries. This completed, the valiant soldiers repelled conventional highly motivated ground forces and fought the perils of an NBC attack, treating casualties as they fell. By the time 'Endex' was called not one stone in the Squadrons' SOPs had been left unturned. After a curry lunch in the field, during which the 2IC and **Sgt Martin** were seen to arrive (great timing!), all assets recovered to Gaza Barracks.

The Units performance report was received within 48hrs of 'Endex'. Excellent scores all round, although a B grade awarded due to deficiencies in NCO and OR manning (not much anyone could do about that!). There was a lot gained individually and collectively from the conduct of the OET. In addition to the external validation of SOPs adopted by the soldiers in the field it provided an assurance for the new OC that the Squadron is truly able to meet its readiness state of 10 days.

SPORTS

During the traditional Officers, WOs and SNCOs versus Juniors sports the 'management' had convincing wins at Rugby Union Football and Basketball. Who said experience counts for nothing. Oh well, better luck next sport.

HOCKEY

With the arrival of **Sgt** 'Wilf' **Wilford** the unit hockey team has risen from the ashes. A fledgling team entered the 2 Div League and Cup competitions and is achieving some success. A lack of opposition meant an automatic route to the 2 Div Minor Unit final against 15 Fd Wksps REME at Catterick on the 22 January 1997. Guaranteed a medal, and against a well established team, the final was a close match that was fought mainly in the Squadron's half of the pitch. In goal **LCpl Steve Birchall** performed miracle after miracle to keep the REME attack at bay and the back four were run ragged as summarised by **Sgt** 'I can't hack all this running' **Martin**. Similarly the midfield were in the thick of things, some more than others as **WO2 (YofS) Keith** 'Where's my Filofax' **Emmerson** found himself listening to a one way conversation with the referee after an innocuous challenge! Although eventually coming second best the team is improving with every game.

A special thanks goes to **Maj Ron Hails** for providing unit funds to purchase a new kit and sticks. Coincidentally the new OC, **Maj Nick Pope**, has been known to play hockey and in his debut match, against QRH, he witnessed the team's first league win, a convincing 1-0.

RUGBY

The Squadron Rugby Team, the Panthers RFC, got off to a flying start in 1997 with an impressive win over our arch rivals and camp co-residents, 24 Armd Fd Amb. This was swiftly followed by a series of astounding victories over the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick and 9 Regt AAC. In the 19 Mech Bde 7-a-side tournament we fought our way through to the final but were unlucky enough to face defeat at the hands of our medic rivals.

In the 2 Div Challenge Cup we had the misfortune to be drawn against the mighty 2 Sig Regt in the first round. Although the score was high, the Panthers played some of their best rugby this season, and 2 Sigs knew they had been in a game and noted our true potential. ,

Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Sid' **Davies** and **Sig** 'Stretch' **Watts** on representing the Corps, and farewell to **Cpls** 'Taff' **Jones** and **Roddy Atkinson** REME, who depart to 14 Sig Regt and 1 ADSR respectively. A mention must also go to **Cpl Shaun** 'Big Cream Puff' **Fardy** for all his hard work in organising the Panthers' games. We relish the anticipated success this year.

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210) Colchester

Sqn Comd	**Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) G. C. Pocock**

GENERAL

Since Red Tricorn in February the Squadron has been very busy. With a quick week to turn the vehicles round we were off to BBGT (N) to watch the Brigade Staff being put through their paces. This turned out to be huge fun, especially since the weather seemed bent on blowing everything away. In the space of just three hours we saw hail, sleet, bright sunshine, snow (BIG SNOW), gale force winds and monsoon style rain. Alpha Tp (with HQ in the field) had a great time, though were cheered by watching the staff watching all their careful preparation turn to papier-mâché. The only other item of note was the road move home. Before he even left camp, **Cpl Gaz Topps** managed to sink his ERV axle deep in mud. Even with 4 recoveries in total, the LAD had their work cut out for them, getting assistance from B Tp's 'knights of the road' **SSgt Kev Shelmerdine** and **Capt Dave Worden** who had to rescue the Yeoman when he ran out of fuel–top move! For that he was demoted to Brew Boy by the OC–see photo for proof.

Yeoman Monty Montgomery is demoted to Brew Boy

With a week in barracks to turn the vehicles around and zero all the weapons, we were ready for our ATD week in ALTCAR. However, before we deployed we had the little subject of a Squadron Smoker to sort out. With some exceptional talent, humour and acting ability it was an excellent night, though all of it is unrepeatable–well, apart from **Cpl Dan Benson** dressed as Cilla Black, we hope that will never be repeated!

ALTCAR training camp provided the Squadron with the chance for everybody to do all the ATD's in a succinct package. The ranges were valuable, and the NBC was amusing–especially for those whose respirators didn't fit correctly. **SSgt Jim Alger** took great pleasure in covering everyone with Fullers Earth and gassing them properly. The APWT didn't prove too much of a problem for most people, and the OC managed the top score (with no 'career-enhancing' marking by the RCO either!) and wanted to know why he couldn't have had a SUSAT before!

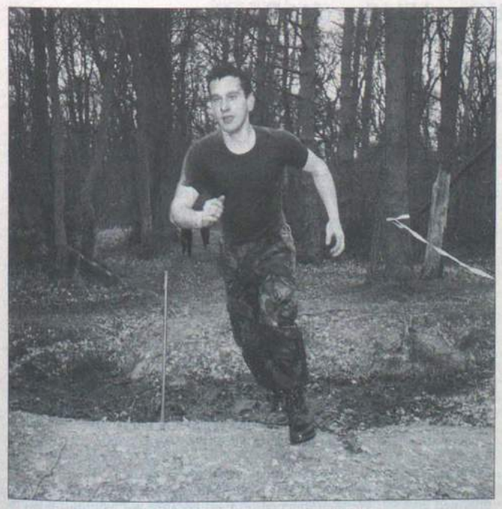
With riveting lectures on LOAC and R to I, ably assisted by penetrating questions from **Cpl Guido Guiddens**, the only thing to top it all off was the 'arrest and restraint' package put on by the Dangerous Brothers–**Cpl Guiddens** and **Cpl O'Brien**. They even managed to restrain **Sig** 'Stretch' **Stevens** who seems to have no feeling in any of his extremities–or if he did have he hasn't any more! No limbs were broken, though they tried very hard!

With another week in barracks–including various SORLS assistance and inspections, it was a relief that only a small deployment was required for Ex Gryphon's Fire. Only about 30 people deployed in the end to support 19 Regt RA in their field firing practices. Still, its not far to Otterburn from Colchester is it!!!??!!! All in all the Squadron has spent only three weeks in barracks since January, so after a well deserved Easter Leave we will need a bit of time in barracks to get ready for the rest of the year.

BRAVO TROOP–SIGGY COMPETITION

Bravo Tp managed to squeeze a Best Siggy Competition into all the other things that have been happening since January. On a bright and sunny Thursday morning the day began with a Barrack Dress inspection and individual drill inspection by the RSM. After they had thawed out it was into combats to receive orders and a march out to the local training area, Friday Woods, for a few little tests. The first of these was dealing with **Sig Tattersall** on a first aid stand. He wouldn't stop screaming (which makes a change from his normal whinging!) and needed a bit of attention for a nasty cut. Having been saved with varying degrees of success by all the Siggies in turn, it was off to the next stand for a spot of map reading. With some of the scores it was a wonder some people even found their way there in the first place. **Capt Worden** then took a gentle bergen tab to the next stand, and almost managed to lose eight of the Siggies in the process. The driving test provided much amusement for all as they took turns in reversing a trailer over a course. **Sigs Fletcher** and **Hopgood** were outstandingly slow, and **Sig** 'Stretch' **Stevens** man-handled the trailer over the course in record time–small bloke that he is!

After a small Military Knowledge test that proved many people probably shouldn't be in the military and certainly have no knowledge, they moved off to the NBC stand where **SSgt** 'NBC Pervert' **Shelmerdine** and his little helpers put them through their paces on all the basic drills. Just to finish them off there was a written test in 3 ROMEO on the orders they had received that morning. To top off the day **LCpl** 'Sadist' **Latham** came up with a nice little river and hill run–see photo–that made everyone's day! The tired and wet Siggies were soon laughing after a can of beer and the results were read out. Well done to **Sig Tony** 'Golden Boy' **Richardson**, who was close pushed by **Sig Sean McKay** and **Sig Barry Hopgood** in second and third places.



Sig Chapman on the river and hill run

Bravo Troop Siggies after the competition

SPORT

With little time in Barracks there has not been much sport played over the past months. However, the Football team played a blinder against the REME Sp Sqn of 36 Regt RE, winning 3-0 with goals from **Cpl O'Brien** (2) and **Sig Foster**. They now go forward to the final of our Minor Units Divisional area.

Well done to the Squash team (**WO2 RQMS Daryl Skimmings**, **Sgt McKenna**, **Cpl Sean Kay**, **Capt David Entiknap**, and **Flt Lt Tony Walker**) who came second in the 4 Div E championships.

Finally, congratulations to **Sig Vicky Moran** on representing the Army at basketball, and on being selected for the Joint Services team.

HELLO'S, GOODBYES AND PROMOTIONS

There have been a number of changes in the Squadron. Alpha Tp says goodbye to **Cpl Thompson**, **LCpls Anderson**, **Reid** and **Johnstone**, and **Sig Jupp**. They say hello to **Cpl Smith** and **LCpl Tarry**. In Bravo Tp we say hello to **LCpl Heynes**, **Sig Marshall** and **Sig Fletcher**, and goodbye to **Cpl Tim Shears** who is now a civvy, and to the long serving **Sgt** (soon to be SSgt) 'Taff' **Evans**, who goes to 7 Sigs. Good luck to you and the family in Germany, and congratulations on coming off the board! Sp Tp says goodbye to **Cpls Steve Mills**, **Bry Dundas** and **Gaz Preece** who all head to Civ Div. Hello to **Cpl Hoskins** and **Sigs Wharton**, **Campbell**, **McCall**, **McTeer** and **Comery**. Congratulations to **SSgt Jed Robinson**, **WO2 FofS Phil Cooper**, and **WO2 (RQMS) Daryl Skimmings** on coming off their respective boards.

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1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) Tidworth

SQUADRON HQ

Sqn Comd	**Maj P. J. Davies**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R. Bray**

Congratulations to the RSM and his wife **Joanne** on their recent marriage from all of the Squadron personnel.

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt N. R. D. Shenow**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D. Gosney**

Following the exercise period the Troop had a couple of weeks in camp preparing for the visit of the happiest bunch of technicians in the Corps, commonly known as RSIT. Despite a number of new inexperienced faces in the Troop, **Sgt** 'This brief will only take two minutes' **Smithurst** steadied the ship to an overall good result for the period.

Whilst all this hectic preparation took place a 10 man exchange had taken place between the Italian Ariete Brigade and ourselves. Preparation for the visit was organised by **Capt** 'kebab' **Range**, this included Helly Dunking Ranges, cultural visits and other military activities. The Trip was ended with a wonderful day in London. The trip was destined for failure with the two guides, **Cpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** and **Cpl** 'Chalkie' **White** never having visited the Capital before. However, the day was a great success and ended with a visit to a watering hole in Twickenham to watch England claim yet another Grand Slam.

SABRE TROOP

The Troop wishes **Sigs Farnsworth** and **Hilson** the best of luck in their new postings and also a warm welcome goes out **Sig** 'Oscar' **Wild**. **SSgt John Rutland** passed his Driving Instructors Course and then managed to crash his much loved automobile–stick to climbing Staff!.

THE ITALIAN JOB
EXERCISE IRON RAM 12-21 MARCH 1997

Lt Golley	**LCpl Palmer**
Cpl Rodie	**Sig Austin**
Cpl Young	**Sig Stainforth**

Ex Iron Ram was an exchange exercise between members of 1 RGJ, 1 RMA, 22 Engr Regt, 215 Sig Sqn and 132 Brigata Corazzata 'Ariete' and was held in Northern Italy. On 12 March 1997 six members of 215 Sig Sqn departed Tidworth for 'Forgiarini' Barracks near Tauriano via Brize Norton/Aviano.

On arrival at Forgiarini Barracks we were put into what would be our accommodation for our stay, 10 bunk beds and 20 single lockers to a room with limited electricity (0630-0830 and 1800-2300). That night and every night transport was available for us to go to Pordenone to sample the local Italian hospitality

Thursday. After the daily flag raising parade which any RSM would have, it was all off to the cinema for the welcome speech by the Regt Comd. Then split up into our respective units, us members of 215 Sig Sqn visited 132nd Arty Regt MQ and Sig Bn. An all day affair spent on unit briefings, familiarisation with barracks, weapons, vehicles and equipment. Stopping for lunch, which was a 50-50 mix of pasta and beer.

Friday. We all departed for Monte Ciauriec training area, which is a large dry river bed for some non-tactical patrolling, map reading observation and recognition, Italian and RGJ style with an Italian 24hr rat pack lunch (ours are not that bad after all). The afternoon was spent on a trip to Vajont dam, why the Italians dam fresh air I will never know.

Saturday. Cultural visit to Venice

Sunday. Trips to the beach about 20 km from Trieste, hardly Blackpool, rocks for a beach and no place open.

Monday. Shooting practice at La Comina firing range–which looked like some targets stuck in the ground, in a field. After being given a brief on the pistol, and range clearance was given by Air Traffic Control, a helicopter flying around the area for 10 minutes, we were told to load then shoot. This was followed by a brief on the rifle which could fire one round, three rounds or fully automatic. When asked what we would be firing on we were told to choose ourselves. So off to the firing point we went. Thirty rounds in the mags, fire the first round off to check the recoil of the weapon, change the setting of the change lever, squeeze the trigger. Seconds later empty mag. What's more no weapon cleaning, my sort of range day **Sgt Head**. After lunch it was off to the Meduna River bed for a recce of the exercise area.

Tuesday. Another morning on the ranges firing the machine gun which was much like the GPMG. A quick brief on the weapon, a belt of 100 rounds and told to get on with it. Following lunch it was off to the Meduna River bed for exercise rehearsals.

Wednesday. Back to the Meduna River training area for joint training rehearsals for exercise. Lunch that day was real food (barbecue).

Thursday. Back to Meduna River training area. After a briefing by the exercise director the exercise began. Leopard tanks and Italian Air Force jets all over the place. Quite a sight. An hour and a half later ENDEX, followed by a debriefing and farewell speech by the Bde Comd.

That afternoon time to put things straight, England v Italy at football, a convincing win 5-0 to the Brits, the man of the match title was given to **Lt Golley**, although he did not score, he did blow his whistle to start and end each half,

Friday. Farewell speech by the Regt Comd then off to Aviano Airport and a return flight by the Italian Air Force to Lyneham.

Question: Did **LCpl Chinnery** take his present from Venice?

5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para) Aldershot

EXERCISE OAK APPLE–KENYA 1997
by LCpl Pilkington

After a delay of over 24 hours at RAF Brize Norton, we eventually set off for Nairobi, Kenya nine hours away. The Exercise that the five of us, from 216 Para Sig Sqn, were about to take part in was an Engineers' Exercise. We were attached to 9 Para Sqn Royal Engineers to provide the communications between the various different locations they were doing projects at back to their SHQ, based near a small town called Timau. **LCpls Sid Cleworth** and 'Ollie' **Oliver** were left with 1 Tp, based in Kahawa Barracks, Nairobi–tasked to build a POL point and MT garage. **Sig Gaz Tiplady** was located with SHQ Tp, Timau. This Troops' task being to support all the other Troops by resupplying building stores and manpower. Myself and **Sig Jay Beattie** were located with 3 Tp. Their task was to build a Community Centre for the Masai Warriors at a place called Dol Dol.

The Exercise as a whole was to last a little over 12 weeks, so the Squadron decided to send two groups of five for a period of six weeks each. On offer was diving near Mombasa, a camel safari, a climb to the summit of Mount Kenya and the Aberdare's Patrol Safari. **LCpls Sid Cleworth**, 'Ollie' **Oliver** and **Sig Gaz Tiplady** went on the climb up Mount Kenya. Myself and **Sig Jay Beattie** went on the 40 mile trek around the Aberdare Safari Park and saw absolutely no wildlife at all. Despite this we still had a good laugh. Staying with all the holidaymakers at the Aberdare Country Club for the last two days of the adventure training was worth not seeing anything.

The six weeks flew by and before we knew it our replacements were arriving. **LCpl Nick Jenkins**, **Sig Thomas Thompson**, **Sig** 'Scotty' **Finn**, **Sig Ronnie Barker**, and **Sig Andy Standing**. Being with 1 Tp at Kahawa Barracks was obviously the pick of the detachment. They had many nights out in Nairobi, leaving the rest of us bitter and twisted.

COMBAT AND SURVIVAL
by Sig 'Dazzling' **Daz Barnes**

Along with **Sig** 'Colonel' **Sanders** (B Tp) and **Sig Gav Vanden** (A Tp), the three of us joined the Sigs Platoon from 7 Para RHA for a weeks' combat and survival.

We left Aldershot after being told we were going somewhere about an hour's drive away and sharing the 4 tonner with some of the thinnest, smelliest chickens I've ever come across. We were all apprehensive about the week ahead especially as **Sgt** 'Richie' **Long** was in charge. Expect the unexpected!!

No sooner had we arrived at the location than our bergens were taken from us, then our webbing and smock pockets were frantically searched. The week consisted of different lessons, practicals and demo's. The fairly relaxed atmosphere let us take in **Sgt Long**'s expertise and then we had quality time to practice. We covered shelters/hides (full marks to **Sig Vanden**'s collapsible effort), fires, improvised clothing (nice hessian anorak 'Colonel' **Sanders**), wild food, fishing, navigation, trapping and unarmed combat. We then touched on E+E because we wouldn't need to go in-depth would we?

The Thursday night was a big wind-down, we talked about the past week, the good and the bad points and then a laugh about chasing chickens with our cavemen clothes–the improvised parachutes and sandbags that we all seemed to be wearing in some form or another. We finished the night off with fish and chips washed down with a few lagers and then it was back to the shelter for the first good nights kip in a week . . . Wrong!!

Nice suit!!

I woke up with brown underpants as the first thunderflash went off about 10 inches from my right ear. The next few hours were like a blur, stress positions, white noise, stress positions, interrogation, questions, stress positions. One thing I do remember is the feeling of helplessness as I was photographed on the Helli-pad, with my arms in the air. A diesel-soaked sandbag over my head, tape over my eyes and my wind pipe about the diameter of a MacDonalds straw after the previous day's getting strangled during unarmed combat. I later found out **SSgt Weaver**, **Cpl** 'Mad' **Jackson**, **Cpl** 'Goma' **Goddard**, **LCpl** 'Paddy' **Howe** and **Sig** 'Tricky' **Dick** were our captors, specially drafted in to dish out the punishment. I'd normally say thanks to all my fellow troopers but on this occasion I wasn't too happy to see them.

All in all, a great week, plenty of skills expertly demonstrated by **Sgt Long** and crew. Perhaps we'll look forward to getting back in the near future . . .

BRAVO TROOP

Bravo Tp has been very busy over the last few months with us all being spread to the four winds as usual. The year was kick-started with Ex Frozen Griffin where all the available para-trained members of the Troop parachuted into Goose Bay for a weeks' skiing and arctic survival training. At the same time **Lt Steve Short**, **Cpl** 'Nosher' **Brown** and **Sig Kev Whyte** were all doing skiing of another kind in the South of France. Unfortunately they came back empty handed much to the disappointment of 'Nosher', who was hoping to keep out of the Troop over the next exercise!

The next month or so saw the Troop on exercise on Salisbury Plain that bore a remarkable resemblance to the Somme. There was an opportunity to do some internal military training run by **Cpls Mick Brown**, 'Bonkers' **Jackson** and 'Goma' **Goddard**. This included basic section drills such as patrolling, harbours, pairs building up to section fire and manoeuvre and bunker busts, casualty simulation and casevac. The latter was quite an eye opener for the SNUTs-from Blandford, thanks to a visit to the very helpful local butcher and Oscar winning performances from **Cpls** 'Nosher' **Brown** and 'Mac' **McBean**. Finally, there was weapon training including GPMG, 9mm pistol and various foreign weapons. The Troop has sent four people on P-coy and three have passed and are awaiting their jumps courses. Congratulations go to **Sig Bobby Charlton**, **2Lt Wong** and most notably **Cpl Dave Maxwell** whose sore feet hardly set foot back in the Troop before being whisked away to Lyneham on the TALCE det!

Cpl 'Nosher' Brown and ?lb of chopped liver

240 Sig Sqn York

Sqn Comd	**Maj Peter Baron**
2IC	**Capt (Retd) Joe Lovell**

OPERATOR TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (Tfc) Steve Watson**
Ops Sgt	**Sgt Caroline Gordon**

Another busy few months for the Troop, however, this has not prevented our relief operators, **LCpl Lorna Banks** and **LCpl Cath Winder**, from attending upgrading courses, crypto courses, an RMA course and even a bit of Skiing in Bavaria for **LCpl Banks**. **Sgt Caroline Gordon** and **Cpl Donna Reynolds** are now on Maternity Leave and we wish you both good luck. One is expecting twins, but we will not say which just yet!

TECH TROOP

Tp Comd	**Maj (TOT) Alan Eames**
Tech Sgt	**Sgt Paul Bowes**

Since our last submission **Cpl Nick Marcovic** has been promoted to Cpl, a belated congratulations to you. Both **Sgt Paul Bowes** and **Cpl Nick Marcovic** have also been busy in their usual technical tasks and also managing to acquire qualifications in various aspects of IT, which includes LAN/WAN Troubleshooting. Although he did not volunteer (that's his story) the TOT, **Maj Alan Eames**, has departed on a six month detachment to Hong Kong, but he still manages to keep in touch once a week, telling us how busy he is. We will see the sun tan in July to prove how busy he was.

FREEFALL PARACHUTE JUMP FOR CHARITY
by Maj Alan Eames

Sgt Gary Skeels (now with 251 Sig Sqn), who some years ago fought and won a personal battle against cancer had an idea to raise funds for the Macmillan Nurses. All he had to do was convince a friend to jump out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft. That friend was **Miss Michele Gilmer** our Catterick Telephone Exchange Supervisor, who in turn decided that she needed someone to give her a push and which turned out to be me! An appeal to potential sponsors went out to many Units in the 2nd Div area and also to some other R Signals Units. To keep costs to a minimum we chose to jump with the Army Parachute Association at Netheravon with 11 August as our preferred date. Bad weather over that weekend prevented any parachuting and we were then rescheduled for 1 September.

When the day dawned the weather was glorious with not a cloud in sight. **Michele** and I were briefed on the tandem jump procedure by the Instructor and then kitted out with the necessary equipment. After what seemed an interminably long wait of some five hours **Michele** was then called forward. Once in the aircraft she was clipped tightly by the harness to the Instructor. After 20 minutes ascent the aircraft reached the 12,500 feet ceiling and it was time to go. On the agreed signal and with her legs out of the door **Michele** was ready to take an alternative view of Wiltshire! The exhilaration of freefall was followed after a minute by the peace and tranquillity of being suspended under the canopy at 5,000 feet. **Mary Anne Whyte** our York COMMCEN Supervisor, **Sgt Gary Skeels** and myself watched and photographed **Michele**'s descent from the drop zone. After a smooth landing her first comment was that she would like to take

my place and go up again! My turn came an hour later and we both agreed afterwards that it was a quite unforgettable experience. The occasion was marked by the donning of the obligatory T shirts, bought by **Sgt Gary Skeels** and celebrated in the usual alcoholic manner on the way back to Yorkshire!

The sponsors all dutifully fulfilled their generous promises and sent their cheques to Catterick. On the 24 October at Imphal Barracks **Mr Stephen Ross-Jones** accepted from us both on behalf of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund a cheque for £1077.38. We send our best wishes to **Sgt Gary Skeels** as he is still undertaking some preventative treatment at this time.

ARRIVALS AND FAREWELLS

The last few months have seen only two members of the Squadron moving on, **Cpl Gary Skeels** going to 251 Sig Sqn on promotion to Sgt, congratulations. Also The Boss, **Maj Stan Howard**, to HQ DFTS at Corsham, we wish you and your families all the best for the future. Their replacements are now firmly established and enjoying the delights of York, **Cpl Steve Guildford** and his wife **Sharon**, and **Maj Peter Baron** with his wife **Lynda** belated welcome and we hope you and your families enjoy your time here.

Major Alan Eames and Miss Michele Gilmer present cheque to Mr Stephen Ross-Jones at Imphal Barracks.

249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))
Bulford Camp

EXERCISE COPELAND IRON (NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITION)
21 NOVEMBER-15 DECEMBER 1996
by Cpl Hilton

Ex Copeland Iron was a 249 Sig Sqn mountaineering expedition to New Zealand held during November and December 1996. The team consisted of **Capt Newell** (8 Sig Regt), **Sgt McCrostie**, **Cpl Hilton**, **Cpl Robjant**, **LCpl Chandler**, **LCpl White**, **Sig Doyle**, **Sig McDiarmid** and **Sig Shaw**. We arrived in Auckland at 0800 local time to glorious sunshine and two, brand new Toyota Previa Space Cruisers awaiting us in the car park. After a four hour drive to the Wahura Military Training Establishment we settled in for the day to recover from jet lag.

The next day saw the start of the expedition into the Mount Tongerouie National Park, a series of three volcanoes one of which is still active. The first attempt at the summit of Tongario (around 2000m) was aborted due to bad weather and we headed to the nearest hut. After awakening to glorious sunshine, the second attempt was successful and we all felt a great sense of achievement. The view was spectacular and was worth the hardships of the previous day as we thought of the rest of the Squadron in Sennybridge on the pre-Norway package–Ex Dryshod! From there we continued to the next summit, Mount Ngauruhoe at 2291 metres which was an exhausting but exhilarating climb. After a descent and more driving we found ourselves climbing Mount Egmont, a 2800m volcano and unfortunately still snow capped so the summit was out. Once again time and the weather got the better of us and we found ourselves stranded in a hut for 28 hours. We then decided to make our descent and headed off to the 'windy city' of Wellington and a ferry journey to the South Island.

Sig 'Popeye' Doyle posing before the final assault on Mt Egmont

Once on the South Island we RV'd with **Lt Jason Healy** of the Royal New Zealand Signals (an ex member of 249 on Ex Longlook '96) who joined us for the rest of the expedition. Another long drive found us in Christchurch for 24 hours R+R. From there we drove to Queenstown, the home of Bungy Jumping, then to the Able Tasmin National Park for two days Sea Kayaking around the inner reefs and coves of the beautiful coastline. The final item on the agenda was another drive back to Auckland and the long flight back to Gatwick. It goes without saying that after three weeks every man was thoroughly exhausted, but we had all experienced the trip of a lifetime and on behalf of the other members of the expedition a very big thank you to **Capt Newall** for leading the expedition.

Expedition Members enjoying R+R at Christchurch, having a Go-Kart Knockout

EXERCISE ADVENTURE EXPRESS 1997
by Sig Chris Noviss

In early February after a month of intensive training in the Arctic Ski and Survival Course, Arctic Warfare Training, Special to Arm training and the food deprivation phase of continuation training, the Squadron prepared for and deployed north into the Arctic Circle. This was for the three week final exercise of the deployment, Ex Adventure Express '97. After a week long exercise in Hjerkin with 3 Para and the Force Arty in temperatures reaching -30 Celcius it was a relief to step off the ferry into what could almost be described as 'warmth.'

I deployed on RRB C, commanded by **Cpl Nav Elliott** and **Sig Phil McDiarmid**. As usual the rebros were expertly guided into location by 'The No Fear Club' or Rebro Recce. Day in, day out **Sgts Rowe** and **Turner** risked life, limb and the Sqn Comd to get onto the mountain in their BV without smashing eggs in the fresh resups.

As the exercise progressed, the AMF(L) moved out of Deterrence Ops and into white cam for Combat Ops as 3 Para, the Dutch Marines and the Italian Alpine Bn's amongst others bravely fought the Whiteland Forces back over their borders. As usual life was busy and the radio nets were crammed with frantic messages in broken English as the 7 NATO nations fought both the battles of language and the war. As usual operators were deployed to all major units and on redeployment many tales were told of the pros and cons of Italian, Dutch, German, Luxembourg and Norwegian ration packs.

Life on the RRB's was not without incident. **WO2 (SSM) Barnes** attempted to fit in more flying time than the actual helicopter pilots in his effort to visit as many dets as possible. A German Huey managed to mistake an HF Dipole for a HLS, hovering feet above the braid we cringed and prayed that the pilot would discover his mistake and move before we had to contend with two broken masts. **LCpl** 'Mick' **Raine** decided to try and perfect his Guy Fawkes impression, however **Sig Dave** 'Leading Fire-Fighter' **Nix** put a stop to **Micks**' 'burning' ambition. Luckily without major incident, the exercise ended, the AMF(L) rightfully victorious and the Squadron prepared for redeployment back to the UK. It was a pleasing sight to see the green of England after two and a half months of pure white as we touched the ground at RAF Lyneham on the 17 March.

Exercise Adventure Express

ARCTIC TRAINING
by Sig Samuel

Ex Hardfall is an annual exercise for 249 Sig Sqn, which is held in Norway. There, the Squadron prepares itself to fulfil its role within the AMF(L) to carry out duties in an Arctic environment. A large part of the exercise is given over to training new members of the Squadron to work, fight and survive in the Arctic. This is done chiefly through the Squadron run Arctic Ski and Survival Course (ASSC).

The First section of ASSC, namely ski training is where all the new snow sprogs were introduced to a wonder of modern technology, the 'Army planks', on which we were expected to be fully capable of transporting ourselves on by the end of the course. It also gave many people the opportunity to audition for the next winter Olympics freestyle ballet team. However, before we started skiing we had to be transported to the various suicide slopes. This was done primarily by BV 206's, tracked articulated vehicles, and the Ayrton Senna driving award must be awarded to **Sig John Spooner** who managed to roll his leading BV on the very first day. The consequences of this was that from that moment on it was always a race to get to the BVs, since the slowest people were the ones who ended up inevitably with 'Spooner'.

One of the first things we learnt was the graceful art of 'Dobbing' where your skis go one way and your body attempted to go in a completely different direction. This move, was soon perfected by everyone, some more so than others. By the end of the first day everyone was ready for a well-deserved recovery session in the bar. The next couple of days were very similar to the first, with exhausting, and sometimes painful sessions on the slopes, followed by evening PT sessions in the bar. By the third day confidence had grown, and more than once 'death before snowplough' was heard being shouted across the slopes. Unfortunately ski training had to be postponed for a couple of days, due to the poor weather conditions (most of the snow melted!!), with conditions back in the UK being more suitable for skiing than those encountered in Norway at the time. When training resumed, we started the survival section of the course with us having to construct brushwood bivvi's to spend the night in. It was during this period that most of the people wished they had perfected the art of fire starting before being deployed. We were also warned of 'midnight choppers' of which there were more than a few. It was during this evening that **Sgt Russ Ezard**'s section managed to misplace their pulk' allegedly stolen, although the section in question were seen to have quite a roaring fire at some time during the night. In the morning a replacement pulk was soon brought out, much to **Cpl Adam Wilkies** dismay, since he would be one of the people pulling it. Pulks looked and weighed like concrete filled coffins, and are used to carry extra section equipment, these improvised torture devices usually being pulled by the stronger members of each section. It was from now on that people seemed to be careful about how quickly they improved, since to become too good on skis inevitably meant you ended up on the pulk.

Sig Dodge perfecting his dobbing technique

The rest of ASSC consisted of climbing steeper and steeper hills, carrying heavier bergans and pulks, with a final night spent in snowholes, until they collapsed, when it was back to the safer tented accommodation. The conclusion of the ASSC was the 10km ski race which was strenuous, exhausting and at times exhilarating, with the SNUTs on attachment from 11 Sigs surpassing everyone's expectations and being branded downhill speed gods, namely **Sig Andy** 'Doris' **Day** and **Chris Whitely**. We look forward to seeing you being posted in at the end of trade training lads!!

After ASSC came Arctic Warfare Training (AWT) but not before it became necessary to send a search party out to find **WO2 (SSM) Barnes**, **Capt Foulkes** and **Cpl** 'Tug' **Wilson**, who did not return from a recce for events later in the exercise. They claimed they knew exactly where they were, and that it wasn't necessary to have sent a helicopter out just for them. Although it did help boost the morale of all the other people who had been finding it hard to tell the difference between one pile of snow and another when looking at their maps.

The AWT phase was the tactical phase that seemed to be digging trenches and building snow walls. Then watching as Mother Nature decided not to play along as a temporary thaw set in and walls came tumbling down. To finish off the initial training phase it was necessary to carry out the infamous ice breaking drills, skiing into and then subsequently exiting from a hole in the ice, on one of the local lakes. It was here that most photos were taken since there was a lot of new facial expressions (as well as verbal) being exchanged. It also gave **Sig** 'Graffe' **Clubb** and **LCpl Marty Quinn** the chance to volunteer to have a go, but this was only so they would not have to have a bath for the rest of the deployment (allegedly).

With training now complete, and all of us were meant to be competent skiers, the Squadron was able to organise another ski race, this time 20km, with bergans. It was during this race that the Squadron found out it had a budding David Bailey amongst the ranks, namely **LCpl Dave Howe**, who used every opportunity to take photos to send back to his wife, instead of racing. The big problem was he usually stood in the middle of the race-track to take the photos. The end of the ski race also saw the end of the ASSC. But any recovery periods were short lived since most people went onto continuation training, but like I had been told before I joined the Squadron, 249 like to work hard and then play hard, and this was certainly true on Ex Hardfall 97.

Sig Shore going in for an early bath

Sig Clubb enjoying Ice Breaking Skills

FIRST IMPRESSIONS
by 2Lt J. C. Fraser

When I received the joining instructions for my Pre Troop Commanders attachment to the Squadron for Ex Hardfall '96 I had an idealized picture of what the Arctic environment would hold in store. Far too much time watching classics like 'Where Eagles Dare' at University instead of working distorted the reality of life in sub-zero temperatures. The condensed Dryshod package gave you an idea of the many complicating factors which effect decision making at all levels in the Arctic Environment. Two things are plainly obvious ultimately the weather is the boss, you have to work round him. The other point that struck me was how on earth do you get all the kit that is required into an issue bergan. I would soon find out.

We deployed to Norway on the 6 January to be greeted by a sudden thaw. The weather in the UK it seemed was far more suitable for ASSC training at that stage than the Voss area of Norway. Never the less we donned our army issue planks and headed for the hills to learn the art of Nordic skiing. The first lesson was on how to get up after a fall or 'dob'. Seeing our skiing ability two weeks on it still remained the most important lesson. Although none of us Arctic virgins managed to emulate the displays of telemarking or the alternative Arctic dress of **LCpl Macgregor**, we did start to master the art of survival skiing. None more so than **Sigs Abbott** and **King** who seemed to lead charmed lives. The weather forced a reshuffle of the programme and ski training was put on

ice. (I should say slush) I was to get a rapid first hand look at the Squadrons' communication role and how it deployed and worked.

I thought whilst in training that the letter codes that constituted army speak were numerous, but speaking to signallers about their equipment is like listening to a never ending stream of Batco. I have however managed to ingest the basics of what the Squadron does! The detachments are scattered to the four winds of the AMF forces providing comms for the entire force in a specialized and unique configuration not seen elsewhere in the Corps. The standards of the signallers are very high by necessity and the one thing that comes across is the self-sufficient nature of the Squadrons' dets. However, there was one dilemma that seemed to perplex **Sgt Castle** at Echelon. Should we try and fix the calor gas heaters or go with the cutting edge of kerosene heating technology.

By week three the weather had changed in our favour and the ASSC resumed. The course, 49 strong, took to the hills again to try and batter the Norwegian landscape flat in a endless series of high speed wipe outs. As we tried to improve our skiing new challenges in the shape of pulks and bergens materialized. With new centres of gravity and the problems of regaining your feet with weight on your back we began to see our limitations in terms of movement in the Arctic. We also had to learn the basics of survival. The Norwegian Forestry Department need never worry about thinning or weeding its forests again. Give the army a forest for its brush wood bivvies demo and watch the woods clear. The improvised shelter saw many variations on a wigwam theme. From **Cpl Wilkies** brushwood igloo to **LCpl Strachan**'s mixed corrugated iron and brushwood thatched condo. These shelters with a fire burning were very warm. However the forest did seem to have a peculiar tendency to spout huge naphtha induced flares periodically thought the night. By the end of the ASSC we had slept in five and four man tents, brushwood bivvies and a brief spell in snowholes all demonstrated throughout the course by **Sgt Hawkin**'s Demo Troop of veteran Arctic warriors. BV '5 however seem to prove more comfortable.

With this completed the next phase was to put these skills into practice in a tactical environment, the AWT. With a first troop of 49 I soon found out that reality is very different from training. The Arctic is a very

Preparation of a tented ski camp

unforgiving place and command at times is a very lonely experience. The exhaustion of the course began to take its toll as the exercise continued and the Norwegian Independent Telemark Society in the shape of the Squadrons' ski gods conspired to prevent anyone getting any sleep in our tactical camp site. With the exception of two luckless members of a replen party who were kidnapped and forced to spend the night in a BV with their sleeping bags. By midnight on the second night the weather again let us know who was the boss. Rain poured down collapsing all the snow defences that had been the main effort over the last 24 hours. Despite a valiant, if not self-defeating, exercise in damage limitation there would be only one winner, the weather. Despite the brief threat of survival night to finish, we returned home exhausted, to thaw and dry out and reflect on the previous two weeks of life in the Arctic.

The last month with the Squadron has taught me a great deal about what life in the field army is like. The learning curve is a very steep one for anyone, but at 249 you need crampons. However, the experience has far greater rewards and the lessons learned certainly stick. The level of experience within the Squadron is vast and as an introduction to the Corps it is second to none. I have certainly learned a lot both good and bad both about the army and myself.

259 Sig Sqn
BFPO 53

Sqn Comd	**Maj Steve Turnbull**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Chris Hardwidge**

HQ TROOP

A warm welcome to the new OC, a reformed Man from the Ministry, and his family who arrived in Cyprus for New Year's Eve, it will get warmer soon. Welcome also to **WO2 (FofS) John Skelton** who has joined us from the emerald isle. Farewell to **WO2 (YofS) Nige Donohue**, and his wife **Nicky** who have left for the UK, congratulations on your promotion. Congratulations also to **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hardwidge** on his selection for promotion. Over at the QM's dept farewell to **Sgt Neil** 'pretty boy' **Jennings** and welcome to **Sgt Steve Lynch** and family.

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Mark Finneran**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Yogi' **Caudwell**
Tp FofS	**SSgt (FofS) Mick Sheppard**

Airfield Tp is now almost bursting at the seams with a recent influx of personnel, postings in and inter troop postings. A warm welcome goes to **SSgt** 'Yogi' **Caudwell** and **Jane**, **Sgt Ingley** and **Sandra** and **LCpl** 'Cav' **Cavannagh**. Off to sunny England is **Sig Aston**, and detached to the Falklands **Cpl Craig Wilson** and **LCpl D'Orr**, good luck. Congratulations to **SSgt Caudwell** on his selection for promotion, you haven't been here five minutes! The best and most feared Troop in the Squadron has been very busy recently with a RAF crash test exercise on the airfield. It appears that we caused the helicopter to crash with **Sig Grindle**'s crazy driving all over the runway, but at least we quickly sorted out the technical problem! Inter Tp sport has also been a part of our routine recently, and despite the size of the Troop we still play like gladiators! The Troop motto is 'Play to win . . . by any means possible!'

Airfield Tp is its usual overworked (whining) self with even more extra work starting with the visiting Squadrons and the Red Arrows, all requiring things done, yesterday. The appearance of a new Troop Staffie has caused the appearance of a few 'Equal Opportunities' tasks, so the Troop lines are undergoing a major facelift, deep joy. Farewells go out to all those that have left and welcome to all those who have arrived, in particular the crows from the factory. Congratulations to **SSgt Yogi Caudwell** on his selection for promotion to WO2, and to **Capt Mark** and particularly **Emma Finneran** on the birth of their bouncing baby boy, **Tudor Bentley**. Finally messages for:

SSgt Caudwell–Akrotiri have run out of blue and green paint.

Sgt Rothery–There is always next year.

Cpl Wilson–Have a good tour, Port Stanley have a theatre club.

LCpl D'Or–Bet you don't forget your passport when you are leaving the Falklands.

DHEKELIA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Cath Waudby**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mick Senior**
Tp FofS	**SSgt (FofS) Mare Findon**

Well it is back to work after the Christmas and New Year break. During the festive season there was reason to celebrate for **Cpl** 'Kingsman' **Ian Hughes** and his wife **Kendra** on the birth of their son **Callum**, the first child of the New Year in Cyprus. Meanwhile, back in the UK congratulations were also in order for **Sgt Neil Blenkinsop** and his wife **Lisa** on the birth of their daughter **Emily-Jessica**. The message from the Troop is, 'Well done and get the beers in!'

The Troop would like to say a belated hello to **Cpl Jimmy Marshall** who complained about not being mentioned in the last edition. Also the mechs would like to welcome back **Sgt** 'Chunky' **Mathieson** on his return from his six months holiday down at Airfield Tp. Last but not least goodbye to **LCpl Andy** 'Happy' **Dodds**, wife **Karen** and the kids who have just started on their magical mystery tour posting to 220 Sig Sqn via 8 Bde. Goodbye also to **LCpl Al Hayhurst** who is off to join his better half at 15 Sig Regt, and also to **LCpl Elvis Hemstead** and **Mel** who are off to 11 Sig Regt.

Sadly the Troop has to say goodbye to **SSgt Mick Senior** and his wife **Mel** and children **Hannah**, **Thomas** and **Grace**, if he had stayed any longer he would have become part of the furniture. New arrivals to the Troop are **Sigs Alma Baldwin**, **Ian Farrow** and **Tomblin**, all fresh from the production line. Have a good one lads. Congratulations to **SSgt (FofS) Marc Findon** for receiving his Army Squash Colours for the second time.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Phil Newton**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Fudge MacPhee**
Tp FofS	**SSgt (FofS) Stu Meldrum**

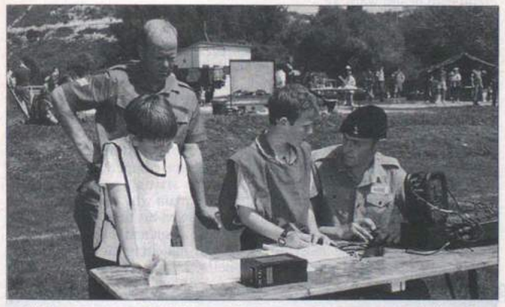
Over the last few weeks there have been lots of changes to the Troops' manning. We sadly say goodbye to our two resident Geordies **Cpls Sid Barrass** and 'Paddy' **Duffy** and also **Cpl Steve Reeves**, all of whom are posted to Ireland. The Troop also says goodbye to newly promoted **LCpl Bob Cope** who has been posted to 216 Sqn for his sins! Arriving in to the Troop are **Sgt Jan Seymour**, **Cpl Jules Upcraft**, and **LCpl** 'Izzy' **Izzard** who take up the Tp Radio Tech positions. Filling the vacant Tele Mech positions are **Sig Owen Trimble** and **Chris Petch**. The Troop would like to welcome all the new arrivals and hope they enjoy their tour. Congratulations on his engagement to **LCpl** 'boring *Wire* notes' **Williams**.

HODGSON SHIELD

The penultimate event in this years' competition was the Rugby 10's, held in Dhekelia on the 14 March 1997. Dhekelia Tp thought they were favourites with HQ Tp looking good, although Dhk had the advantage with ten fit people to choose from. The standard of rugby itself was excellent, most games going to one score to decide the winner. The deciding game was between Epi Tp and Dhk and it was a missed conversion from in front of the posts that left Epi Tp as somewhat fortunate winners 12-10. Sincere thanks go to **Sgt Blenkinsop** for organising a good days' rugby. The Compendium, a Friday afternoon of sport in Happy Valley took place on the 4 April 1997. The sports concerned were Volleyball, Softball and Tug of War. The honours going to Epi Tp although they didn't manage to win any of the events on the day outright. Thanks go to the SQMS for organising the day and serving up a splendid barbecue afterwards at the Jimmy Club. The final score after a long year of hard fought competitions is Dhk bringing up the rear, the old men of HQ in third, Afd in second and this year's winners Epi Tp.

COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH THE AGES CHALLENGE

On Easter Monday the Youth Centres of the Island gathered in Happy Valley for the Squadron's Communications Through the Ages Challenge in aid of Wireless for the Blind. The Challenge involved teams from each youth centre using a variety of methods of communication to pass a message as quickly and accurately as possible. Prior to the event the troops visited the children and taught them various methods of communication, which were then used in the competition. The children found themselves running, on horseback (OK then, on their bikes), using semaphore, morse, telephone and finally VHF radio. 'The Gladiators', a team of Signallers from the Squadron in the first race, were shamed by the youths from Dhekelia. The finely tuned team from Akrotiri defeated the team from Episkopi in the second heat and went forward to the final. In a closely contested race, and after a stewards inquiry Dhekelia Youth Centre ran out eventual winners. The prizes were very kindly presented by the Gar Comd. Between the races there were plenty of other attractions, the Police and Fire Service, portraits by **Sig Lee Bearfield**, burgers by **Cpl** 'Baz' **Pickles** and **Tony Lythgoe**, and the very popular bungee run. Even the OC and SSM were tempted onto the Bungee Run. The event was a success, the children enjoyed themselves, and the sponsorship raised is expected to exceed C£350. Many thanks to all those who worked hard to make the day a success, from the team coaches, those who helped on the day, to **2Lt Kath Honan** and **Sgt Steve Lynch** who organised the OC's 'good idea'.



Cpl Hughes and Cpl Wainwright supervising morse during the Communications Through the Ages Challenge.

SQUADRON HOCKEY

The hockey season has come to an end and the Squadron team has finished a very creditable third place in the Flamingo Motors WSBA Minor Units Hockey League. The misnomer of a minor units league left us just behind RAF Akrotiri with a strength in thousands, and ahead of a Garrison team for which members of the Squadron played last season when we did not have a team of our own. Indeed we were one of the few teams to beat Akrotiri in the league with a creditable 1-0 away win.

Sunday the 16 March 1997 saw the Squadron competing against 1RGBW in the Epi Gar Hockey Plate Competition. The Squadron battled through the first half and were 1-0 down at half time. However, true to form, an amazing comeback in the second half ensured the Squadron took the plate with an impressive 4-1 victory. With an excellent season behind us, bags of enthusiasm and impressive facilities, we can only hope that despite the postings plot, next season will prove just as successful.

Cpl Baz Pickles collects the WSBA Hockey Plate from the Garrison Comd.

EPI SEVEN'S

The Episkopi 7's annual rugby tournament took place on the 5 April 1997 in Happy Valley. The Squadron entered two teams despite the defection of some members of Dhk Tp to their Garrison side. The first team started badly, narrowly losing the first game to the UN. The second game started badly when **Capt Wood** and **Sig James** each produced a great tackle, at the same time, on the same man. Both fell to the ground injured and took no further part in the day's play. As it happened the team won every game that followed and qualified for the plate competition. They continued their winning streak and won the plate final against Epi Gar 'A' team. The second team were not so successful but they enjoyed themselves, with notable performances from **Sgt** 'Bradford Northern' **Rothery** and **SSgt** 'but I can't play rugby' **Cauldwell**. Thanks to all the supporters that turned up on the day, especially those that brought their boots, just in case.

2 Sig Sqn (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Bryan Gilfether MBE**
PSAO	**Capt Bill Naismith**

PSI TEAM

WO2 (YofS) Andy Dobson
SSgt Tony Doherty
SSgt Phil Skene
Sgt Steve Goodyear
Sgt Aidy Gamei

EXERCISE TARTAN SNOW 4-6 APRIL 1997

Many thought that planning a Skiing exercise in April was typical of the training wing. Well, the success of such brave moves pivot on a single letter. 'Dear big fella in heaven, please provide snow during the 31 March-4 April and a little sun over the weekend would be just dandy'. What a result we had.

Dressed in the best gortex Thatcham could provide, with trusty wooden planks to guide us down the slopes, the troops set about learning those important lessons which can only be learnt at 200mph. **Sig Liam Parry**, **Cfn Rod Hamilton** and **Pte Chris Kelbie** were the dangerous brothers of the beginners group, causing alarm and despondency all around them. By the end of the first day, all the group had learnt the basics. The dangerous brothers then proceeded to tell all who'd listen how good they were, (as if people from Aviemore can't ski!).

Those of the Squadron, who 'knew a few moves', kept moving all weekend, stopping only when enjoyment was surpassed by exhaustion (ten minutes before the skilifts closed). **Sig Woody** 'I've got a snow board and I'm not afraid to use it' **Woodcock** passed on his local knowledge to the others, showing them where all the jumps were! **Cpl Billy** 'Ist Prize' **Morris** kept the smiles wide, with his usual steady flow of sarcasm and wit. **WO2 (YofS) Andy** 'measure that' **Dobson** progressed onto one plank skiing following an ambitious jump with a dodgy landing. After 200m stopping was his only problem. **Sig Tam Ramsay** rescued the missing ski, saving a tiresome climb back up. A successful weekend all told, which will be repeated next year. Brave instructors from the Corps are requested to forward their requests to assist, along with a certificate of insanity to the Sqn Trg Wing.

EXERCISE EASY DRIVER 8 MARCH 1997

Teams were given maps and different methods of navigation, such as Tulips, Spot heights and Out of Bounds in order to get around the route, which had several manned check points. As the first teams left the TAC, **Sgt Ronnie** 'eagle eyes' **Thomson** suggested to the event organiser, MT SNCO **Sgt Aidy Garner** that he had made an 'error', he had. A number of 'naughty words' were forthcoming. The problem was quickly put right, and fortunately the errors made the early teams return past the TAC (how bizarre). Lunchtime came and went, the organiser was feeling, pleased that none of our ageing fleet had retired. Not long after this crazy thought the phone started to ring, **Sgt Bruce Singers** began nursing his poorly Landrover back to camp. And soon after **Sgt Joe MuGugoon** phoned to say that his pilot, **Sig Jenny Randall**, had unfortunately left the road and hit a barn door'. This had occurred at slow speed while turning around. Looking on the bright side, **Sig Randall** should do better on the next APWT.

Prize giving took place in the evening during a quiz night, (there were no MT type questions luckily). The winners were **SSgt (YofS) Bob Davidson** and **Sig Dave Adam**, who were presented with a case of beer and their taxi fare home. This event was enjoyed by all participants and will be repeated in the future, **Sgt Aidy Garner** promises to make it harder since there were no really really lost teams.

EXERCISE ROVERS FLING 21-23 FEBRUARY 1997

The first comms ex of 97 proved to be a good shake out of cobwebs after the Christmas festivities. The weather held out for the weekend that meant that the OC **Maj Bryan '007' Gilfether** didn't need his brolly during the visit of **Dep Comdr Col S. Foulkes** as they toured the detachments in the field. The Dep Comdr was taking a keen interest in the well being and aspirations of the soldiers when **Sig T. J. Thomson** said that his ambition was to be a Forklift Truck Driver . . . PSI **Sgt Steve Goodyear** had to quickly exit the tent unable to contain his emotions. The weekend proved to be too much for PSI **SSgt Phil Skene** after trying to para roll from his ERV onto razor wire, just to take another week off.

Sgt Bob Murray wondering why this tent is full of holes

44 Sig Sqn (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj Nigel Thompson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Peter Froggatt**

ANNUAL CAMP 96–ALTCAR

A comprehensive modular programme had been put together of range work, a comms ex and the famous (or is it infamous?) Krypton Factor assault course, all of which were done on a squadron basis. This was topped off by a final infantry-type exercise that the whole Regiment participated in (more of which later). Most of the Squadron members had a day off in the middle of the week. This was with the exception of the officers, RSM, FofS and YofS. All of whom attended the 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde study weekend at Donnington and could not therefore experience the dubious delights of Southport town centre on a Saturday night.

The Squadron had been tasked to provide two speakers for the study period to talk about their experiences in IFOR. **Capt Mike White** had returned from Croatia three weeks previously after a tour as Ops Offr for 230 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Pumphrett** was due to fly in from Sarajevo where he was still serving with 7 Sig Regt at ARRC Main. Come the day, **Cpl Pumphrett** was not present, having been told that he was supposed to report to Blandford, where understandably perhaps they knew nothing about him! Mutters of 'March him in, RSM' were quietened by the realisation that he may have been given slightly erroneous joining instructions.

A team from 749 Tp gained second place in the Inter Tp Competition well done, **SSgt Backhouse**. Our linguistic abilities were stretched to the limit when one of the three German Signals Reservists we had with us on camp gave a speech on the final night. We assume it was friendly as they did share a beer with the boys in the bar afterwards.

On the injury side of life, the Squadron management team was decimated. The OC fell at the first hurdle on the assault course and would have been shot if he were a horse. The 2IC cracked a rib prior to camp on a dry ski slope. The Ops Offr already had a broken big toe from a parachuting course. **SSgt Ward** managed (somehow) to end up in a full leg plaster cast after a game of volleyball and we haven't seen him since. It was unanimously voted that the next years' camp should be a nice gentle comms ex.

The CO's exercise at the culmination of camp involved a low-level tactics patrol and advance to contact. There were obviously a number of rain dances carried out on Holcombe Moor that day as it absolutely tipped down, just as an attack was going in at midnight (up a very steep hill). Noah would have had a hard job keeping afloat. The move back to the TA centres took a relatively long time but will probably be looked back on with fond memories when we are moving convoys all over Germany later this year on Ex Rhino Replen.

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS WEEKEND 14/15 DECEMBER 1996

This took place in the traditional venue of St Martins Plain and consisted of a range and round robin skills competitions. The officers and seniors served the traditional dinner on Saturday evening.

EXERCISE BLUE HAZE 18/19 JANUARY 1997

The first Squadron exercise of the New Year was an MT/Convoy drill/movement exercise based at Grays TAC. This concentrated on driver training on the Saturday with some maintenance on the Sunday and was mainly organised by **SSgt Ray** 'Billiard Ball' **Bishop**. Vehicle maintenance was programmed for Sunday morning. **LCpl Sally Howson** gave a demonstration of how to fill in an FMT3 for real! After a tour with IFOR, please remember that we drive on the left over here.

EXERCISE SNOW LION 1-9 MARCH 1997

Following last year's attempt to enter the TA skiing championships (the race was cancelled due to rather inclement weather), a number of intrepid skiers made their way to Aviemore with the intention of spending the whole week competing in Giant Slalom and Slalom events. Initially billed as a Regiment event, it turned out that all the participants were from 44 Sqn. These were **Capt Graham Grown**, **Capt Mike White**, **SSgt Richard Backhouse**, **Sgt** 'Wingnut' **Nichols**, who comprised the team. **Sig Ian Robinson** and **Sig Eugene Cole** skied as individuals. **Pte** 'Slops' **Barker** provided the culinary expertise. A guest skier in the shape of the CO, **Lt Col Brian Scott-Morton**, managed to fit in several appearances on the slopes and participated in two of the races.

There was very little snow on our arrival but fortunately a daylong blizzard on the Sunday provided the best snow conditions of the season and this stayed all week. The cold and wind were up to the usual level, ie: rather nasty sometimes. The results will be published next month or so–suffice it to say that the Squadron will not have to increase their insurance premium for extra silver.

Extracurricular activities involved exploring the social opportunities provided by Aviemore (whoever said it is a one-horse town is exaggerating!). Clay pigeon shooting, saunas and swimming were welcome alternatives to skiing, as was buying skis, poles, bindings, boots etc from Duggie the lodge manager. Every ski meeting should carry a credit card health warning.

At the prize giving on the Saturday night, it sounded like a disproportionately large number of trophies were won by a disproportionately small number of people, none of them ours. However, we were not far away from winning the R Signals team competition and finally came third (admittedly out of three teams, but it is a start). The 'Golden Maggot' award goes jointly to **LCpl Blacklock**, the CO's driver and **Pte Barker**, the cook, who declined the offer to go skiing during the day on the grounds that it would interfere with their sleep. The 'Roles Chronometer' award goes to **SSgt** 'Ski Monster' **Backhouse** who would insist on just one more run down the hill before the competition started and was inevitably disqualified as he missed his starting position. Padded knees were the order of the day as he had to explain why he was late to the judges, but luckily they were merciful and allowed his time to stand.

This week will hopefully become an annual event and it was agreed that the teams who won the most prizes all had matching Gortex suits and woolly pullies–point to note there, Colonel!

44 Sqn Ski Team With Guests:
SSgt Backhouse, Capt White, Sig Cole, Mrs White,
The CO, SSgt Nichols, Capt Brown

IFOR VOLUNTEERS

The Squadron has had a significant percentage of its members volunteer for service with IFOR and has provided two officers and **Cpl Pumphrett**, **Cpl Williams**, **LCpl Bland**, **LCpl Howson**, **LCpl Staples**, **LCpl Thorndike**, **Sig Curtis**, **Sig Ellis**, **Sig Kerr**, **Sig Partridge**, **Sig Smith** and **Sig Start**. Congratulations and welcome back to those who have returned and see you soon to those whom extended until the end of Op Lodestar.

SHOOTING TEAM

The CO at annual camp decided that it would be a good idea to raise a Regimental Shooting Team to put some silver on the table, as this aspect of training had been dormant within the Regiment for some years. This has now been done under the management of **Capt Mike** 'Gunslinger' **White** with support from the Trg Maj, **Maj Graham Lewis-Taylor**, SSgts **Stan Haynes** and **Gordon Brogan**. It is pleasing to see that 44 Sqn has provided nine of the 11 members so far with 54 Sqn providing the two others.

After a weekend on the SAT range at Chelsea in January, live firing weekends have taken place in January and February, with more due in March before the competitions start. Bisley, watch out. As the Corps SAAM requires iron sights and the London District SAAM requires SUSAT, shooting team members have been issued with three rifles each–one with iron sights for competition, one with SUSAT for competition and with one iron sight for exercise purposes.

OFFICER MOVEMENTS

The Officers' plot at 44 Sqn has been fairly active in the past six months. In October, **Capt Mike White** returned from his paid holiday with IFOR in Split and is now 2IC/Ops Offr at SHQ. (Congratulations are due on passing his recent Capt to Maj promotion exams.) He has managed to avoid telling too many war stories so far, unlike the other IFOR veteran, **Capt Graham** 'Porridge Bandit' **Smith**, who ran out of people to tell stories to within the Squadron and therefore left 747 Tp to take up the job of Regt Ops Officer in Ilford. Good luck, **Graham** (and RHQ). Continuing with Captains, **Mark Smith** left the 2IC slot to take over the job of 2IC/Ops Offr at 54 Sqn in Cambridge.

Lt Neil Bowskill was despatched from SHQ late last year to Southend TAC to run 749 Tp and **Lt Adrian Marshall** will move from 748 Tp to Warley TAC to command a Troop in 45 Sqn.

Congratulations are due to **Stewart Rowson** who made the leap from Cpl to 2Lt at the age of thirty-something. Welcome to the Mess and guess who is Mr Vice? He was learning the ropes in OSC 148 (this is the kettle. That's the toaster) on Ex Winter Eagle when difficulties with comms saw him spending a lot of time in the Mux–plus ca change . . . After a period of attachment to RHQ to perfect the art of tea making, he has now taken command of 747 Tp.

A recent addition from outside the Regiment has been **2Lt Paul Whitehouse** who is transferring from the Royal Anglians. His knowledge of wiggly amp matters will no doubt be increased, as will the Squadron's knowledge of how to dig holes and run around looking like a tree. He is 748 Tp Comd.

PROMOTION

LCpl Andy Bathurst has metamorphosised into **Cpl Bathurst** with effect from December. Your round then!

FAREWELL

A very sad farewell must be said to **Sgt Bob Andrews** from 749 Tp and indeed from everyone in the Squadron. He is one of the mainstays of the Troop and he attends every Troop function, be it drill night or social event. Unfortunately, the years have caught up with him and after receiving his third clasp to his TEM, we must unwillingly say goodbye to **Bob**. You will be sorely missed but we hope to see you around for years to come. The Troop will no doubt make its own inimitable arrangements to say goodbye to you in a more private forum.

JNCO CADRE COURSE JANUARY 1997–A STUDENT'S STORY
by LCpl Monk 44 Sig Sqn

The Regiment runs a JNCO Cadre to qualify people for promotion once a year and this year it was held over two weekends in January and February on the Stanford Training Area. I was nominated for the course and duly turned up late on the Friday night to be met by the friendly reception committee of **SSgt McNally** and **Sgt Stidwell** with **WOI (RSM) Bywater MBE** assuring me that the course was merely a gentle introduction to being a JNCO.

Reveille was at 0530 hrs and our introduction to the course was a BFT designed to acquaint us with the local countryside and to ensure we were all up for breakfast. Throughout the first weekend we were taught and then tested on numerous military skills such as weapon handling, drill, map reading, internal security and a few more as well. Much was learnt by all and credit must go to the PSIs involved. The second weekend soon arrived and once again the programme allowed for us to be up bright and early for PT under the sympathetic guidance of **LCpl Smith**, our friendly PTI. Drill assessments and a vehicle navigation exercise closely followed this. We were then briefed on exercise 'Pilgrim's Progress' which was to be our validation exercise, putting into practice the skills we had been taught the week before; we soon realised that 'out on the ground' there is no place to hide.

We started off the night's activities with a night navigation exercise with only a trusty, or not so trusty in some cases, Silva compass working purely on bearings and the fine art of pacing between check points, an eye opener for us all. The next phase involved the occupation of a comms site, which included deploying EUROMUX, and Triffid assets, defence, cam and concealment and numerous other tasks. 'Stand to' positions were soon occupied due to the first attack of the evening by the 'enemy'. Having been left alone for most of the night our expected 'Early Call' came and we duly crashed out only to be ambushed 'expectantly' by the 'enemy hordes'.

We then deployed to a safe location only to be greeted by an Internal Security scenario, with Mortar blinds, base-plates and other devices thrown in. All designed to test many of us to the full, even the stroppy journalist who looked like our Adjutant, **Capt Hunter**, had his part to play; it is plainly obvious why he only works for the local 'RAG'. Having been debriefed on the IS phase we gratefully returned to Stonebridge Camp to complete the normal turnaround of vehicles and equipment, weapon cleaning and making sure the camp was ready for handover.

A special mention must go to the admin staff for both weekends, without whose help the cadre could not have taken place.

I was lucky enough to gain the top Student award and have subsequently been promoted, which for future cadres within the Regiment is an excellent incentive to do well. It has to be said that everyone who attended the course seemed to enjoy themselves and collectively it was agreed that a great deal of knowledge was gained by all concerned. The course was well run from the outset and the programme well put together by the RSM, who as we speak is busy putting together next year's cunning plan.

54 Sig Sqn (V)

757 EXERCISE REPORT 1997

Over the weekend of 14-16 March Ex Milky Way, a Regt FTX took place. Setting up in our first location . . . Cherry Hinton TAC, was an artificial experience, but getting the comms in still proved hard. This was because 755 Tp, who we were supposed to be communicating to, had been delayed in Norwich due to tractor failure and arrived in location two hours late. In hindsight, the decision to locate a Triffid in the middle of 254 Field Ambulances' ornamental garden was perhaps not the wisest of moves, but at least it gave **2Lt Jones** the opportunity to practice preparing DAMCON forms.

On Saturday morning the Troop deployed to Wisbech Airfield, south of Saffron Walden. Here we were joined by a detachment from 749 Tp manned by **LCpl Murdoch**. There is an old Chinese proverb, 'When shots come in and siting perfect, neither CO or RSM visit' and on this occasion it held true. However, we were graced by a posse of dynamic, although slightly less glamorous visitors, including **Majs Thompson** and **Clegg** and their respective SSMS, **OCdt Sykes** also made a celebrity appearance, although our calm and efficient operation failed to sate her desire for more exciting war photography.

By Sunday morning we were taking five shots and feeling slightly smug as all were working perfectly. However, our feelings of joy were deflated when OSC148, led by **Capt White**, arrived to critique our efforts. Unable to pick us up on either comms or siting they settled for a damning assessment of the untidiness of the array of masts set up. Some people are never pleased!

The close down order came at a pleasantly early time and the Troop was home by lunch time, fortified by **Sgt Cole** and **Sig Carter**'s mushroom and tomato sauce sandwiches. Delicious, I think not. It had been a valuable weekend, particularly from a comms points of view, but **Sigs Ellington** and **Cooks**' thirst for action was still not fully satisfied and they volunteered for additional arduous gardening duties on 254 Field Ambulance's front lawn. **Cpl Sollitt**, you may have been ill, but you missed a good one.

NEW RECRUIT FOR THE GUARD LIST

On 14 November 96 **LCpl Eddie Allen** and **Sig Linda Allen** received, on permanent issue, a bouncing baby girl. Born at 2308 hrs, just after the bar closed, **Charlotte** became 54 Sqn's youngest recruit. When asked, 'How is parenthood?' the proud parents replied, 'It is worse than being on exercise. You get woken up every three hours and everywhere is wet and dirty!'

Linda is currently getting back into the swing of it all by leaving **Eddie** looking after **Charlotte** and attending her All Arms Stores course at 21Blackdown.

Congratulations from Granma Fluffy, Uncle Bav, Uncle Glen and all in 756 and 754 Tps.

Eddie and **Linda** would like to thank everyone in 36 Sig Regt for all their kind thoughts and best wishes.

WO2 (SSM) Kikas 54 Sqn explains the role of a sentry to
LCpl Griffith 756 Tp during Ex Milky Way

55 Sig Sqn (V)

PERSONALITIES

Sqn Comd	**Maj John Crackett TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) John Lloyd**

ARRIVALS

Welcome to **SSgt Glen Martin**, who joins us as MT PSI. The shock of joining this unique TA unit is beginning to wear off as he does his best to wear out the new rowing machine.

CONGRATULATIONS

A flurry of presentations have seen Territorial Efficiency Medals or bars for newly-promoted **SSgt Halewood**, **SSgts Dawson** and **Ralston**, **Sgt Hogan**, **Cpl Harrison** and **Sig Jollife**; and UN medals for Bosnia service for **Cpl Bates** and **LCpl Bell**. Citation-reader and part-time OC Sp Tp **Lt Ged McCann** can now be booked as an MC for private functions. (And well done for passing the promotion exam!)

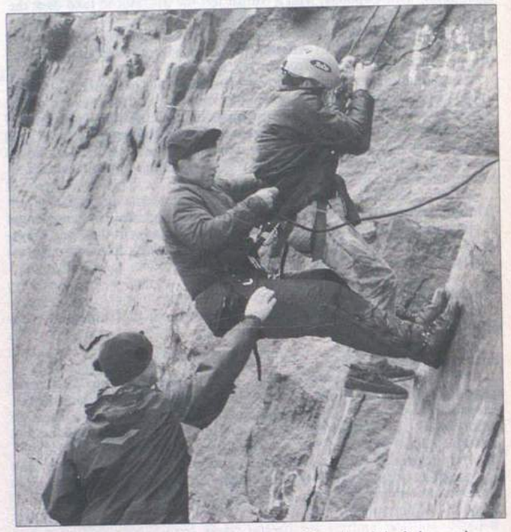
Comd 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde, Brig D.M. Wills, fails to extract a new pair of lightweights from SSgt (SQMS) Di Halewood, despite giving her a TEM.

RECRUITS

The last recruits' course was of record size–with two dozen surviving the course to bring the Squadron up to full strength. **Sig Davies** was judged Best Recruit, and a rather stunned **Sig Walters** won Most Improved Student. The Honorary Colonel, **Col Colin Herbert**, gave both of them awards. History does not record which 4 recruits were told to 'get down' during the final night patrol, and were found an hour later by the Sqn Comd and SSM, loyally guarding a 5-bar gate . . .

ACTIVITIES

The Squadron as usual added tone to 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde by providing VHF rebros for Ex Winter Eagle. **Cpl Hogan** is still trying to decide whether it is more difficult to drive up The Wrekin or to drive down (when he was only half-way up he was neither up nor down). Radcon was so carefully concealed on an airfield by Ops Offr **Capt Kenny Sirr** that the Sqn Comd took an hour to find it. Ex Aintree Spring was meant to blow off the cobwebs in March, and Leek provided weather suitable to the task. Sterling effort in the cookhouse by **Cpl Fahey** and (pressed help) **Sig Woodford** fed 91 ranks to an excellent standard. Mention must be made of the RQMS, **WO2 Jim Brebner**, and his high-priced team of sandwich-makers. Meanwhile single detachment deployments have taken in Germany and Belgium, and the Squadrons' Para section took part in Swiss Raid Commando–the first Allied jump into that country.



Cpls O'Sullivan and Gilbanks guide wheelchair-bound Mr Chris Peters down a charity abseil in aid of Fazackerly Childrens Hospital.

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

Sqn Comd	**Capt 'Mac' McCrindle**
YofS	**SSgt Pete van den Broek**
Cpl Mick Murphy	
LCpl 'Aus' Gambles	
LCpl Andy Johnstone	
Sig 'Andy 2' Powell	
Sig 'Vic' Vernon	
Sig Scott Yuill	

The second week of February saw **LCpl Andy Johnstone**, **Sigs** 'Andy 2' **Powell**, 'Vic' **Vernon** and **Scott Yuill** back at school as they deployed to the Army Education Centre in Fallingbostel for a Computer Literacy and Information technology course. Despite their tinkering with the COMSEC computer based equipment, they were still able to learn a great deal from the course, including how to lose all your work as well as crash computers. The general consensus was that the classroom equipment was 'primitive' and 'quaint'. We've got better kit in the back of our trucks!

Ex Green Star, a pre-Bosnia exercise for HQ 7 Armd Bde and 2 RRF, was the first field deployment of 1997 to a wet, wet, wet Sennelager training area. While the OC, YofS and **Cpl Mick Murphy** put the kit through its paces, the remainder of the team helped out the Armoured Infantry Training Advisory Team (AITAT) by playing other characters in the plot.

LCpl Andy Johnstone and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** teamed up with **Col Tehman** from the German civil police, on leave from the International Police Task Force in Bosnia, to masquerade as international policemen. They were able to wear some very nice black plastic noddy suits that crinkled and rustled every time they moved. They also assisted SFOR troops in their tasks by searching civilian police stations for illegal arms, supervising the burying and exchange of bodies and also (not in the script) managing to stop a mob of unruly civilians from entering the HQ. Isn't that the job the gate guards are supposed to do?

Sigs 'Andy 2' **Powell** and **Scott Yuill** assisted the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and were able to wear some very nice white plastic noddy suits which also crinkled and rustled every time they moved. They were given a Gucci Frontera to drive around as they mediated between warring factions when they were not burying the dead, exchanging bodies and handing out food. The exercise culminated in hostilities between the warring factions and the stage was set for a battle between SFOR and the factions, duly witnessed by the COMSEC team. The exercise was a break from the ordinary and gave us a good insight into the roles of other organisations.

The next deployment was Ex Prairie Eagle, a Kings Royal Hussars battlegroup exercise in Poland. The COMSEC team deployed with the advance party and managed to visit the nearby towns of Drawsko Pomorskie and Kalisz Pomorskie, known as Dramburg and Kallies respectively by previous occupants. A visit to Kolbrzeg on the north coast enabled us to see where the expression 'It's Baltic!' originated as the wind howled along the beach.

As befits our role as combat communicators to the British Army, we demonstrated our ability to obtain money, chips, drinks and other strange and weird foods (most of which **Sig Scott Yuill** would not eat on the grounds that he's fussy, picky and awkward). All this despite the groups inability to speak, or even pronounce, Polish. A great deal of interest was shown by the Polish people, including a chance meeting with an old gentleman who had served with the RAF during the Battle of Britain (who wanted to get us a policeman for some reason!).

The team returned to their old home on spot height 163, the highest point in the area, and set up home. A few quantum leaps were made on learning how our system is built, due to the attendance of the YofS, **SSgt Pete van den Broek**, on an OS/2 course at the London Hilton and the team provided its normal service of interception and deception throughout the exercise. **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and the three Siggies were able to attend a DFWES demonstration for the Poles. For the uneducated, DFWES is the Direct Fire Weapons Effect Simulator, which is a load of boxes, doobries and thingies attached to the person or the vehicle and tells you when you are dead. It's sort of like laser quest or quasar, only with big tanks and things.

The team attended Commander CAFTG(G)s' briefing for the final battle of the exercise which assisted the operators listening to the battlegroup nets to have a greater understanding of what was happening on the ground. It also gave a source of black amusement as they saw the ground the units would cross and the little surprises the engineers were putting in for them! The end of the exercise saw a quick but thorough turnaround and then clouds of fumes and dust as the team departed on leave, all set to back to Poland for another few weeks.

Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and **Sarah** on the birth of their son **Callum**.

University of London OTC

OC	**Capt J. Dodd**
PSI	**WO2 (SSM) D. W. Craig**
JUO	**I. Curphey**

R. SIGNALS TROOP
ULOTC VISIT TO 1 (UK) ADSR AT HERFORD, GERMANY
by 2Lt Sarah Williams

The ULOTC R Signals Tp visit to 1(UK) ADSR began with a 600 mile journey on Thursday 13 February from our TA Centre in Handel Street, London. We were full of optimism for what would prove to be an extremely informative and worthwhile trip to Herford, Germany. Even the 10 hour journey did not dampen the enthusiasm.

Towards the end, however, somewhere on the Route 2, Tom Jones, the **Sgt Major**'s CD, was wearing a bit thin!

The ULOTC visit was organised by **Sgt Maj Dougie Craig** in conjunction with **Lt Col Pratley**, CO of 1 (UK) ADSR (and a former OC from days spent with 8 Inf Bde). The aim was to provide the OCdts with an inimitable insight into the workings of a regular Signals Unit, giving them a chance to meet the Officers and Soldiers and to participate in Mess life–very different in BFG to it's UK counterpart! We had a unique opportunity to glimpse this Armoured, Ptarmigan equipped Regiment fresh from it's Bosnia exploits.

An apprehensive but enthusiastic 12 Tp (R. Signals) ULOTC is met by 2Lt Barnard

On Friday morning a very tired (if unremittingly cheerful) group of 15 arrived in Herford. Here **Lt Sue Barnard** with her 'flexible' programme greeted us (obviously she had had some experience of OCdts before!). The rewarding, varied and extremely busy visit began with AFV driver training on what was soon turned into one of the muddiest training areas in Minden North. **OCdt Smith** proved her driving really is as eventful as people say it is, whilst **OCdt Elliot Harper** demonstrated that University student he may now be but Royal Signals trained he remains - first, fastest and most daring around the course! No satisfactory solution was found as to how to dispose of the trees felled by **OCdts David Brooks** and **Harriet Smith**–destroying the evidence rather than 'replanting' seemed the favoured method but I think the Burgemeister had us anyway! Without even feeling their fatigue through the adrenaline, everyone returned to the Mess for the first Regimental Dinner Night since the Regiment deployed to Bosnia in 1996. The Subalterns wasted no time in teaching the Cadets a thing or two about Mess games as **OCdt Penny Johns** and the CO's spurs will attest to.

Saturday began with an extremely rewarding and informative look at Fwd HQ set up by 211 Sqn under the auspices of OC, **Maj Harwell**. This was particularly enjoyable because as members of the OTC, it is not an opportunity frequently awarded to us. This was closely followed by a Military Skills Competition–Orienteering, SAT, Vehicle Recognition and Weapons Drills formed the events (courtesy of the Regimental Training Wing). Although **JUO Ian Curphey** and **OCdts Tracey Parrott** and **Paul Hughes** won the competition, that missing checkpoint remains a bone of contention!

The customary Saturday night 'Subbies eye view' of Herford complete with Go Park and Gyros resulted in 13 very poorly (and by now very tired) but extremely happy cadets tackling Ptarmigan on Sunday morning. Ptarmigan is not something we of the OTC get a chance to learn about very often. So the day spent with six Radio Relay detachments on each of the three camps–Wentworth, Hammersmith and Harewood–allowed the cadets to gain a unique chance to see first hand the problems of 'getting the comms in'. Many thanks to the Det Cmds whose wealth of experience and knowledge proved invaluable as was the expert coaching received from the NCOs, thus ensuring that ULOTC Signals Tp will achieve victory in this year's Lightning Strike Mast Race!

Miss Penny Johns leads the way in the Mast Race

A Bosnia Briefing was quickly followed by a Troop meal in a local German restaurant (aptly named 'Dalmatien' but then it was a Balkan Grill). A wonderful evening was had by all, entirely representative of the hospitality and welcoming treatment we received from all at 1 (UK) ADSR. Everyone got the most out of PT the next morning (we knew it was bad when Para-wannabe **OCdt Gareth Lambert** turned pale and asked for water). This didn't stop the obligatory duty free purchases that proved invaluable 12 hours later when stuck in Calais by striking Frenchmen!

The four day trip to 1 (UK) ADSR was an extremely beneficial, informative and rewarding one. The programme was both interesting and enjoyable and gave the Troop an enviable insight into the workings of a Divisional Signals Regt. An even more admirable feat considering the visit was hosted over the weekend! Many thanks for the hard work of all those involved in making it such a complete success.

Lancashire Army Cadet Force

Four Army Cadets from the Ormskirk Detachment of the Lancashire Army Cadet Force have achieved the coveted Cadet Signals Award. The course which took place at their detachment and during weekends spent at 42 Sig Sqn (Liverpool) over a period of four months was adjudicated by **Sgt Ian Cawson** (33 Sigs Regt). Our photograph shows him with **Lt Col Moreland** (OC 33 Sigs Regt.) and **RSM Kevin Hallett** (33 Sigs Regt) during the award ceremony which took place in April at the detachment hut. The Cadets are (Back row) **Liam Fairley** aged 14, **Cdt Sergeant Stephen Lowry** (17) and in the front row twins **Stephen** and **Johnathon Walsh** (15).

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col J. E. F. Kirby OBE**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt I. Gray** Glasgow Mil
Secretaries:	
General	**Capt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2849
Dinghy & Dayboats	**SSgt Bungay** Blandford Mil 2409
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	**SSgt N. Finnegan** Osnabruck Mill 2225
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster** Bulford Mil
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** York Mil 2346
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney** Bulford Mil

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club. If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

The season is about to start for the Offshore, Dinghy and Dayboats and has already got off to an excellent start for the Windsurfers. Watch our next entry for the announcement on a replacement for *Skywave*

WINDSURFING

R Signals Windsurfing is now well underway for 1997. The season opened with two days of training at Thorney Island where **Jane Clague** (a professional windsurfer and Olympic 2000 candidate) coached some 19 Corps members. The quality of the training was first class and the fun and the atmosphere generated by all carried through to the evening . . .

The first of the inter-Corps events was held at Hayling Island in conjunction with the UKBSA southern region series, totaling over 100 competitors. The previous Corps training certainly paid off. The R Signals convincingly beat our main rivals the REME by over 30 points. Once again we dominated the Army effort by entering 13 Sailors just for our Corps!

The Corps now has six brand new Fanatic Boards for 1997, complete with 7.5m² ART Sails. In addition, the Mistral boards which were due to be sold off have remained in the Corps (due to the high demand for boards) and are going off to our up and coming fleet of excellent sailors.

If you have not received a newsletter and would like to know more about what is going on, either competitively or on the instructional side, contact **Capt John Coleman** on Bassingbourn Mil (765) 4220.

Dinghy Sailing 1997

BLANDFORD CAMP SAILING CLUB
HAVE NOW INCREASED THEIR
HIRE FLEET SIZE FOR 1997.

WE NOW HAVE A FLEET OF
12 TOPPER DINGHIES
(ON 2 ROAD TRAILERS),
COMPLETE WITH BUOYANCY AIDS.

For Further Details Contact
SSGT STEVE BUNGAY ON
BLANDFORD MIL (737) 2409 PHONE/FAX.

SPORT

CORPS FOOTBALL RESULTS

ROYAL SIGNALS v ARMY MEDICAL SERVICES

Result 3–1. Scorers: **Sig Stephenson, Sig Galliford** (2)

Due to injuries and unavailability of regular players the Corps fielded a much weakened team for this Merit League fixture. It took the whole of the first half for the team to settle down and neither team produced a goal scoring chance. The Corps started the second half with more commitment and understanding resulting in a goal after five minutes by **Sig Galliford**. The Corps now took control of the game and scored two further goals through **Sig Stephenson** and a second for **Sig Galliford**. A lack of concentration in the Signals defence allowed the AMS to score a consolation goal in the last minute. A good result considering the players not available.

ROYAL SIGNALS v ROYAL LOGISTIC CORPS

Result 3–1. Scorers: **Sig Stephenson, Sig Galliford** (2)

This was a much improved performance from that against the AMS the previous day. Signals dominated from the first whistle and were rewarded with an excellent volleyed goal by **Sig Galliford** after five minutes. Signals continued to dominate play and **Sig Stephenson** scored a second goal midway through the half. The second half started much as the first had finished with the Signals on top and but for some excellent saves by the RLC goalkeeper would have added further to the score. A third goal was however scored midway through the half by **Sig Galliford** at the second attempt his first shot having been saved. Signals play became less urgent after this goal allowing the RLC to start to control the game which resulted in a goal. Although the RLC had more of the play in the last 10 minutes they were unable to add to the score. This was a very professional and controlled performance by the Corps team.

ROYAL SIGNALS v ARMY AIR CORPS

Result 4–0. Scorers: **Sigs Stephenson, Galliford, Johnston, Miller**

The Signals got off to a good start scoring in the first minute through **Sig Johnston** after a scramble in the goalmouth. The Signals continued to dictate play and scored a second goal midway through the half through **Sig Stephenson**. **Sig Miller** scored a third goal before half time with the Signals well on top. The second half started as dramatically as the first with the Signals scoring in the first minute through **Sig Galliford**. Although the Signals continued to control the game play was scrappy with very few chances created. After the excellent performance against the RLC this was a rather mediocre performance but a good result.

SPONSORSHIP FOR CORPS FOOTBALL

In recent years ETS Communications Ltd of Wakefield have kindly and generously sponsored the Corps football team. This year we are delighted that they have again agreed to continue their sponsorship in conjunction with Crane Telecommunications of Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

ETS have their origins in the Corps as Frank Hall, who set up the Company in 1980, is Ex Royal Signals. It is his daughter Allison who now holds the reins of the family business.

The Corps is grateful for this very generous offer of sponsorship.

Col Cliff Walters, President of Corps Football,
at the presentation of a cheque for £2,000 by
Mrs Allison Hall-Jackson, ETS Communications Ltd and
Mr David George, Crane Telecommunications Ltd.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig C. T. Garton Area 1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3; Brig K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans CBE Area 5; Lt Col J. G. Billingham Wales; Maj R. Sampson CBE Scotland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.
All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

BEDFORD BRANCH

Secretary Trevor E. Holyoake

Bedford Branch enjoyed a very good year in 1996 with a variety of Social and other Events. We started the year in January with a visit to the Mayor's Parlour in Bedford Town Hall, the Mayor being ex-Signals 23394088 **Malcom Evans**, 1957/59 serving, at sometime, in Cyprus. We had a very interesting evening on the history of Bedford from a well-informed **Malcom**.

In February: Our Annual Dinner with the Mayor and Mayoress as our guest with members from as far afield as Portsmouth, North Yorkshire and Worcestershire, with wives and friends totalling 53, in the pleasant surroundings of Bedford & County Golf Club.

In March: a group of members with, once again our wives, were guest's of **Yeoman Warden Ray Saunders-Crook** at the Tower of London for the evening Key's Ceremony, with gory, stomach churning tales on the tour given by **Ray**.

In April: I attended the Reps. meeting at Blandford, this time due to the cost of extra travelling and overnight stay in London, our Branch was unable to fund another member to go with me.

In May: some of our Branch members who were with 54 Squadron, 36 Sig Regt (V) attended an 'Old Boys' Reunion Dinner at Letchworth.

In June: I and **Bob Sheridan**, due to a last minute cancelled space, attended the Blandford Reunion, several more members would have liked to come along but cannot afford the extra B&B cost's. I know it is a sore point with other Branch's.

In July: Instead of our usual monthly meeting we held a Social Evening with a very profitable raffle. There were 11 very good donated prizes and a nice buffet.

In August: A Peace Day Service arranged by Bedford R.B.L was held in our local Bedford United Services Associations Club following the successful V.J. Day service last year to remember the end of the War. Local Branch members attended and it is now to be held annually.

In September: Several members with wives, families and friends enjoyed an outing to Norfolk. On arrival at Aylsham we boarded a train of the Bure Valley Narrow Gauge Railway for a 45 minute trip to Wroxham. After a short walk we boarded a boat for a 2 hour cruise on the Norfolk Broads, returning back via the railway to our coach for the trip home, stopping on route in Fordham near Newmarket at the Royal British Legion club for an evening buffet.

In October: With kind permission from the R.S.M. at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and our guide ex-Signals **WO Ken Coombs** 25 members, families and friends enjoyed the hospitality of a tour and the evening in the In-Pensioners Club, joining us was ex-Bedford PSI, **In-Pensioner Tommy Goldsmith**.

In November: our members attended Remembrance Festivals and Services held in and around Bedford.

Lastly in December we held our Annual Christmas Draw and Social evening. Originally started in 1982 to raise money for our Branch Standard when tickets were sent to every Branch, now it is kept to Bedford Branch members only and is still very popular and making our main source of income, 20 very good donated prize's this time. Another good turn out.

The entire outing's buffets are supported by Branch funds to keep individual costs down. As you can see a very busy 1996 but very entertaining.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Sad to say Brighton has not contributed very often to *The Wire*. Your new scribe hopes to improve matters. What can I say about this Branch? It has made me very welcome and at the Annual Dinner Dance I presented a solid silver Rose Bowl to the Branch. It commemorates the theatres of war in which the R. SIGNALS Carrier Pigeons were used in World War II.

We have 120 members but are always anxious to recruit more. We meet at the Drill Hall in Dyke Road, Brighton, on the first Friday of the month,

Mr Joe Morrison with the Rose Bowl

but not August. Anyone interested in joining us should contact **Phillip West** (Sec) on 01903 530431.

Our January meeting was held in the middle of winter, we were colder than Moscow! So we just had a general chat. In February we held the Branch AGM. Our AGM was very well attended and we had to use our large hall. Perhaps I should explain that we use 884 Tp's room, which has a very pleasant bar and a splendid barman (volunteer), but it can only hold about thirty people. Under new arrangements we can now use the lecture room which can seat up to two hundred people. The AGM went smoothly and everyone seemed satisfied. Our thanks go to **Brig Colin Brown** for his active support as our President. Nor must we forget our hard working officers and committee. In March our two Gurus, **Barry** and **Blanche** organised our annual Quiz. Rumour has it that they spent a month searching out the most awful questions. Needless to say there was, of course, argument about the answers. 'Which is the largest island?' 'Australia.' 'No. It's Greenland.' 'But Australia is an island. It has sea all round it.' ' Yes, that may be so but it is a continent.' 'Oh no it's not.' 'Oh yes it is.' At this point Joe Soap who sits at the bar dozing, apart from when he wakes up to call for a large gin and tonic, woke up and said 'Australia! Australia! Do you want me to tell you about Australia and the last war?' 'No. No.' we all shout in unison. After a tie-break **Ken Brown** and **Bill Barlow** were the winners. Our great thanks go to **Barry** and **Blanche Foreman**, the dreaded Gurus. In April **Inspector Chris Poole**, from the Sussex Police Air Support Unit, came to talk about the 'chopper' which often seems to hover over my house. What a crowd turned up–we made £43 out of the raffle that was organised by **Charlie** and **Naomi Barr**. Thank you both. A splendid speaker **Chris** is one of the few people who do not have their slides upside down, on edge or back to front and he certainly knows his stuff. We are very proud of the Sussex Police force that has to cope with a lot of crime. The 'chopper', which is on hire, does one thousand five hundred tasks. It costs about one penny per person per week to operate, wonderful value! **Chris** also told us many humorous stories. He dislikes police dogs. One day he put his hand in a police car-boot and promptly got bitten on the backside by the nearest police dog! On another occasion the chopper landed at the base of Beachy Head to rescue a child. The crew kept an eye on the tide, which was coming in, as it would have been a bit difficult to explain to 'the Chief' that his chopper had floated off to France. Many thanks to **Chris Poole**.

Finally we must not forget that we had a most welcome visit from **Roy Andrews** and his charming wife. We hope to see them again. It is good to know that we have such active people.

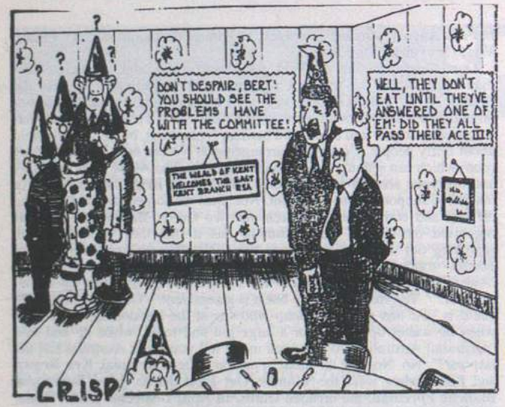
EAST KENT BRANCH

There was a disappointing turnout for the Ten Pin Bowling but the Committee considered it was probably of there own making! We had invited members to Bowl off at 1100 hrs. To do so **Bill Lovett** left home at 0845hrs that was a noble effort for a Sunday morning. The result was that nearly all the participants were from the local area. We will have a later start next year. However, there was no lack of enthusiasm, or for that matter expertise amongst those present **Fred Oaten**, last years' winner, was a little off form though **Kevin** certainly showed style. There were plenty of other styles too some caused by arthritis or rheumatism and others through sheer joie de vivre. From all this emerged a new winner-**Pat Andrews** who massed a score of 144 (without the aid of fenders!) and 18 points ahead of her nearest rival, the Hon Sec was the best man! She was presented with the Branch Trophy by the Chairman who then went on to present the wooden spoon, in Corps colours (donated by **Roy Andrews**), to **Bill Causer** and a Kit-Kat each to **Catherine Allison** and **Hilda Watkin-Edwards** as compensation for their valiant but disappointing efforts.

Dining out the Chairman. To say thank-you to **Roy Andrews** for his work on the Committee since its inception in 1992. In particular for his Chairmanship in the last two years, the Committee and their wives dined him out on the 6 February. The dinner was held in the Hon Secs' house where the 20 diners gathered. A short Committee meeting was held before sitting down to the festivities. There was good humour, good food and very good company. **Trevor Allison** thanked **Roy** and presented him with a photocopy of the Branch Photograph Album. The evening was lightened by the Hon Sec going through the bottom of his chair. **Gordon Alexander** tried emulating a ghost by attempting to walk through a plate glass door and the whole company on their knees on the floor playing Racing Demon.

Donald Crisp actually produced the cartoon before our Sunday event took place and we are glad to report that the general knowledge of the 40 members present was a bit better than that depicted! It was perfectly clear that it was Mothering Sunday as downstairs in the main dining room some 250 people were enjoying a matriarchal lunch. Our thanks go to **Bert Sawyer** who organised the quiz. The questions ranged from the crossword type to those connected with the Corps. Who can remember what TDPLS stands for? The winning group was made up of the **Bewseys**, **Castles**, **Hughes** and **Weets**, each of whom received an Easter Egg as their prize. Who is able to recognise **Maj Gen John Badcock** and **Lt Col Bert Sawyer** from the cartoon? Afterwards we enjoyed a delicious roast lunch.

Sadly it is au revoir to **Colin** and **Mary Smith** who have moved away to Bishops Stortford and so have resigned but will be joining their local Branch and we hope to see them at Blandford. **Jimmy Hands** has gone into the Royal Marsden for a small operation and hope to see him back very soon. There seems to have been a plethora of wedding anniversaries of late, the most notable of which was **George** and **Bernadette Cooper**'s Golden Wedding. It hardly seems possible for such a young looking couple. We wish them every happiness for the future.



GLASGOW BRANCH

December 1996 the branch held a social evening in the JRC's mess which included a Christmas Draw, the proceeds going toward the 'Blandford Fund'. It will allow some members who have never seen the new museum at least one opportunity in their lifetime to make this visit, and offset the expense of travel.

February 1997 a social evening was held to allow the members to say farewell to **WO1 (RSM) Graham Reith** and his wife **Moira**. The RSM has been posted on commissioning. He was presented with a bronze coloured statue of 'Jimmy' by the Branch Chairman **Bill Taylor** on behalf of the members. In his speech, **Bill** thanked the RSM for his support during the time he had been with the Regiment.

The RSM replied that he had enjoyed his time with the Regiment, and been happy in his association with the Branch members at their functions. He was pleased that his efforts to assist in any way were appreciated. He thanked the members for the gift and said it would have pride of place wherever he went.

Moira was then presented with a bouquet by **Jim Prentice** who thanked her on behalf of the members for her support. We wish her well and every happiness in the future.

The AGM of the Branch was held on Tuesday 15 April 1997. The Honorary President **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson CB** presided. In his foreword, he said: 'It gives me great pleasure to see the branch maintaining its excellent record on membership, finance and activity. This reflects very creditably on the commitment of individual members, and the continuing efforts of your hard working committee. Your monthly meetings and social events were all well attended. The St Andrew's Day Dinner and Ball was especially popular and **Maj Gen Yeoman** and his wife were as impressed with this Gala event as I was. It was self evident that everyone who came enjoyed the occasion greatly. I understand that the Christmas Draw was also a big success again last year. Your strong contingent in the Armistice Parade on 10 November was very creditable and all those who took part are to be congratulated. As always the branch is indebted to 32 (Scottish) Regt for their continuing support and encouragement. I wish you all well in the coming year.'

Bill Taylor in his Chairman's report stated that the efforts on Channel Four Teletext and local media had resulted in some new members. The membership stands at 82 with 12 associate members and he thanked **Jim Prentice** for his help in this. He mentioned the visit of **Maj Gen A. Yeoman CB** and **Lt Col I. Hamilton** and the visit to the Edinburgh Military Tattoo accompanied by the Hon President and **Mrs Anderson**. The visit to Warcop by 15 branch members, and the smart turnout of 28 members at the Remembrance Day service in George Square, Glasgow, with the Branch Standard paraded. 116 members, friends and guests attended the St Andrews Dinner Dance, our largest gathering yet. He mentioned the excellent evening of the Christmas Draw and thanked **Dominic** and his team for their hard work, and members who donated prizes. On behalf of the members **Bill** welcomed the new CO of the Regiment, **Lt Col Alan Lapsley** and **WO1 (RSM) Jim McLachlan**, both well known to some members. Wishing them and their families a happy stay in Glasgow and a long association with the branch. He also wished to thank everybody at 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) for their help last year, the use of the TA Centre and its facilities, **Mr** and **Mrs Dollan**, **Eric** and **Ivana**, the Social Committee, all new members, their families and friends, for the support given to him in making it a successful year.

Eric McWaters the Branch Treasurer can go on his holidays in the knowledge that he has left the branch funds in the black. He also indicated his willingness to serve a further term as Treasurer and, after the meeting, set up shop selling ties and ladies scarves with the branch insignia.

Ivana Hamilton Branch Secretary, in her report said that there were 40 full members and 12 associate members attending monthly meetings regularly. She sold tickets in the Christmas draw to her workmates which won two prizes. (So maybe next time she could sell double the number?). She reported that the buildings should be ready for occupancy in Blandford, in time for the 1997 reunion, and we may be granted reserved space. **Ivana** will be attending the area meeting to obtain the latest information from RHQ. **Ivana** thanked the members for their support, and intimated her willingness to stay on as secretary of the branch.

Dominic Sheridan the Social Convenor, reported on the various functions arranged last year and thanked the members for their support. But he pointed out that any future functions to be a success and profitable, must continue to have much more support. He acknowledged thanks to 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) for use of their accommodation and facilities free of charge, to **Mr** and **Mrs Dollen** for all their help, to the WO's and Sgt's Mess for our monthly meetings with bar facilities. Thanks to the PMC and members of the JRC, and the Branch Committee and entertainments committee for their hard work over the past year. A special thanks to all members attending functions, for donations of prizes and for setting up and clearing the hall.

This being the election year of the committee, the President asked for nominations to fill the offices of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. There were no new nominations and the existing committee were asked if they were willing to stay on. They did agree, but with the proviso that members be appointed to act as understudies. Led by the Branch Chairman **Bill Taylor**, this committee has made the branch such a success from its inception, that they were voted in office unanimously for a further term.

It was emphasised that all the branch members must give their help and full support to the committee for continuing success.

There being no other business the President then closed the meeting and was given a round of applause in appreciation of his attendance. The members then adjourned to enjoy a buffet provided by the entertainments committee with **Mrs Dollan** at the bar to serve refreshment.

GUERNSEY BRANCH

Our AGM, which was held on Thursday 13 February 1997, was the last for our Branch Chairman who did not stand for re-election. **John Rudkin**, who has been at the helm for the last 19 years, expressed his thanks and appreciation, for the support he had received from all Members of the Branch during his lengthy tenure. In his turn our Hon. Sec, **Tom Remfrey**, paid tribute to **John**'s exemplary service which included:–Serving with the Corps: January 1943-September 1947 (RARO until December 1961), R. Signals Association: Joined March 1969, Branch Chairman 1978-1997. In 1993 to mark 50 years of service to R Signals he was presented with the 'Award of Honour Membership', the Association lapel badge being presented by the then Bailiff of Guernsey, **Sir Charles Frossard**. **Tom** said, 'I would like to place on record the thanks of the Guernsey Branch, and indeed of the Corps, for the exemplary record of our retiring Chairman. **John** has, amongst a lot of failing ex-service associations, kept our Association alive and kicking. That is a record to envy but, of his many achievements, his tenure of office has been characterised by his unfailing concern for all members of the Branch and particularly those who have needed support and assistance. Thank you, **John**, for all that you have done.' All members present echoed his sentiments. In the absence of any formal nomination and in response to the request of the outgoing Chairman, **Mike Brock** has kindly agreed to take the Chair.

Social events last year included a very successful Dinner Night at the Cobo Bay Hotel on 10 May and a most enjoyable Christmas Dinner on 13 December at which a raffle and auction raised the sum of £172.99. Finally we wish a speedy recovery to our dear friend and Committee Member, **Vera Falia** and hope that she is soon able to join husband **Stan** at the committee table.

LINCOLN BRANCH

It is with much regret that we report the passing of a respected comrade and founder member **Dick Fox** who died on 28 January 1997 our deepest sympathy was conveyed to **Mrs Emma Fox** and family at their great loss. 'We will remember him.'

The Branch held it's first AGM at the new venue of Sabraon Barracks, Burton Road, Lincoln. Our Branch President, **Maj Frank Philp**, chaired it. Our report on the activities for 1996 is as follows, the two Curry suppers and social evenings were a great success. The highlight of the year was the Annual Christmas Dance and Social held on 25 November 1996 at the Sabraon Barracks. **Ann** and **Dave Metcalfe** did us proud with the lay out of the tables for the buffet decorated by the Lincolnshire Regimental Silver. They also put on a marvellous carvery style buffet, to put in a nutshell the music was great the food was superb for all this our wholehearted thanks go to, **Maj Vic Clark** and **Maj Derek Wood MBE** for their organisation of the event.

At the Christmas Dance the Presentation of a 50 Year Badge was made by the branch President, **Maj Frank Philp** to the Branch Secretary, **Frank Robinson**. On the same occasion we were honoured by the presence of the new CO, **Maj McComb** and his charming wife. Also five members of the 399 Signal Unit Digby, they being **WO2 (SSM) Mick Tait,** (SS) **Sutherland,** (SS) **Trethewey, LCpls Ford**, **Long**, **Christen** they were warmly welcomed by our Branch President and a good time was had by all who attended.

(*Right*) Branch President Maj Frank Philp presents the 50 Year Badge and Certificate to the Hon Secretary Frank Robinson (*Left*)

1997 is a important year in that it will be 21 years ago we formed the Lincoln Branch of the RSA. The date was the 27 May 1976 and our first meeting was at the TAVR Drill Hall Newport Lincoln on 9 August 1976 and was attended by 19 Ex Signals. We are still going strong. Comrades have passed away but new faces fill the ranks.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

After a couple of false starts the Branch, under the Chairmanship of **Colin Dadson** ably assisted by the Honorary Secretary, **Margaret Dadson** continues to thrive and has now been in existence since 1988.

During the past 12 months we have enjoyed visits to Scarborough to see Joe Longthorne, to Tetleys Brewery Leeds and to the Kearton Guest House in the Dales. In each case we managed to almost fill the coach with members, guests and wives, and as the annual balance sheet shows we actually made a small profit.

The Annual Raffle and Buffet Supper proved a huge success as usual and was held in November 1996 rather earlier than usual, but we were dependent upon the availability of accommodation in the JRC. Continuing the subject of food our Annual Dinner was held at the Claxton Hotel, Redcar in March and proved a huge success. Some 50 members attended with friends and in anticipation of Easter, everyone received an Easter Egg.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 27 March 1997, a few days after the Dinner. We celebrated this with a Pie and Pea Supper that was organised by our Vice-Chairman **Dick Grainge** and **Audrey Grainge**. **Colin** and **Margaret** were re-elected as Chairman and Secretary respectively and **Dick Grainge** and **Audrey Grainge** continue to serve as Vice Chairman and Assistant Secretary. **Billy Watson** is also on hand if needed. **John Grange** continues as our loyal standard bearer and incidentally has actually carried the Standard on 18 occasions already this year.

Any Signallers or former Signallers interested in joining us should contact **Margaret** on 01642 478347.

READING BRANCH

My thoughts–Why do you suppose I was stood on a cold windy corner in Windsor at 11a.m. on Remembrance Sunday when I could have been at Reading (Brock Barracks) or even near home at Caversham (War memorial). I could even have been watching the Cenotaph service on TV.

If you are like me you'll have more questions than answers. Let me explain. I joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1944. Did my time and was demobbed. I had a career . . . I needed the money to feed our 5 children and my wife and myself, so had to work. In fact not much time for much else. Then when I retired I once again remembered that I was a Life Member of the RSA, (I had a little blue card somewhere among my possessions), and thought maybe I ought to 'give 'em a call'. I think I must be among the majority who didn't keep in touch. I was welcomed to the Reading Branch and accepted their culture . . . and that's why I was in Windsor. The Berkshire Yeomanry is there . . . and they're wearing the badge of the Royal Signals. It is our nearest unit of R Signals so we just went along and marched with them. I was given a history lesson that made me realise that you can't just pick up the threads where you left off. Too much has changed.

The latest news:

Reading Branch has given up meeting in the Brock Barracks (at night), and has begun meeting in more congenial convivial surroundings (on Saturday mornings). If the first meeting is any measure, we ll soon be looking for larger rooms.

Brig and **Mrs Olds** attended the Reading Branch of the R Signals Association held on Friday 21 March where the members stood in silent tribute to their colleagues who had died since the branch was formed. Members travelled from as far as Colchester and Brighton to hear the President compare the branch to a Cruise Liner where the majority were enjoying the ride. He said, 'The ship would sink without the crew that navigates and organises the day to day running. I salute the crew.'

Pauline Tennant the retiring Hon Secretary was presented with a personal memento by the retiring Chairman, **Alan Foot**. **Col H. Shorter** was elected Chairman and **Alan Foot** volunteered to change his hat to that of Hon Secretary. The usual excellent Buffet and Raffle followed the meeting.

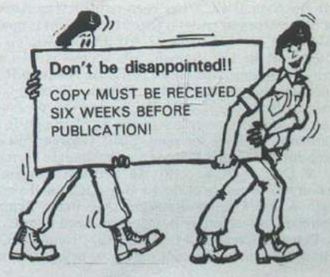
SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT BRANCH

The first quarter of the year is always a busy period for the Branch. The Annual Dinner & Dance was held on 31 January and as usual was fully attended. The guest of honour was **Col Dudley Moore** RA. He spoke on the subject of 'Communications', sharing some of his reminiscences from El Alamein, through the desert, Sicily, Italy and Northwest Europe. Naturally referring to his involvement with 'The Signals'. Our President, 'Murdo' **MacLeod**, proposed the Loyal Toast, Secretary **John Reaney** gave the Address whilst Vice Chairman, **Graham Krinks**, was the Master of Ceremonies. The Standard was marched into the function room to the accompaniment of the Regimental March by **Bill Whalley**. The dinner was attended by the Branch Members and their guests including those from the Polish Combatants Association, the Anglo-Polish Society, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Artillery and prominent members of the town community.

At the AGM held on 20 February there was a reshuffle of appointments. The Chair is now occupied by **Bruce Gillingham** (ex SAS, so no malingering allowed) with the Vice-Chairman now being **Dave Carrier**. **John Reaney** has given up the Chair to enable him to devote more time to the duties of Welfare Officer. Those who are continuing in office are President 'Murdo' **MacLeod**, Vice-President and Standard Bearer **Graham Krinks**, Secretary **Roger Stanforth**, Treasurer **Bernard Moorcroft** and Padre **Rev. John Roberts**.

The Branch Annual Church Parade took place on Palm Sunday at the Unitarian Church, the Minister being an ex-Royal Signals Radio Mechanic, **Rev John Roberts**. Flowers for the church were kindly provided by **Mrs Hornby**, the widow of a past Chairman of the Branch. The Parade was well attended and as custom the Members marched into church behind the Standard that was carried by **Graham Krinks**. Chairman, **Bruce Gillingham**, gave the Exhortation and President, 'Murdo' **MacLeod**, gave the Kohima Epitaph. After the Parade the church officials kindly invited the Branch to refreshments.

All thoughts are now being directed to the Branch Representatives Meeting and the Blandford Reunion. In conclusion, the Branch wishes to thank **Maj C. Reynolds-Jones** for all his interest in our affairs during his term as Area 2 Representative. We hope he and **Bridget** enjoy their new life in Essex.



SWINDON BRANCH

The Swindon Branch led by its President, **Lt Col D. Gent (Retd)**, visited the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry at work. A Squadron is the Nuclear and Chemical Survey Squadron of the Royal Yeomanry. Its task is to detect and mark out areas of chemical and nuclear contamination in the event of the use of these weapons.

The Squadron is equipped with the FUCHS a highly sophisticated German vehicle that first saw operational use in the Gulf War. It is totally sealed and air conditioned and is equipped with advanced detection and analysis equipment. The members of Swindon Branch were very impressed with both the equipment and the men of the Unit .

YORK BRANCH

The Branch Annual Dinner was held at the Sergeants' Mess, Imphal Barracks at York during November, by the kind invitation of **WO1 (RSM) W. Gray** (2 Sig Regt). The members, their ladies and guests under the Presidency of our new Branch Chairman, **Tony Spray**, enjoyed a very pleasant evening. **Tony** has taken over from **John Varlow**, who has been a staunch RSA supporter since the far off post-war days. As Chairman, **John** was year by year unanimously re-elected with acclaim and without opposition. As we all know it does happen, but in this case with very good cause. The Branch owes a debt of gratitude for **John**'s long and successful tenure. It was fitting that the Master at our Annual Dinner should present his 50-Year Badge to him in 1994.

We also have a change of Branch Secretary, **Mel Dawkins** having taken over from **Tony Leavesley**. **Tony**, a Branch Member since 1947, took over as Secretary in 1964. This after stints in the other committee chairs and by his efforts and dedication has ensured the continuity of the Branch. He was awarded Honour Membership in 1982 and also had the privilege of receiving his 50-Year Badge from the Master. **Tony Leavesley** served with the Y Service from 1942/47. After demob was for some years a member of the Voluntary Intercept Organisation. (Never heard of it? That was probably the intention!) This background encouraged him to arrange a visit to the Royal Navy communications station at HMS *Forest Moor*. This is located in the ullu west of Harrogate. **Tony** was actually stationed there immediately after the war when the site was in Army hands. It has now changed out of all recognition. This was a most interesting visit and our party was warmly welcomed by the Royal Navy and offered generous hospitality.

The six members who travelled down to Blandford by minibus, for the Reunion last year, much enjoyed the occasion. Our *ad hoc* Branch entertainment committee are working on delectations for 1997 to supplement our last Wednesday in the month Branch meetings.

After a low rainfall in January, the River *Ouse* in York has now flooded. This being caused by huge volumes of water descending from the Dales–stand by for a hosepipe ban!

RSA AO's NEWSDESK

BRANCH NEWS

The 1 AB Div Signals OCA has been retitled 'The Airborne Signals OCA'. **Capt Steve Morgan** (Admin Offr 216 Sig Sqn) is now the point of contact at Aldershot on 01252-349547. **Mr Jim Brown** has been elected the new secretary of the Hull Branch. His address is; 11 Greater Gutter Lane, Willerby, N. Humberside HU10 6DE. **Mr Norman Riley** has been elected the new secretary of the Newark Branch. His address is; 5 Brecon Close, Rainworth, Notts NG21 0HU. Due an overseas posting, **Tony Bird** has had to stand down as secretary of the Scarborough Branch, **Derek Rigby** (Chairman) is holding the reins. Sadly **George Colclough** passed away in March and **Mrs Ruby Price** is now holding the secretarial reins of the Glossop & District OCA. Sadly we also lost **Gordon Pickard** in March. **Gordon** was secretary of the Ex Boys OCA, and a member of the Dorset, Brighton and Reading Branches. **Mr Peter Brown** has been elected as secretary of the Torbay Branch to succeed **Tom Evans** who has stood down. **Peter**'s address is; 8 Berkeley Rise, Torquay TQ2 7LD. The Liverpool Branch's monthly meetings are now being held on the FIRST TUESDAY of each month. Whilst with Liverpool Branch, how good it is to hear that Hon Secretary **Jimmy Carruthers** is well on the mend after his serious injury. We all look forward to seeing **Jimmy** at the reunion. As a result of injuries received in a motor accident, **Bert Harber** has stood down as secretary of the Swindon Branch, we welcome **Tom Davies** to the post. Thank you **Bert** for your part in getting the Swindon Branch off to such a good start. **Tom Davies**' address is; 39 Valleyside, Swindon SN1 4NB. **Pauline Tennant** having spent 10 years in post and 26 years on the committee, has stood down as secretary of the Reading Branch. **Pauline** will continue serving the branch as the Social Secretary. **Mr Alan Foot** has been elected as the new secretary, handing over the Chair to **Col Harold Shorter**.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION CENOTAPH PARADE

As per usual, I should be receiving a limited number of (gratis) tickets for this years' Cenotaph Parade on Sunday 9 November. Most branch members parade in their local town on the day, but any member who wishes to join the Cenotaph Parade is welcome to register their name with me, (first come, first served).

The BBC are keen to give more accurate coverage of the Parade and therefore the RBL will arrange for all members of each association to march together. Accordingly, the RBL have requested the appointment of one member from each association who can act as coordinator. His/her tasks are:

a. To report to Horse Guards Parade at 0900 hrs.
b. Collect a marker board and stand in the space provided under direction of the Parade Marshall.
c. Return the marker board prior to marching off.

A volunteer for this task would be appreciated. Name to RHQ please.

NATIONAL ARBORETUM UPDATE

All but two Regiments/Corps have contributed to The Army Grove. Proposed opening is now early summer 1998. An 'Abies Procera' (Noble Fir) has been planted to mark the Royal Corps of Signals plot, which will also contain the Corps plaque. Anyone wishing to know more about the project or who would like to sponsor a tree should contact the Director on 01722-716310.

REUNION

All who wish to attend should by now have received and returned their application forms. It is important that we know how many members plan to attend, so that meals can be ordered from the caterers. It is embarrassing for both parties when members turn up on the day expecting a meal, without having previously ordered it. (There, that's off my chest!)

THE NATIONAL EX-SERVICE ASSOCIATION (NESA)

I have received the first edition (March) of the NESA News. My fears of yet another 'tin pot' attempt to get the government to do something for ex-service men and women have been proven groundless. This is a thoroughly professional looking newspaper, which has countrywide distribution. Amongst its aims is a petition for the creation of a Minister for Ex-Services Affairs. As well as pursuing its aims, the paper has plenty of interesting reading. Membership is £5.00 annually, which includes regular copies of the newspaper. Details from the Membership Secretary, Rayner House, High Hillgate, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3ER.

CONDUCTED PILGRIMAGES TO KOREA

A further series of two-week conducted pilgrimages to Korea has been announced by Korea Specialist Travel. Bookings are now being accepted for these pilgrimages, which are scheduled for the autumn of 1997 and both spring and autumn of 1998. For information, write to; Korea Specialist Travel (BKVA Section), Rayner House, 23 Higher Hillgate, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3ER, enclosing a SAE.

AGM

100 members, from 48 branches, attended the Association AGM, which was combined with the Branch Representatives Meeting at Donnington on Saturday 19 April. Items of interest from this desk are that **Maj (Retd) Mike Sexton**, of the Norfolk Branch, was elected as Area 3 Representative, vice **Capt (Retd) Jim Preston**. **Lt Col (Retd) John Billingham** was elected as Area Vice Chairman for Wales to succeed **Brig Curl**. **Maj (Retd) Ronnie Sampson** was confirmed as Area Vice Chairman for Scotland. Well done to **Dave Walker** for organising a raffle on the day, which resulted in £121 being donated to the Benevolent Fund.

NEW MEMBERS

The list below shows new life members, who joined since the last issue of *The Wire*. Hopefully most of those in 'RHQ' branch will by now have joined their local branch.

Former Rank	*Name*	*Branch*	*Served*
LCpl	J. Douglas	RHQ	1955-57
Sgt	J.F. Walter	RHQ	1942-47
Cpl	A.C. Carter	Middx Yeomanry	1939-46
Cpl	J.E. Bailey	Middx Yeomanry	1937-46
Cpl	K.P. Taylor	Middx Yeomanry	1939-46
WLCpl	J.M. Sheridan	RHQ	1948-53
Maj	C.E. Timson	Catterick	1946-86
Sig	H. Howard	RHQ	1946-48
Sig	J.A. Oldfield	RHQ	1945-48
Sgt	A.G. Godfrey	RHQ	1940-46
Sig	E.W. Anderson	RHQ	1951-53
Sig	K.C. Cattell	RHQ	1950-56
Sig	R.A. Hodges	RHQ	1948-50
Lt(now Rev)	G.H. Paton	RHQ	1941-46
LCpl	R.V. Brook	RHQ	1947-53
Sig	A.E. Funnell	RHQ	1942-46
Sig	J.T. Carter	RHQ	1945-48
Sgt	R.J. Honour	Middx Yeomanry	1939-46
Sgt	C.H. Williams	Middx Yeomanry	1940-46
WPte	A. Shoesmith	South Staffs	1941-45
Sig	A.J. Gribben	Hull	1995-date
Sig	G.P. Wragg	Hull	1995-date
Cpl	G. Wood	RHQ	1941-46
Sgt	A.S. Gardner	RHQ	1965-75
Sig	G. Fitzpatrick	RHQ	1955-57
Sgt	M.F. Court	Peterborough	1958-82
Cpl	D.A. Haynes	RHQ	1980-94
LCpl	D.G. Haynes	Peterborough	1956-62
Sig	J. Abbott	RHQ	1945-48
WLCpl	J. Davies	RHQ	1991-97
Sig	J.D. Hallett	RHQ	1992-96
Sig	L.F. Winter	RHQ	1942-46
Sig	A.C. Keen	Lincoln	1945-46
WCpl	S.S. Burch	RHQ	1942-46
Sig	K.T. Jones	RHQ	1942-47
LCpl	G. Drew	Norfolk	1942-47
Sgt	J.E. Harris	Leeds	1967-81
WO2	L.R. Elliot	RHQ	1939-46
Sgt	G.S. Rolfe	RHQ	1949-64
Sig	A.E. Davis	RHQ	1943-47
Sig	W.G. Devereux	RHQ	1942-47
Sgt	S.D. Wall	RHQ	1975-89
Cpl	K.F. Seymour	RHQ	1953-64
Dvr	W.G. Hands	RHQ	1944-47
Cpl	H. Henthorne	RHQ	1947-50
LCpl	G.R. Tyler	RHQ	1978-93
Dvr	K. Birt	Dorset	1942-47
Sig	D. Thorne	RHQ	1940-46
Capt	A.G. Taylor	Darlington	1967-93
Sig	S. Starkey	Cotswolds	1943-47
LCpl	R.T. Smithers	RHQ	1955-57
Cpl	J.W. Batt	West London	1949-67
WCpl	I.E. Walker	RHQ	1946-51
Sig	K.W. Edwards	RHQ	1938-46
LCpl	I. Cowan	Spennymoor	1992-date
WO1	C.R. Ager	Spennymoor	1970-92
Sgt	C.T. James	RHQ	1970-79
Cpl	S.P. Slater	RHQ	1973-97
Sgt	B.G. Crew	RHQ	1946-48
SSgt	P. Skinner	RHQ	1974-96
Cpl	G.S. Evans	RHQ	1943-47
WPte	M.L. Evans	RHQ	1941-46
Sig	P. Bennett	East London	1992-97
Maj	R. Taylor	219 Sig Sqn	1945-77
Lt	C.F. Lander	Middx Yeomanry	1938-52
Capt	A.F. Seymour	Dorset	1951-67
Sig	G.D. Gardner	RHQ	1992-97
LCpl	R.G. Moyse	RHQ	1939-46
Cpl	T. Crook	RHQ	1973-97
LCpl	M. Johnson	RHQ	1987-97
LCpl	G.W. Jones	RHQ	1985-97
WO2	W.G. Metcalfe	RHQ	1962-86
Sig	R.E. Ford	RHQ	1942-48
Sgt	G.D. Duffy	RHQ	1972-97
Cpl	B.A. Dundas	RHQ	1991-97
SSgt	M.W. Scott	RHQ	1974-97
LCpl	P.C. Tighe	RHQ	1983-97
Sgt	A. Liddle	Eastbourne	1941-46
LCpl	D.L. Morris	RHQ	1945-48
Sig	R.J. Whichello	RHQ	1974-78
WO2	F.E. Small	RHQ	1972-97
Sgt	M.J. Davis	RHQ	1974-97
WO1	P.A. Willams	RHQ	1951-74
SSgt	R.M. Hooper	RHQ	1964-89
Sgt	C.J. Othen	RHQ	1966-88
SSgt	R.M. Frape	RHQ	1973-97
Sgt	K.D. Wright	RHQ	1935-46
LCpl	C.J. Hard	RHQ	1938-46
WPte	M.G. Phillips	East London	1970-71
Sig	V.J. Brown	Bristol	1949-50
Sig	A.H. Haycock	Bristol	1956-58
Sig	B.A. Jones	Bristol	1950-55
Sgt	D. Spencer	RHQ	1973-97
LCpl	B.W. Blair	RHQ	1991-97
Sig	F.S. Dowler	Torbay	1943-47
Cpl	F.G. Grace	RHQ	1942-46
Sgt	F.J. Conlan	Liverpool	1948-89
WLCpl	A. Stuart	Liverpool	1944-47
Cpl	J.S. Walker	RHQ	1962-72
Sgt	C.H. Franklin	Shropshire	1939-45
Cpl	A.R. Bunnage	Winchester	1944-48
LCpl	K. Hayes	Middlesbrough	1985-97

219 Sig Sqn (Tripolitania) OCA

I have a feeling of déja vu about this months' article. My computer has crashed, bringing back memories of comms to Malta and Benghazi on a Saturday night. Nothing works! The good news is that we welcome **Maj Roger Taylor** and his wife **Nan** to the Branch. We will greet them in the true 219 fashion when we next get together. Hopefully, this may be at the end of July, if negotiations with the 'new 219' work out.

If anybody knows the whereabouts of the 'young' chaps of the 1964 rugby team, or if you recognise yourself, please drop me a line. They are

(L-R) Back Row: **Andy Jamieson, Ken Silk, Jim Taylor, Bob Treasurer, Roy Andrews, Bill Pritchard,** 'Wally' **Hammond, Roy Sutcliffe**

(L-R) Front Row: **Brian Firth, Tom Evans, Tom Wiggins, Norman Troughton, Tony Payne,** 'Red' **Matthews,** 'Dick' **Beresford**

I might add that the ex-scrum half, your correspondent, was freezing in KD at the Earls Court Radio Show when this was taken. Still, I met **Lulu** who had much more to offer. Life does have its compensations!

A friend of **Capt Cliff Hesketh** was kind enough to phone me and inform me that Cliff had sadly passed on. All members of the Branch who knew him will miss him. Especially me, I suffered many a tongue lashing from **Cliff** rather than a 252. He respected his Operators and they respected him. A very sad loss.

12th, 15th & 18th Air Formation Signal Regiment Association

What an important part coincidence plays in life. An ex-AFS comrade who rang us a short time ago was extremely excited at having come across information on the 12th, 15th and 18th AFS in a Saga magazine he had picked up by chance in a dentists' waiting room. We are awaiting his returned pro-forma to add to our list of members.

First and foremost we are giving ample notice of our Informal reunion dinner weekend, or only the dinner itself if so desired. Several of you expressed regret that arrangements for holidays, visits etc., had been made before confirmation of last year's date had been circulated. Hence this early notification. It will take place on Saturday 6 September and Sunday 7 September at the Regent Hotel Leamington Spa, as per last year. So many of you expressed your pleasure at the venue that we thought it best to retain it for at least another reunion, and to place it once again in the very capable hands of Saga, who managed it so excellently in 1996. But please understand, participation in the entire weekend is not an obligation, only a suggestion. The Saturday night stay at the Regent is not obligatory either, as when we had our reunions at Pratt's Hotel in Bath in 1994/95 a number of members found their own bed and breakfast accommodation. We feel sure that the Tourist Office at Leamington would provide information in this field. Incidentally, **Pamela** and myself will be using our touring caravan, so it really is what suits you and your pocket.

Secondly, we have had official notification from **Lt Col D. M.Steele MBE**, CO of 21 Sig Regt (Air Support) that owing to exercises and continuing operational commitments it will not be possible to hold an Open Day at Colerne at all this year. It is a pity after the enormous success of the 1994 event. But these are circumstances beyond our control and it appears to be becoming a biennial affair, as he is planning a big Open Day for 1998; so we have lost the chance yet again of putting **Tony Williams**' bike on our stand.

Now we have some news of a different nature. We have asked you all for some feedback on anything that would be of interest to the rest of our members. Well, **Don Ellingworth**, our Dunkirk and Normandy veteran, has come up with something again. Apparently his father had the distinction of being awarded the George Cross (posthumously) in December 1940. During the heavy blitz of this year **Don**'s father was one of a party of naval ratings who were deactivating parachute mines that had been dropped by the enemy and sadly was killed in the process of this dangerous operation. He was 42. Sadly at some time in the family's history, and due to events beyond **Don**'s control, the medal was sold in 1968 for £720 and was lost track of until very recently. However, the Imperial War Museum traced it to Yorkshire, from where it had actually been taken to Canada. Now **Don** is waiting for its return to Yorkshire as he and various members of his family have agreed to buy back the George Cross and present it, in memory of its recipient, to be put on display at the Imperial War Museum. The Staff there are absolutely delighted.

We mentioned in our Christmas News that **Chris Collier** was going to Australia. Well, besides visiting the tallest building in the Southern hemisphere, panning unsuccessfully for gold, experiencing a 24 hour train journey and watching hundreds of penguins coming up a beach to feed their young, they had the pleasure of attending a Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph in Darwin. Thus keeping up their unbroken tradition of 35 years. The occasion was organised by the Returned Servicemen's League, members of which were also there, and after the service and the sounding of the Last Post one wreath was laid by a very 'bemedalled local old soldier'. Apparently the event is always rather small now as the Australian main service parade is held on ANZAC Day. However, both **Chris**, and his wife **Marion** were very proud to have attended a Remembrance service on the other side of the world, wearing the poppies they had carefully taken with them from Britain. It was for them a day to remember.

Another event of interest is to take place at Melsbroek, Belgium, on 14 June. 'DAKOTA' 15th Wing is a relatively new Belgian organisation concerned with the history and documentation of 15th Wing. Following an article placed in 'Air Mail', (the journal of the RAF), a great deal of information and photographic material was forwarded by their ex-personnel. This included members of 64 Wing 12th AFS, who operated from Melsbroek between September 1944 and April 1945. Particularly included were details of the heavy straffing of the mainly British/US airfield there by the Luftwaffe on 1 January 1945. On account of this enthusiastic response all British personnel, either involved or interested, have been invited by the Belgians to a large and impressive reunion in June. You can rest assured Air Formation Signals will be well represented–in the persons of **Chris Collier**, **Don Ellingworth** and **Colin** and **Pamela Morgan**.

You will be interested to learn that your committee recently made an application to the National Lotteries Charities Board for a small grant, which was, actually, refused along with requests from many other organisations. However, this has not deterred us and we are at the moment formulating another claim for 1997. Apparently we must show that we are helping ourselves, and we would thank all of you who have sent us donations, however small, in the past. Your management committee have to date subsidised our Association in time, effort and finance, but without your donational support we could not have survived the main expense of postal and photocopying charges. THANK YOU AGAIN. Should our latest application also be turned down we may be forced in the future to request a small contribution to assist us in maintaining this service.

Again, may we repeat, we would be grateful for any feedback on subjects of general interest. Finally, don't forget the dates of our reunion in September. Put them down in your diary now so that they don't clash with your other activities. We assure you, you won't regret attending. In due course you will be receiving the detailed information, costs etc. of our gathering.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU . . .

31 Signals Regimental Association

At the moment we are preparing our bodies for a trip to Antwerp, more of that next time.

Our Secretary, Henry Holman, trying to look disappointed at the free wine

April saw us attending our Annual Dinner with a very special guest from France, **Madame Gondreé-Prichett** owner of the famous Pegasus Bridge café. On our visit to the Normandy Beaches last year, we noticed that there was very little on the café walls depicting the Royal Corps of Signals. We decided to put that right. Our Chairman, **Col Donald Crawford** presented **Madame Gondreé-Prichett** with a specially made wall-shield.

Madame Gondreé-Pritchett receives the shield from Col Crawford

Madame has kindly invited us back to her café on the 3/4/5 October 1997. Anyone who would like to come along should contact 'Dusty' **Miller**, 6 Barry Terrace, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 3BB. It would be nice to get a few 'Paras' along. (Start saving your pennies folks).

Our AGM went well followed by a fish and chip supper, this years' fish and chip member was **Sally Bentley**. We welcome two new members on to the committee (lambs to the slaughter?), **Maj Bob Simpson** and **Maj John Robson**. The Light Entertainments team, continue to beaver away led by 'Dusty' **Miller**, **Sgt Christine Mills** and **Steve Bland** assist. Our next outing will be at the Royal Star and Garter Home, Richmond, on the 7 June 1997. On this one we have 'insider information' with **Maj Jim Mill**, our treasurer, and the Homes' Director of Finance arranging one or two goodies.

Our best wishes go to all ex-31 Sigs members where ever they may be. More next issue folks!!

The Middlesex Yeomanry Association

The Association continues to tick over with a band of regular attendees led by our President, **Col Simon Beazley**. It is with regret that we record the death of one of those regular attendees **Maj Ted Hughes**, on 13 January. The funeral was held at St Swithins Church Southsea. Amongst those present were **Maj Gen J. Hellier**, **Lt Col P. Soward**, **Lt Col H. Hancock** CO 39 (Skinners) Sig Regt and a number of his friends from the Middlesex Yeomanry Association. A Royal Signals Trumpeter sounded *Last Post*.

This year sees us celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the Regiment and our Chairman **George Key** would like plenty of support for the various functions, so here are a few dates for your diary:

Summer Ball	Uxbridge TAC	5 July
200 Anniversary Dinner	Duke of Yorks' HQ	10 October
Lafone Day Parade	St Pauls' Cathedral	12 October

Other celebrations in the melting pot at the time of going to press are:

The March through Harrow
The March through Uxbridge
Drinks at the 'White Horse Inn' Uxbridge

If you want to know more, keep in touch with our Secretary **Andrew Bridges**, 17 Queensbury Place, Blackwater, Surrey GU17 9LX, or our Light Entertainment Officer **Ron** 'Dusty' **Miller**, 6 Barry Terrace, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 3BB

DON'T DELAY MAKE CONTACT TODAY!!

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy must be received six weeks before the publication date

REUNIONS

3 DIV SIG REUNION CLUB

Col Andrew Carter MBE, the General Secretary and Treasurer of the Royal Signals Association, accompanied by his wife, **Debbie**, was the Guest of Honour at our Reunion Luncheon and AGM held at the Victory Services Club in London on Saturday 22 March 1997. There was a good attendance of 78, including guests, some of which had travelled a considerable distance to be present. It is always very gratifying to think that people have enough feelings left for one of their old units to attend our Reunions, sometimes at considerable trouble and expense.

The AGM part of the Reunion lasted about seven minutes. During which time our Chairman passed on the information regarding the appointment of **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE** as Master of Signals in succession to **Maj Gen A.C. Birtwistle CB CBE DL** with effect from 30 June 1997. Then it was back to socialising and meeting our guests who, in addition to **Col Andrew** and **Debbie**, included **Lt Col Graham Leach**, the CO of 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, with his wife **Fiona** and the new RSM, **Kevin Fitzpatrick** accompanied by **Debbie**, his wife. Also present from the Regiment were **Capt Mark Wright-Jones** and **Stuart Simpson**, winner of this years' E.E. Bayley Award.

After the usual excellent lunch provided by the Victory Club our President, **Brig Ronnie Stonham**, introduced **Col Carter** and asked him to tell us how things were at RHQ. The Colonel replied by explaining that at the moment he was still a 'makee learnee' General Secretary but that with the help of an excellent staff and a good briefing from his predecessor he was getting into the swing of things. Blandford Camp was still very much a building site but gradually one could see things coming together and before long we should be able to see the results of years of planning and work. He mentioned that one of the things that had persuaded him to take on the job had been the prospect of visiting various Branches and meeting RSA members enabling him to renew old friendships and make new ones. **Col Andrew** made the point that though the Corps was now down to a strength of around 9000 all ranks our percentage of the overall strength of the Army remained at the same level, about 10%.

The President then called on **Lt Col Graham Leach**, the CO of 3 (UK) HQ & Sig Regt, to give the Shareholders Report to the Club. He began by telling us that all was well with the Regiment, that the Staff were still as demanding as ever, but that the Regiment just kept on producing what was asked for, and still found time for sport and all the other things a Signal Regiment has to do. Bosnia had given a lot of young signallers the opportunity to test themselves in an operational role and they had all been well seasoned by it. He thanked the Club for its generous contribution to the cost of the painting, commissioned by the Regiment, to commemorate its participation in events in Bosnia. **Col Graham** concluded by inviting the Club to join with the Regiment in Bulford for a Regimental Weekend in July.

Our Chairman, **Maj Derek Roberts** then performed his pleasant duty of introducing our 'first footers' to a Reunion. This year they were **Mr L. Collins**, **Mr P. Corrie**, **Mr Doug Kay**, **Maj Len White** and **Capt Mark Wright-Jones**.

Maj Derek Roberts presents John Templeton with his RSA 50 year Badge and Certificate

He then called forward the Secretary, **John Templeton**, to present him with his R Signals Association 50 Year Badge and Certificate. **John** had specifically asked that **Derek** perform the honours on this occasion so that he, John, could get a little dig in at **Derek** in continuation of a long-standing joke between them. This led on to the raffle, organised this year by **Ernest Packham** who had only recently recovered from a heart attack which had him in hospital until shortly before the Reunion. The first prize to be chosen in the raffle was a wooden bowl made by **Bob Piper** and presented by him to the Club. The raffle raised the tidy sum of £100.

Attention, anyone reading this who is, or was, a member of 3 Sig Regt in any of its various titles from the 1920s to the present, whether R Signals or not. Should any of them who has not already joined our Club, would like to do so, please contact the Secretary, **John Templeton**, on 0181 654 8408. You will be made very welcome.

176 COURSE, ROYAL SIGNALS OCTU, CATTERICK 50-YEAR REUNION

by David Geary

The 19 March 1947 saw the passout parade of that particularly fine body of men known as 176 Course, 150 OCTU, Royal Signals. The 19th March 1997 saw the bulk of us muster, accompanied by our ladies, on the quarterdeck of HMS *Belfast* in the lee of Tower Bridge for a highly enjoyable reunion. A chilly wind gusting along the Thames encouraged us to make for the wardroom area without delay, and was a small reminder of 50 years earlier when 'training' was primarily a matter of achieving any form of movement in that winter's exceptionally deep snow.

As was to be expected, anecdote and reminiscence were the order of the day, as we progressed from the coffee-and-biscuit stage, via something a little stronger, to a delicious lunch that we felt rather had the gastronomic edge on our 1947 passing-out dinner.

Our thanks for bringing 176 together again must go to **Derek Brown**, who spent hours of patient research in order to track us down; his wife, **Anne**, deserves a medal for her support in that worthy cause. Also present were **Brian** and **Sheila Beirne**, **Pat** (aka 'Jock') and **Hazel Cooper**, **David** and **Sheila Geary**, **John** and **Mavis Philpott**, **Ted** and **Joy Vousden**, **Brian** and **Elizabeth Whittet** and **George** and **Anne Willis**. Unfortunately the MO had prescribed a spell of light duties for **Tony Knight**, so we were unable to say, 'Hello, again,' to him and his wife **Hilary**.

Our 1947 postings took us to West Africa, Nigeria, Ceylon and Burma. Later, our careers took us into the realms of banking, hospitality, broadcasting, local government, engineering, oil and tea (unblended!). In such fields we all had our moments. However, we agreed that none of them could match the thrill of laying lines across the frozen wastes of Yorkshire or sampling the exotic delights of the Darlington NAAFI Club.

ROYAL SIGNALS,
OCTU

176 COURSE
No. 2 SQUADRON

PASSING-OUT
DINNER

13 MARCH 1947

Menu

Kidney Soup

Fillet of Plaice

Lamb Cutlet
Creamed & Roast Potatoes,
Savoys
Carrot

Plum Tart
Custard

Savoury

Biscuits and Cheese

Coffee

If you're visiting Bournemouth or Poole,
why not combine it with a visit to
The Royal Signals Museum
Blandford Camp

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL BURMA STAR REUNION EVENT

27th - 29th JUNE 1997

All holders of the 'Burma Star' whether or not they are members of the Association, their families and friends are invited to attend.

All events will be held in the Empress Ballroom, in the Winter Gardens. The cost per person for the full weekend of events is £5.00 (excluding accommodation).

For further information and tickets please contact:

Mr J.F. Nield
188 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool, FY3 9HJ
Tel: 01253 763134

We look forward to welcoming any Signals personnel who served in the Burma Campaign or South East Asia Command.

'F' Boys Company 6th Reunion 24th September 1997

The 6th reunion will be held at the very comfortable Union Jack Club in Sandell Street, just behind Waterloo Station, on the 24th September 1997, from 1100-1500 hours. Individual invitations will be sent out on 1 June to those on our current list. Ex boy apprentices who joined 'F' Company from 1920 to 1942 who are not yet listed but would like to attend should forward their details to the Treasurer :

Maj D.J. Chetwynd,
17 Parmiter Way,
Wimborne,
Dorset BH21 2BS,
(Telephone: 01202 885908).

Please enclose a cheque for £10.00 (made out to him) to cover the costs of a curry lunch and for use of the club facilities.

V.L.R.D. Secretary

Airborne Officers REUNION DINNER

FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER 1997

216 Paracute Signal Squadron are hosting the annual Royal Signals Airborne Officers Dinner in Aldershot on Friday 3 October 1997.

If you are a serving or retired Royal Signals Officer who has served with Airborne Forces you are more than welcome to come along.

Invitations have already been sent out, should you not have received yours or would like further information, please contact the **Admin Officer, 216 (Para) Sig Sqn, Arnhem Barracks, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2AU**

ROYAL SIGNALS KREFELD

60's 16er's 1997 reunion to be held in Krefeld, the weekend of the 19-21 September.

For details send a SAE to:
Chris Bartlett
45 Whitehouse Road
Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 5SR

64 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V) SHEFFIELD

30th Birthday Party

A 30th Birthday party for the Squadron will be held on Saturday the 12th July 1997 at Manor TA Centre, Hurlfield Road, Sheffield, to celebrate 30 years of the Territorial Army and 64 Sig Sqn (V).

All ex-Squadron members are very welcome.

An open day will be held on Saturday with various displays and an evening programme, further details from **Kath Howse** on : 0114 2396979.

SIDNEY C. HOOTON

Royal Signals Manning Control Division, based in Glasgow, would like to trace **Sidney C. Hooton** who served in the Corps in 1941/42. We would like to present him, albeit a little late, with his Warrant and Commission Parchments. If anyone should have any information would they please contact:

Lt Col M. A. Stevenson on
Glasgow Mil: 3270 or 0141 224 3270

'WHERE ARE THEY NOW?'

Name of soldier: **John Newman**
Army number: probably 238 or 239 series
Background–Ex boy soldier–served in Munster Area of Germany with 4/7 RDGs from 1963 to 1965. Was a radio-technician C12 at the time. Left in 1965 to join the Paras. He was a good mate of ex-**Cpl Rodney Spicer**.
Contact: **Rodney Spicer** on 01689 855265; or **Steve Bland**, Secretary of 56 Div (City of London Signals) OCA Branch, on 0181 656 9740.

Mr Derek Morris would like to make contact with his old pal **Tony Middleton**, from their time together in No. 3 Trg Regt, Bourlon Lines, Catterick Camp in 1946-1948. Anyone who can help, please write to **Derek** at 'Littlemead', Offwell, Nr. Honiton, DEVON, EX14 9RY.

Mr Vic Barry would be pleased to hear from anyone who remembers him from his time in Support Gp, 7 Armd Div in the Western Desert during 1937-1942. Vic can be contacted on 01695 632697, or at the Reunion at Blandford.

Mr Richard Whichello is seeking to contact his former pal **Mr Eddie Mooney**. They were stationed together in 30 Sig Regt from 1976 to 1978. **Eddie** is Scottish and was a Radio Telegraphist. Anyone with information on **Eddie**, please call **Mr Whichello** on 01273 401573.

Mr Jai Singh is keen to make contact with two of his former comrades from 7 Formation Regiment in Singapore in 1946. Anyone with knowledge of **Maj Vivi Muglarm** or **Capt Ellis-Norton** is asked to ring **Jai** on Cardiff (01222) 224806.

Mr Terry Smith is seeking contact with anyone who remembers him from his days in 30 Sig Regt, Blandford, in the early 1980s, 202 Sig Sqn in the mid 1980s also in Paderborn and 254 Sig Sqn (UN). In particular he seeks the whereabouts of his best man **Fred Walker**, last heard of in 22 Sig Regt in 1986. **Terry**'s contact telephone number is 01703 392466.

Mr F. W. Whitlam of Rotherham is seeking his old pal **Nobby Lowe**, who was attached to B Sqn, 13/18 Hussars, as a wireless and Signals Operator in Aden during 1957/58. Any information to be sent to **Mr Whitelam** on: 01709 815622

Mr D. Clarke of 200 Chantry Crescent, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 7PG, is seeking his old pal **John Meehan**, who served in 2 L of C Regt at BadOeynhausen, Germany in about 1946.

From: **Ex-Sig H. J. Hammond**
Dear Editor
I am **ex 22995827 Sig H. J.Hammond**, radio mechanic attached to 36 Corps Engineer Regt. Initially based at Ripon, then Osnabruck 1955/57, and wish to contact our former Section Head, **Sgt Denzil Freeth Hemmings**. Please write to: 13 Stirling Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH3 7JG. Tel: 01202 528842 (evenings only)

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Mrs Jane S. Stockill**
Dear Editor
Maj Mike (M.H.W.) Cooper and I are trying to locate **Maj Keith Reggler** and his wife **Lillian**. I spotted your item in the February *Wire* on page 74, offering to try to contact friends from the Corps.

All I know about the **Regglers** is that they were super neighbours in Changi, Singapore, when my late husband, **Maj Jim Hewson** and **Keith** were in 19 Air Formation Sig Regt, in 1964-65. After corresponding for a few years to their home at 2 Exford Road, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent, we lost touch. We heard that they emigrated to New Zealand, but have since heard that they have now returned to this country.

Mike and **Sheila Cooper** are, at present in New Zealand combining holiday and business. They are trying to find the whereabouts of **Keith** and **Lillian** through the Auckland Signals Association, I said that I would try at this end. Hopefully between them and your magazine we will find them.

From: **Capt (TOT) Jack Cooper** (R Signals Rtd)
Dear Sir
Recently a ray of sunshine by way of the April 1997 copy of *The Wire* dropped on the mat and, having reached my allocated span of three score years and ten, many of the names mentioned therein mean little to me (unless they, too, have reach their allocated span!).

However, the photographs often do prompt old memories and it was while reading 'News from Blandford' and looking at the accompanying photograph that I noticed the qualification badge worn by **Sgt John McNeill**. This immediately took me back to the middle 50s when I was serving as an Instructor at 8 Sig Regt and was 'selected' to fill a vacancy on a training course.

Nothing unusual in that, except that this was on a Weapon Training Instructors Course at The School of Infantry at Hythe. I had qualified on a Regimental Drill and Duties Course and that was about all. 'We don't get vacancies on this course very often, so put up a good show!' and 'It can take the place of a Drill Course for promotion purposes'. Hythe did not sound so bad as Pirbright faded into the distance. The last icing on the cake was 'And if you get an 'A' or 'B' grading you can wear crossed rifles over your chevrons'.

The eventual arrival at Hythe brought me down to earth with a bump–discipline was strict, hours long, exams hard (at least to me!) and I was greeted with 'Not another Corps type. You won't get past the mid-course exam. They never do.'

As far as I remember the course consisted of about 160 students divided into two syndicates with one Royal Signals 'type' in each syndicate. There were a number of Commonwealth Forces including one that became a very good friend 'Sabu' who came from Ceylon, but was actually a very young CSM in the Malay Regiment.

Most of the students were senior NCOs with a sprinkling of Corporals. The administration of the course was excellent, and such things as the Demonstration Platoon breaking camouflage cover and rushing across the ranges with bayonets fixed towards our section taught one what it was like to be on the wrong end of a bayonet charge and the importance of good camouflage!!

The senior NCOs lived in 'Spider' barrack rooms and friendships soon developed. In the bed opposite to me was a **Sgt John Barwick** of the KRRC and further up the barrack room was **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Eland** of the DLI. **John Barwick** was a very good hypnotist and would give demonstrations in the barrack room in the evenings, but only 'Geordie' **Eland** and myself ever volunteered to act as stooges. It helped break the tension and provided a laugh.

Eventually, the mid-course exam arrived with two major possibilities–a Pass (and leave) or RTU. The exam consisted of both theoretical and practical exams lasting most of the day (I was really never much good at fully stripping a Bren and re-assembling same within a time limit–whilst blindfolded), but at the end of the day I felt that I had done better than expected.

Next morning on parade my name was called out and I was told I was to report to the syndicate senior instructor, a WO1 in the Small Arms School Corps. I had visions of a 'Failed with Honours' Certificate and a railway ticket marked 'Hythe to Catterick–Single'. At this time no one had received their final marks and I just didn't know what to expect. What did happen surprised me. 'We have reason to believe that you took yesterdays' exam under hypnosis, and if proved you may be charged with taking a School exam under hypnosis.' Many questions flashed across my mind–'How did they know we had dabbled with hypnosis?' 'What section would I be charged under?' I couldn't remember hypnosis being mentioned in Queens Regs or the Army Act. I strongly denied the accusation and remember saying that if I had failed it was by my own efforts and nothing to do with hypnosis (I felt that **John Barwick** should not be involved). There was a painful silence. 'We have two or three 'A's', all due for posting to the SASC as instructors, we have (I think it was) 9 'B's', some 'C's' and 'D's' and quite a few failures'. 'What has this got to do with me' I thought. 'You–' he paused 'have got a 'B'. I said the only thing I could think of saying 'Pardon, Sir?'. 'Yes, you have a 'B'', now explain how you got such a high mark without hypnosis'. Again I said the only thing I could think of saying at the time 'You asked me to do the practical things I had practised and the questions to which I knew the answers–SIR!' 'Fall out, Sergeant, and see if you can do the same at the final exams'. I fell out and was glad to do so.

To cut a long story short, I managed to do the same at the end of the course and returned to Catterick and a visit to the barbers at Kemmel opposite the YMCA–not for a haircut but for a couple of sets of brass crossed rifles (usually used as lower sleeve badges for qualified marksmen).

The badges were worn until promotion to WO2 and during the following 19 years service I don't recall ever seeing another set of crossed rifles over chevrons, although there must have been many.

It is strange to think that the above reminiscence came about by one small part of one photo in the April 1997 *Wire*.

A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE BY AN EX-SIGNALLER

I am on a visit from Sri Lanka to see my son in London. During the last four months, one of the highlights of my holiday was my stay with a friend of mine, **Maurice Matthews**, who had been in the Royal Corps of Signals–I was with the Sri Lankan Signal Corps for 21 years.

Whilst I was with him, he arranged through a friend of his, **Linda Stanley**, a Sister at Blandford Camp, for me to visit the Museum. The trip was arranged for Wednesday 12 February 1997, and although the museum was closed I had the opportunity to see some of the exhibits. I found this to be an emotional and moving experience, to see the Headquarters of the Royal Corps of Signals for the first time.

Following the visit to the museum, **Sister Stanley** had made arrangements for us to visit the Officers' Mess, where we were entertained in the Bar, and had the pleasure of meeting **Brig Nigel Wood**, **Col Leon Deen**, **Lt Col (Retd) Valder**, **Maj (Retd) Lafferty** and many other Officers.

I would like to thank **Sister Stanley** and everyone at Blandford Camp for giving me such a wonderful day, with so many memories to take back to Sri Lanka of my friends in the Corps. When I visit my Regiment back in Sri Lanka I will pass on to them the greetings and goodwill of everyone at Blandford. My gratitude to all the Officers and the other Ranks at Blandford Camp, together with all my Good Wishes.

Yours Sincerely
K. G. Mettapala

From: **Mr & Mrs Pearce**
Dear Editor
I am writing on behalf of my husband, to thank your Welfare Secretary very much for the help she gave towards his electric scooter. He's unable to write for himself, as his right hand is not very steady since his stroke.

Thank you once again for the help you gave us through Mrs Childs (SAAFA). Having the scooter has made an enormous difference to my husband, as he is now able to go out on his own.

Yours Gratefully

Mr Pearce enjoying a new measure of independence

From: **Mrs Dawn Gould**
Dear Sir,
I was 'born' into the Signals in 1927. My late father, 2315688 **Thomas** 'Busty' **Yardy** was in the Corps from the early 1920s. He was a 'Horse-Breaker' at first, a funny job for a lad from the slums of Poplar. He later became a telephone/linesman. He had a wonderful physique and was an Army Champion Boxer. He was a member of the really strong rugby team adopted and fostered by the then Prince of Wales. At the Prince's request, a photo was taken of the team and I gave my copy to the museum. He had an officer called **'Boileau'** and they were always breaking each other's bones on the rugby field.

In 1929, when he left the Army, he was promised a job with the GPO but was on the 'dole' until 1939. He got his first job and was then promptly called back into the Army in September 1939. He was a dispatch rider in Yorkshire and trained younger fellows for the 'Bike' life.

In North Africa he was in the 6 L of C Signals. Wounded and sent home he spent eight months at Netley Hospital (what a place!) and was then demobbed.

I am Signals born and bred. I'm proud to be the Liaison Officer here, since 1994, between all visiting veterans of all nationalities and the locals. I very much enjoyed the Video and the magazines, so 'Begone Dull Care', as the Regimental March says!

Yours Sincerely
102 Newstead Road
WEYMOUTH
Dorset
DT4 0AR

From: **Capt (Retd) Gordon Park**
Dear Sir,

Back in 1973, 22 Sig Regt ran an Exercise which consisted of Radio Relay Vehicles & Dets communicating from Neustadt on the Baltic Sea, above Lubbecke, and Neustadt on the Swiss border. The exercise was a success for the Regiment. 1 Sqn dealt with the Northern ??? this was about March 1973.

Whilst on the exercise the Squadron made a lot of friends in Neustadt and Pelzerharen and allowed the off-duty personnel to use a local Gastätte for a drink and a meal if required. The place was called 'Gastätte–An 'Kiebitzberg' and was run by a young German couple **Peter** and **Liesell Vollenbroich**. All were made very welcome, and lots of messages and good times were remembered in the Visitors' Book. On completion of the Exercise and back in Barracks, it was decided that the Sqn would go back to Neustadt for its Summer Camp 1973. A recce party, **Capt Paddy Stringer** (later Maj) and **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Park** (later Capt) went up to find a suitable site. We found an area owned by the German Navy which had its own private beach, also running water and toilets were available.

In August/September the Squadron duly arrived in Pelzerharen and set up camp. It was an excellent camp with plenty of exercise, games on the beach and even deep-sea fishing trips. Also of course many of the Sqn members headed over to **Peter** and **Liesells'**, Gastätte–An Kiebitzberg. Real friends were made, plaques presented etc. Once again lots of messages and praise were written in the Visitors' Book.

On the 1 April 1997, **Peter** and **Liesell** held a 25th Anniversary party at the Gastatte. **Capt (Retd) Gordon Parks**, who has been back many times over the years, was invited to the party. A good time was had by all. It started at 11am and finally finished at about 1am. All drinks were free and there was a free running buffet all day and night. **Peter** and **Leisell** would like to send their best wishes to all the lads who they met on both visits. The Visitors' Book is still going well, and the plaques are still in pride of place on the Bar wall. The address for those who may wish to drop them a line is:

Peter & Leisell Vollenbroich
Gastätte–An Kiebitzberg
Neustadt
Ostsee
GERMANY

Information for Ex-Squadron members: **Peter Paustians'** Camping site is now a big new Hospital. The orchard where all the tents were is gone and now part of the hospital. The Summer Camp site is now a FKK Beach (nudist) and also has a fitness centre and sauna there. The old naval barracks is now closed and holds refugees etc. from the East.

The Beer is still good.

Peter and Leisell Vollenbroich (Left)
and Celia and Capt (Retd) Gordon Park

From: **Sig Brett Barber**
Dear Sir

I am writing to you to ask if you would give a mention in *The Wire* about my two brothers and myself. Not so long ago I passed out of the Army Apprentice College at Arborfield, thus keeping up what has become something of a family tradition. Started by my eldest brother, **Cavin Barber**, who in 1989 decided that the Army was the career for him, and after much effort joined the Royal Corps of Signals as a Jnr Leader (Catterick). At the end of his training he was a Jnr/Sgt and won Best Soldier of his intake. One year later my brother **Stephen Barber** kept the ball rolling and joined the Royal Corps of Signals. Now a LCpl he is serving in NI stationed not far from my eldest brother **Cpl Cavin Barber**. Six years later I decided that I too would join the Army. I found it quite a struggle to get into the R Signals because of my grades. However, with hard work I got a shading reference but I couldn't go as a Jnr Leader like my brothers so I went for an Apprenticeship. My time at Arborfield was fun. I'm now at Blandford to complete my trade training.

Yours Faithfully

From: **Des Wiggins** (Ex 1st and 6 AB Div.Sigs.)
Dear Editor

I am a wartime member of Airborne Signals and last year my daughter sent me a tankard that she had found in an antique shop in Wales. The tankard bears the engraving of the pre 1947 cap badge and underneath 143rd Signal Section and below that, 5 Sept '40

I have had correspondence with the Director of Royal Signals Museum and he is unable to find any record of a 143rd Signal Section without any qualification of its army connection. His guess is that it would be for 143rd Independent Infantry Brigade Signals Section although there is no evidence that such a section ever existed.

As the tankard was made by Armada Pewter in England it would follow that the Section was in the UK at that time. Reference to Winston Churchill's 'History of the Second World War' shows that 143rd Brigade of 48th Div. was in France, close to the Belgium border, on 28 May 1940 with Panzer divs approaching it from the south and other units of the German sixth army from the north east. 48 Div were on the beaches of Dunkirk 29th and 30th May but had embarked by the 31st. Is the Signal section of that 143rd Brigade the one I am looking for?

What did they have to celebrate on 5 September, only three months after Dunkirk, other than their deliverance, and cause to have a commemorative tankard issued? Indeed what would any section have to celebrate in those days. The more I consider it the more intriguing the search becomes. If any of your readers were a member of the 143rd section I am trying to trace I would be delighted to hear from them.

Yours Sincerely

From: **E. G. Heasman**
Dear Editor

In an earlier letter to you I mentioned the fact that my grandson had persuaded me to put my memories to paper and had made a start. Well after quite a few interruptions, I had progressed through my life reaching at long last my posting as a PSI to GHQ Signals SR, Glasgow and the outbreak of WWII. I have just finished the section dealing with leaving UK for France and the fall of Calais. I am sending you a copy to see if it has any interest for *Wire* readers.

I plan to make a start on the next section that will be the passage to purgatory ie: Calais to Thorun in Poland. From then on to events in the POW camp as they affected me, followed eventually by the long trail back in the ice and snow from January to April.

Yours sincerely

PS. I always have vivid memories of those days when 'Dad's Army' is shown on television. The Operations Map that shows the German Army cutting off the channel ports and in particular the column that swung around and cut off Calais. Unfortunately that series is popular just now! I never did find out what our task was to be. Cheers!

The 26 May 1940, Calais had fallen to the might of Hitler's army. Now was to be the start of the long, long slog back to Blighty. Those who had survived the onslaught were to be driven finally, onto the sands of Calais, to look across the waters of the Channel to those white cliffs knowing that there was no means by which they could be reached. There was plenty of activity in the Channel to and from Dunkerque but none of it would be coming to Calais. The enemy was between Calais and Dunkerque as he was to the west with Bolougne having fallen. There was no way out. What was to be the end?

My unit in the Royal Corps of Signals was GHQ Signals SR. A supplementary reserve unit based part in Glasgow and part in Edinburgh. The unit was somewhat based on the same system as the Territorial Army units, with the exception that it would be completely mobilised within three days of the declaration of war. Thus, after a lot of effort, we were on our way passing through Aldershot, stopping only to pick up some supplies and inoculations. On to Southampton to be ferried over to Cherbourg and after some tribulation we found ourselves billeted in and around Arras.

I had been posted from 'A' Corps Signals as a PSI to 2 Company of the unit becoming, on the outbreak, Section Sergeant to 24 Construction Section. 2 Company was billeted in the village of Dainville, a couple of kilometres west of Arras. The normal complement of officers in the line and construction sections was two lieutenants. This, however, was changed early in 1940, one officer leaving for other duties and the section sergeant being promoted to WOIII with the likelihood of being sent to an OTU in the near future. It should be mentioned that the reservist members of the unit were for the most part linemen and printer operators from the post office engineering department. Drivers and other personnel were from the Glasgow Corporation Bus and Tramways Department. 24 Construction Section were mostly concerned with the installation of what was going to be a main artery cable from the French and Belgian frontier back to Amiens and work had begun on it, with a mechanical trench digger to bury it six foot under. The Section was moved about a bit, until the enemy began the offensive. Normally referred to as 'when the balloon went up'!

The Section moved back into the Arras area, and settled down for a bit to see what was going to happen. It was hard to assess the progress of the offensive. The BBC news did not help much and the cloak of security did not help at all. However, 'Lord Haw Haw' seemed to manage to know everything. Naming names and where units of the force were stationed. In Dainville slit trenches were dug at the approaches to the village, and we suddenly became aware that the war was coming our way. It had always seemed so distant but now things were changing fast. German aircraft began to appear. Arras airfield was bombed and not a shot fired as the two Heinkels sailed round the town.

I was sent for and was given instructions to take my section to Boulogne, and not to stop for anything. I was to report to the headquarters situated in the Hotel Splendide. We complied with these instructions and set off along the main coastal road, puzzled by the fact that all the roads leading south that we passed had been barricaded. We thought that the enemy was behind us in the east so why all the blocking of the south roads. When we arrived in Boulogne I reported our arrival to the HQ. Here I was told that the CinC was expected to arrive shortly but I should take my Section and find food and accommodation for the night. Apparently the Germans also knew of the CinC's movements because an aerial torpedo was dropped on the top floor. Early next morning I was told to take my Construction Detachment to the small town of Wimereux a few miles along the Calais road. It was a small seaside town and as we drove down towards it the first sight we saw was the local hospital on a rise above the town. There was a large Red Cross painted on the roof and some German pilot had used it as a target. It had received a direct hit. I reported our arrival at the local telephone exchange and a message was passed to me ordering me to standby for further orders. There was a lot of military traffic in the town with high ranking staffs moving in and out of the small hotels, but nobody seemed to be interested in us.

Late afternoon came and we were told to report back to Boulogne, which we did to find utter confusion going on and nobody could tell us what was happening. The only message we received was to report back to Wimereux in the morning. Next morning we set off back to our destination as ordered, after having fuelled up and fed ourselves at the transit camp. Looking back it seems incredible that the Base Troops were performing their duties as if they were on a weekend camping exercise. No word of evacuation or anything unthinkable like that. It was queer.

Arriving back at the turn off for Wimereux a military policeman stopped us to enquire where we were going and what we were going to do. I told him we were to report at the local telephone exchange for orders. He said I don't know who will give you any orders because you will be the only military people in town. I told him there was plenty of activity here yesterday and he replied maybe but they all cleared out overnight. We made our way into the town and sure enough there was not a soul to be seen, so we went and waited at our friendly telephone exchange. After about three hours we received a message to pack-up and go to Calais where we would be met at the outskirts, so we set off along the much traveled coast road to Calais passing our Redcap acquaintance. I sometimes wonder if he was still there when Jerry came through! When we came to open country, on both sides of the road, I spotted two Heinkels coming in from the seaward side making directly for us, or so I thought. I gave the order to stop and disperse away from the vehicles. This we did. We had nothing that would make them change their minds, but they just calmly cruised over us probably laughing at the Englanders, going to ground like rabbits. Once they showed no sign of returning we continued our journey.

At Calais, an officer who then guided us to a town square, met us. Here we parked our vehicles ready to move off, then we were taken round to a street of large houses. Entering one, we were told to stay and wait for further instructions. The house was the home of the British Consul, he and his family were long gone leaving the furniture stacked and sheeted. We had a place down in the basement or cellar with a few other Royal Signals NCOs and Signalmen. Firing could be heard in the distance to the southeast, which showed that the enemy was not very far away. We could do nothing but wait for orders, and drum up a drop of tea and a mouthful of food. When dawn came, after an apprehensive night, I went to the front door and stood listening to the firing that had carried on during the hours of darkness. It was much nearer and the mortar fire was distinctive because when the shells reached their maximum height and burst, on their downward travel, after the burst came the rattle of the shrapnel bullets on the slate roofs of the houses below. Therefore it could only be a few streets away. At last I received orders to take the Section to the citadel. An officer came to point out the way leaving us when we were in sight of the fortification. When we entered the French army was there with a tank unit. Two tanks went out as we came in. There was activity all round us. In front of the actual entrance there were five people standing under guard. Three were civilians, the other two were strapping young fellows dressed as priests. An ominous gathering, I thought. The officer who had sent for us came up and took us inside. The place was full of British and French officers and a small group were gathered round a small telephone switchboard. I think it was an army type of about twenty lines that folded in on itself. As we stood there they broke up and made their way towards us. I heard the highest ranking officer say, 'Well that's it gentlemen I have told London that we are closing down, and it is every man for himself.'

So this was it. Now what? We had no time to talk, our officer said, 'Right Sergeant Major follow me,' and off we went. Leaving the citadel area and passing across the harbour and docks toward the Gare Maritime. Halting where the railway lines enter the station, the officer said to wait and off he went along the rails into the station. We were left standing on the level crossing so, seeing a bit of a wall nearby I told the men to get behind and keep under cover. We waited for some time and I became a bit apprehensive, because there was quite a bit of firing going on some of it coming our way at times. Then I said to the men to wait there, under cover and I would see if I could find the officer. I went into the station and searched around although there were quite a few troops in the place, there did not seem to anyone in charge they were just wandering around keeping away from the outside. They did not appear to be armed. I had been gone about ten minutes and decided to get back to the Section, When I arrived back they had gone. I had no idea where to, so I made for the timber yard across the harbour where I could see some of our troops firing from behind timber stacks. They were mostly Royal Signals men. There were two officers with them and I asked if they had seen my lot. They had seen a small party pass along behind the stacks but had no idea as to where they intended to go so I followed on until I came out into the open near the commencement of the sand dunes. I was beginning to feel devastated and lost. My section was gone, I had no idea where I was and I knew nothing of Calais harbour and its environs. I came to a raised bank, and clambered up it. It seemed to be part of a canal system, some eruptions in the water nearby told me it was not a place to be in. Turning back down the slope I went further eastward and found myself in the dunes, followed along by them back toward the sea and came to an open area where the ground was gravelled. The ground rose up as I headed towards the sea and I saw two large cannon mounted on turrets. They had no armour round them and looked to me like WWI guns. Not far from them I saw two 30cwt army vehicles, their canopies shot through by mg fire. Leaving them waving like lace in the gentle breeze, I noticed that the gravelled ground where I stood was striated from being swept by automatic fire. Turning back I made my way back to the central part of the harbour, crossing a road to arrive back towards the timber yard. As I looked down the road I saw a number of copper coloured shells or heavy bullets lying along on the ground. They were about the size of a 2 inch antitank weapon. They had all been flattened in the head, obviously they had hit something and fallen off! Then I saw some firing going on up in the dunes and made my way towards it, struggling to make way up in the soft sand. I hoped to be able to join a group firing at the enemy. It was at this stage that I realised that I was unarmed, the only weapon I had was my nice new .38 revolver. My .45 Webley had been taken off me the .38 and issued in its place. No ammunition was available it would be issued later and the .45 ammo was handed in. There was no point in hanging on to it. I should have to try to find a weapon of some sort. First of all I had to jettison the .45 ammo in my pouch as the Geneva Convention banned it, because of the heavy lead bullet, so I did not want to be found carrying it. Next a weapon, I made my way up the dune to where I had seen some troops firing over the harbour. I think they were 'QVR's' men of the rifle brigade, Queen Victoria's Rifles. There were no spare weapons there. They were nearly out of ammo themselves, and Jerry had spotted them, as the arrival of some mortar shells testified. Throwing up great gouts of sand obliterating trenches and some bodies too. Scrambling over the dune I came to the bank where the sea, at high tide, scooped a hollow into the grassy end of the dune and I found myself on the sea sand looking up the shore towards Dunkerque. Fires were burning, enemy planes were active over the shore. There were a few troops making their way in that direction. My nose was very sore, because my steel helmet had been jammed over my face when diving for cover. Standing up on the sand I looked down to the sea and was surprised to see a vessel had been beached. The sea having drawn away the sand from its sides leaving it sitting in its own small pond. There was no activity on it or around it. Going nearer I could see two holes that had been punched in her sides amidships, just about on the waterline. Near where I was standing was a ship's lifeboat, a heavy steel one that had been emptied of all the gear. While I stood three soldiers drifted toward me coming from the harbour area much as I had done. We stood for a bit discussing the chances of getting the boat afloat, but I said there was no way with just a few of us we could not even rock her. Then we heard an engine, thinking it was an enemy vehicle we got down right smartly behind the boat, and waited. Suddenly a revving up of the engine told us or me anyway, that it was a tracked vehicle. Then from behind a spur of the dunes suddenly appeared a Matilda tank, I ran along the sand towards it and asked the driver where he was going. He said he was not going anywhere in particular but it would not be very far he was nearly out of fuel and his ammo was expended. I asked him could he tow the lifeboat down to the sea so that we could get it afloat and maybe get away in it. He said he would try I jumped up on the vehicle, and held on by the turret burning my trousers on the hot exhaust pipe. By this time a few more soldiers had appeared from the dunes with mostly the same stories of no ammunition, and being outflanked, so we took the tow and made it fast to the shackle on the prow. The little tank took up the slack and began to pull but only succeeded to dig itself into the sand. I called a halt and told the troops to gather round and give a hand, that did the trick and the boat started to move. We kept it moving right down into the sea, it was only about ten yards as the tide was coming in. Although the boat was in the water no way could we get it to float, so the tank hooked up again it was track deep in the water. The valiant little machine kept chugging away until the driver suddenly came out of the turret and dropped into the water. As the tank disappeared under the water so the boat became buoyant just clear of the sand. We got her loaded with some troops, four elderly French civilians and two wounded chaps and she stuck again. Myself and some others had to starting pushing again I took off my boots, socks, and battle dress blouse put them on the bow and we all got heaving till she broke free and was away, the crew paddling away with any bit of wood they had found. We had unshackled the tank as soon as it went under and the towline carried on till it too vanished. I sometimes wonder how far it went before it was choked to death. There were four of us left and I suggested we should have a look at the ship to see if there was any means we could use to get ourselves away from this shore, I was thinking of ships boats or rafts. We made our way to the ship, and paddled out to her side, she had a rope ladder hanging down the side. Looking up to the deck rail, it seemed impossible to climb that great height me in bare feet too. 'Bare feet', of course daft me had left his boots socks and battle dress on the boat, together with a wallet containing amongst other things seven thousand French francs, imprest money! Well there was nothing I could do about it, I would have to see what I could find on board if I ever got there in my bare feet. As it turned out it was not so bad. The ladder rungs were flat about three inches wide, but the sides of the ship were not all that smooth.

I led the way and as I neared the deck I began to fear what I was going to see when I reached the top, because there was a smell of death on the ship not being carried away by the light breeze, and so it was. There were two dead soldiers on the deck. They had been there for a day or two exposed to the sun in this fine May weather. We scouted round but could not find anything except a heavy liferaft which we would have had a job moving. Further searching found more dead bodies below decks appearing to have been killed by the shellfire explosions, also the fact that the ship had been well and truly looted. There was quite a lot of soldiers gear around I don't know what nationality but either Dutch or Belgian troops had been carried on it. On the upper cargo deck there was a lot of kit lying around, having been gone through by the looters, I found a pair of boots but no socks. I went up on deck and asked the others if they thought we could get the raft over the side, so we decided to have a try. By dint of much heaving and levering with planks from hatch covers we got it to the side but it was too heavy to clear the rail. We rigged up a hoist and managed to get it over the side but could not manage to control its descent and it landed with a splash in the pond the tide having retreated. We hunted round for a mast sails and anything to help us on our way, tossed them down and made every thing ready for the return of the tide there was no way we could haul the thing to the sea, it must have been fifty yards away. Now suddenly the same thought hit us hunger, none of us had eaten a meal since the day before, so down to the galley and food store. The looters had beaten us, there was nothing whatsoever eatable left. The crew's drink of red wine had been in a container something like a fifty-gallon cask but not even a dribble was left. Now all we could do was sit and wait for the tide. I fell asleep and was woken, by a shake of the shoulder by one of the others, It's nearly daylight and I've been to see the raft. It's gone. The tide came in and somebody else has got away because I can't see anything at sea.' That was it, our last chance that we had worked so hard for, gone. I blamed myself for not seeing to it that our raft would be guarded against others who would come along.

Our little party broke up leaving the ship and drifting away towards Dunkerque. I took a last look round still looking for socks. The two dead men were still there but I could not for the life of me take a pair of socks off one of them. The time would come when I would wish that I had. I had some string for laces and hung my boots round my neck to make the descent to the sand. I got to the side and looked down for the ladder, when suddenly my gaze became locked on the apparition standing by the edge of the pool. His gaze was locked on me. There stood the perfect soldier, from helmet to boots he was kitted out as the perfect fighting man. He spoke one word 'Komm.' with a slight heft of his automatic weapon. I complied at once, I knew he would only speak once, down I clambered. I must have looked a sorry sight barefooted, burnt trousers, no jacket or helmet. Reaching the sand he motioned me to go up the beach and join a bunch of dejected soldiers. We were taken to a grassy place up on the dunes and made to lie down and discard our steel helmets. I just lay looking up into the blue heavens, wondering, wondering . . .

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LAST POST

Bridle	**–Maj E.H.J. Bridle**	Served 1942/68 Died Feb1997
Colclough	**–Cpl G. Colclough**	Served 1939/46 Died 18/02/97
Cowsill	**–Maj G.H. Cowsill**	Served 1944/74 Died 03/03/97
Edge	**–Lt Col M.R. Edge**	Served 1946/83 Died 16/03/97
Galloway	**–Lt Col A.L. Galloway**	Served 1937/60 Died 19/02/97
Gibson	**–WO1 (RSM) E. Gibson**	Served 1945/68 Died 23/02/97
Gillibrand	**–Sgt H. Gillibrand**	Served 1936/46 Died
Groom	**–Sig G.E. Groom**	Served 1929/45 Died
Heaton	**–Maj W.G.Heaton**	Served 1942/70 Died 01/03/97
Hishin	**–Maj M.G. Hishin**	Served 1942/46 Died June 1995
MacSwiney	**–Maj J.F. MacSwiney**	Served 1935/56 Died 01/03/97
Maslin	**–LCpl G.C. Maslin**	Served 1931/46 Died 24/03/97
McLeod	**–Sgt D.W. McLeod**	Served 1951/73 Died 21/03/97
Milner	**–Col E.W. Milner OBE, TD**	Served 1939/65 Died 24/03/97
Mountford	**–Col H.D. Mountford CBE**	Served 1925/ Died 06/03/97
Murray	**–Maj D.A.L. Murray**	Served 1936/68 Died April 97
Nicholson	**–Col W. Nicholson**	Served 1939/75 Died 22/03/97
North	**–Col J.P. North CBE**	Served 1931/64 Died 29/04/97
Oakes	**–Maj F.W. Oakes MBE**	Served 1941/75 Died 28/03/97
Pickard	**–SSgt J.G.G. Pickard**	Served 1947/87 Died 16/03/97
Reddall	**–Capt J. Reddall**	Died 11/04/97
Reeds	**–Sgt H. Reeds**	Served 19??/46 Died 01/12/96
Shepherd	**–Sig G.T. Shepherd**	Served 1939/47 Died

Colclough–George Edward Colclough. Born on 3 June 1920, **George** was educated at Glossop Grammar School and on 8 May 1939 he was recruited at Glossop into the newly formed 2nd (North Midland) Corps Signals, under command of that great and good man **Colonel G. J. (Gerry) Underwood, CBE, TD, DL**. Embodied eventually in 4 Corps Signals on l September 1939, George served with great distinction as an Operator Wireless and Line in the Unit. This unit gave rise to many famous Signal Regiments and, in November 1941, it became 11 Armd Div Sigs, which played so prominent a part in the invasion of Normandy and the subsequent Victory in Europe.

George, in the Signal Tp of the 29 Armd Bde of the Division, landed in Normandy on D-Day + 4. After many famous battles, the Brigade was urgently withdrawn from its position in December to fight in the dreadful Battle of the Ardennes, better known as the Battle of the Bulge, holding the bridges at Namur, Dinant and Givet. Following this the Division made the longest Divisional advance in history in one day, to Antwerp. In all these actions **George** played a distinguished part and finished his wartime service as a Sergeant in the Brigade Armoured Command Vehicle.

In the years of peace, **George** was a member of the Glossop and District Royal Signals Old Comrades Association, of which he was Chairman at the time of his death, on 18 February 1997. It was with great pride that he secured the kind attendance of the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle, CB, CBE, DL** at the 50th Reunion Dinner in Glossop in October 1995. George was Chairman of the Glossop Branch of the Royal British Legion and its Poppy Day organiser.

The Parish Church of Old Glossop was packed for his funeral. A Guard of Honour formed by members of the Royal British Legion and the Royal Signals OCA, many of whom had served during the war with him was present. **George** portrayed in magnificent manner the great qualities of Care, Compassion and Courtesy, Courage, Endurance and Fortitude.

To his wife **Mary** and son **Miles** we extend our deepest sympathy.

Warren–Maj N. T. Warren MBE TD. We, the Reading Branch of the RSA, have received the very sad news of **Nicholas Warren**'s death on 30 November at his home in Lymington. Most of us first came across **Nicholas** in 1994 when he played a full part in the official Royal Signals Association's party participating in the commemorations in France of the 50th Anniversary of the Normandy Landings. **Nicholas** had a particular interest in this Anniversary as, during the actual landings he was a Staff Officer in the Signals Branch of HQ Corps, located on board HMS *Hillary* off-shore, and he had been the author of the Corps' Signal Instruction. Others of our Branch knew **Nicholas** from the days when he commanded 10 ASSU, once part of 63 Sig Regt TA. He had attended some of our recent Annual Dinners as Chairman of the Southampton Branch of the Association.

Haylock–George Haylock, who lived in Sidcup, Kent, died on the 12 December 1996. He was a member of 56 Div (City of London Signals) OCA Branch. He was posted in from the Signals Training Centre at the Mushroom Farm in 1942 and went overseas in 1942. He was an Operator Wireless and Line and spent most of his service with Brigade Section No 3 Company. He was present at the Battle of Enfidaville and took part in Operation HUSKY, Anzio and the rest of the Italian Campaign. He was a keen member of the RS Amateur Radio Society. He leaves a widow, **Helen**.

Hubble–Bill Hubble, who lived in Barking, Essex, died in November 1996. He was a member of 56 Div (City of London Signals) OCA Branch. He was a pre-war Territorial who joined 'B' Cable Section before 1937. As a lineman he went overseas with the unit in 1942 and was present at the Battle of Enfidaville. He took part in the Salerno landings, Anzio and the rest of the Italian Campaign. He was seriously wounded a few weeks before the end of the war in Europe and spent the rest of 1945 and most of 1946 in hospital recovering from his wounds, before demob. He leaves a widow, **Kathy**.

Mann–Tommy Mann. **Tom** passed away suddenly at his home on 30 January 1997. He was a good friend to the Liverpool Branch of the RSA and although suffering from emphysema, it did not stop him giving help to many ex-servicemen and their families in the Liverpool area. **Tom** served in the Corps from 1939/46. He lost his wife a few years ago and is survived by his two sons **Robert** and **Stephen** and daughter **Pat**, to whom the Association offer their condolences. All his friends in the Corps will sorely miss **Tom**.

Unwin–SSgt Vaughan 'Pickles' **Unwin**–passed away peacefully in hospital near his home in Niederbergheim, Germany on 28 February 1997, following a brave battle against cancer. 'Pickles' joined the Junior Leaders Regiment in 1959. After trade training in 24 Sig Regt. He moved to 217 Sig Sqn Germany and then back to 24 Sig Regt as an instructor in 1965 and in July 1968 commenced a two year tour with 255 Sig Sqn in Bahrain. From October 1970 until August 1973 he headed 'D' Shift, HQ BAOR Sig Tp, gaining promotion to Sgt and marriage to **Maureen** 'Mo'. August 1973 saw a move to AFNORTH and in November 1976 'Pickles' moved to 3 UK Div for a short stay before forming part of the advance party to St Sebastian Barracks, Soest. He then saw further service in 229 Sig Sqn Berlin prior to a return in 1978 to HQ BAOR as SSgt IC FAST (Freq/SCAN assignments). His final posting was a return to 3 Div Soest in February 1982 as families SNCO. He completed his service in March 1984 and remained in the Families Office as Mr 'Pickles' until the unit returned to UK. He then moved to Dortmund to assist in the final move of families out of the Garrison.

'Pickles' was warm but extremely rude to anyone he liked, respected or considered harmless. Those, whom he considered did not live up to his own extremely high standards were treated to his own brand of polite helpfulness. He never made arbitrary judgments and always erred on the side of charity with the young and inexperienced.

Wherever he is now, I hope he will keep on growling and that his companions, whoever they are, will cherish him as we did. Our sympathy and condolences are extended to his wife **Mo**.

Reddall–The Southampton & District Branch of the RSA, regrets to report the death on 11 April 1997 of **Mr Jack Reddall**, after a long illness. He served as Captain of 'J' Section, Royal Signals in North Africa, Italy and Greece. He was mentioned in dispatches.

Our sympathy goes out to his wife and daughters.

Maslin–George Cyril Maslin was born in 1913, and served first of all in the Brighton Squadron of the Royal Signals TA as from March 1931, when he trained as an Operator Signals. He was embodied into the Regular Army at the outbreak of war in 1939, and the Squadron formed part of the BEF in France. After Dunkirk his Squadron was reformed in England and posted to Malaya, where the Japanese captured him in February 1942. **Mr Maslin** was discharged from the Army in July 1946 as being no longer fit for service. Regrettably owing to his captivity, he contracted the eye disease Retrobulbar Neuritis that is caused by malnutrition and deprivation. This is a slow acting eye disease and he was not registered as blind until July 1994, at which time he became a full beneficiary of St Dunstan's. He was also deaf which was another result of malnutrition and deprivation. His wife unfortunately predeceased him in 1994 and he became a resident at St Dunstan's home in Brighton.

Pounds–Lt Col D. L. Pounds. **Donald Pounds** died after a long illness at his home in Horsham on the 30 December 1996.

He left 104th Essex Yeomanry Regiment shortly after Alamein and went to the All Arms OCTU at Mahdi in Egypt. He was commissioned in November 1943 and was repatriated to the School of Signals, Catterick where he became an Instructor in the Regimental Wing. In 1947 he became TA Adjutant in Wanstead, Essex. In 1949 he was posted to Cyrenaica. In 1952 posted to Germany to 1st Corps Signal Regiment and then to the Staff of Corps at Bielefeld. His next appointment was with the 19 Inf Bde and Sig Regt, Colchester. In 1959 he became British Liaison Officer to the US Signal Corps at the Pentagon, Washington DC. In 1961 he returned to Catterick to the Planning Wing. 1962 he was posted as CSO Guards Division London District. The highlight of this post was being responsible for all communications, for Winston Churchill's funeral. Afterwards he was on the staff for two years at Episkopi, Cyprus followed by two years of Officer Recruitment for the MoD. Finally there was a spell with a NATO Committee when he commuted frequently to Brussels. He finally retired after a long and happy service in 1973.

He is sadly missed by his wife and all who knew him.

Pickard–SSgt Gordon Pickard was born in Newton Abbot and at the age of 15 he joined the Army Boys Service. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals. He travelled the world and most of England as well. He spent a lot of time at Catterick having been posted there on no less than 4 occasions. He also served at Bulford, Ascot, Tewksbury, Blandford, Corsham and Aldershot. He also served in Egypt, Cyprus and Germany. For six years he was in Kenya, during the time of the Mau Mau uprising. **Gordon** retired from the army in 1987, after 40 years of service, with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

He was immensely proud of his association with the Army and regularly attended Old Comrades and Royal Signals Association Reunions. He would at every opportunity wear the uniform of his Regiment as it was during the First World War, his Old Comrades uniform. After his retirement his wife **Jean** thought that perhaps he shouldn't be under her feet every day, even though she enjoyed his company after several long periods of separation, whilst he was in the Army. She saw an advert in the paper for a custodian at Alfred's Tower, a National Trust property near Stalbridge. **Gordon** applied for the job and got it. During the time he was custodian he increased the time he spent there from two days to five days a week. It is largely thanks to him that the Tower is now such a tourist attraction. Our thoughts are with **Jean** and the two children **Michelle** and **Duncan**.

Gibson–WO1 (RSM) Ernie Gibson died on 23 February 1997.

Ernie enlisted into the Corps in January 1945 and served in North Africa in 1947, and Barnard Castle in 1949, where he met and married **Audrey**. In 1950 **Ernie** served in Catterick and was then posted to East Africa in 1952. He returned to UK in 1955 to serve in Ripon and then in 1958 returned to East Africa. **Ernie** was posted to Germany in 1959 moving to Cyprus in 1962. His last tour was as RSM in 10 Sig Regt at Hounslow, having given 26 years service to the Corps. The Manchester Branch was represented at the funeral in Warrington to pay their last respects. The Branch and Regimental Headquarters offer sincere condolences to **Audrey** and daughters **Christine** and **Karen**.

Milner–Col (Retd) Eric W. Milner. it was during his tenure as Commanding Officer of 64 Sig Regt (57-62) that National Service finished. He then had the task of rebuilding the Regiment from its remaining strength of 30; he left a Regiment 300 strong. Those were heady days and it was both instructive and fun to serve under his somewhat unorthodox regime. His then wife, **Catherine**, commanded the WRAC Sqn of the Regiment and, during Annual Camps, the officers got quite used to discovering, over breakfast, that significant decisions about Regimental Policy mysteriously seemed to have been taken overnight! **Eric** first met **Catherine** when they were both serving in Germany at the end of the war. She was then a Lt Col and he was a Capt; what more needs to be said.

Carpenter–Sgt. A. C. Carpenter. **Alex Carpenter** joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1936 having previously served as a Boy Soldier for three years in The Cambridgeshire Regiment TA. He trained as a Wireless Operator at Catterick and for two years served in Egypt. At the outbreak of War, he was posted to 7 Armd Bde and served with 7th Hussars as Rear Link Operator. In 1941, Alex went with 7 Armd Bde to Burma and after their tanks were destroyed he participated in the 220 miles 'march out!' of Burma, completing the journey to Poona via Calcutta and Bombay by train.

Alex returned to UK in August 1943 and assisted in training and preparation for the Normandy Landings. He landed on Sword Beach on D+20 and was involved in the battle for Caen. He was then posted to 6th Airborne Sigs and following the breakout at Falaise, he moved with them to Eindhoven, Arnhem and the Reichwald Forest. Lastly to Hamburg and the final surrender on Luneburg Heath. He left the Army in 1946.

Alex was a keen member of the Royal Signals Association which he joined in 1950. He was a member of the Reading Branch from 1972 up to his death on 28 January 1997 at the age of 78. During this time he served for many years on the Branch Committee; was Vice-Chairman, Chairman and Vice-President in succession and made a most valuable contribution to the Branch. He will be greatly missed and sincere condolences go to his wife **Myrtle** and his son **Charles**, who also served for some years in the Corps.

McLeod–Sgt David McLeod. It is with much sadness that I have to inform the Corps of the sudden death of my cousin who died on 21 March 1997. He joined the Corps in 1951 and completed 22 years of service, serving in the UK, Hong Kong, Aden and BAOR. He ended his career in the Royal Corps of Signals as a recruiter in Leicester and latterly Aberdeen. His enthusiasm for the Corps changed the mind of many a young 'Highlander' to join the Royal Signals rather than the Gordons or the Highlanders, when he worked in Aberdeen.

David was a true and loyal ambassador to the Corps, to him, the Corps was always the 'best'. He persuaded his brother, son-in-law and myself into service with the Royal Signals. On his retirement in 1973 he set up a removal business and his vehicles were proudly adorned with the Corps colours and the 'Jimmy'.

Sadly his second daughter **Gail**, (wife of **WO2 (SSM) D. Fraser**, presently serving in Blandford) died in 1996. His wife **Nita**, two daughters and seven grandchildren will sadly miss him.

Wire PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in *The Wire*, to be returned, unless they are irreplaceable.

Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing a photograph that cannot be replaced.

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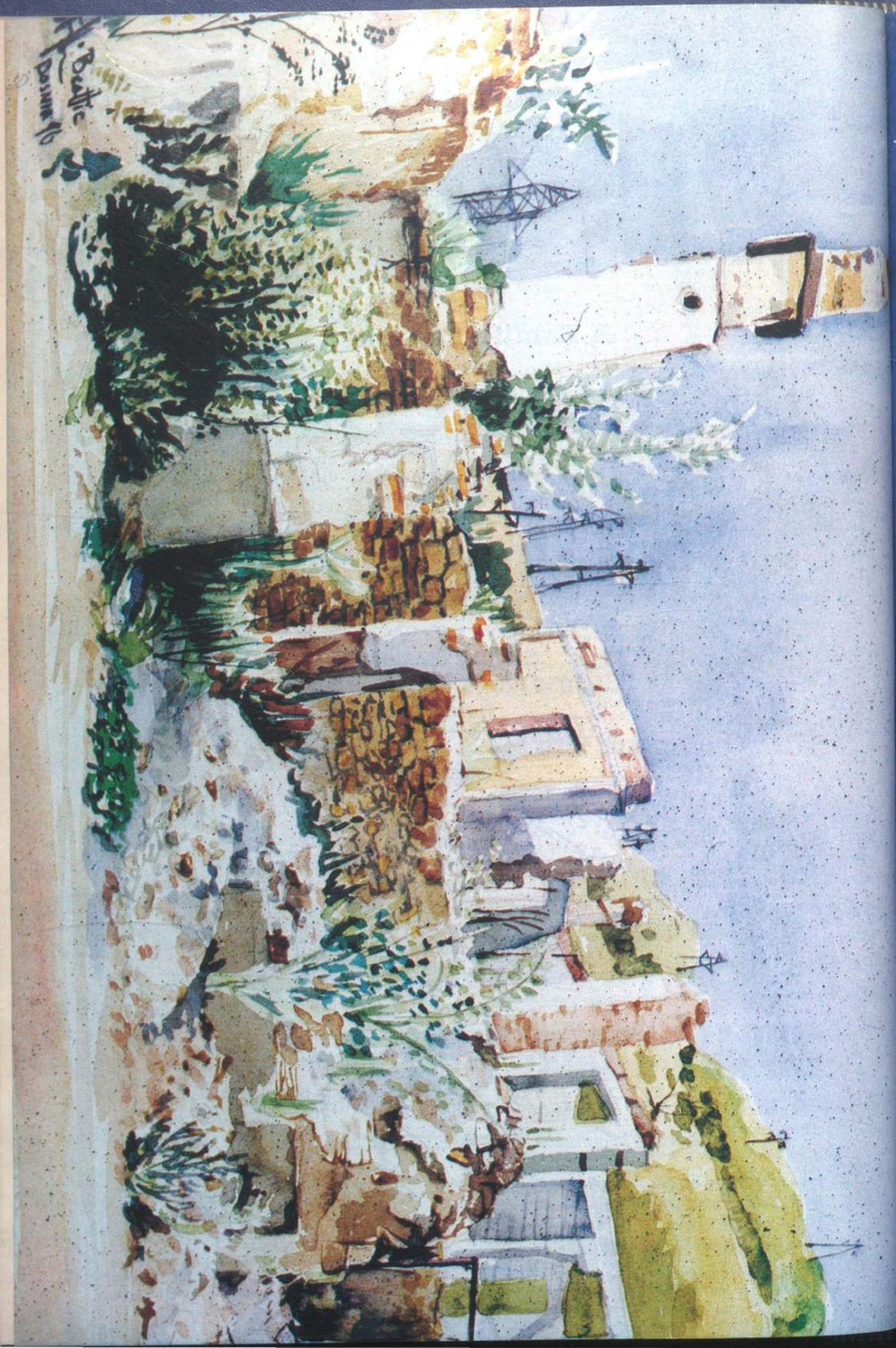
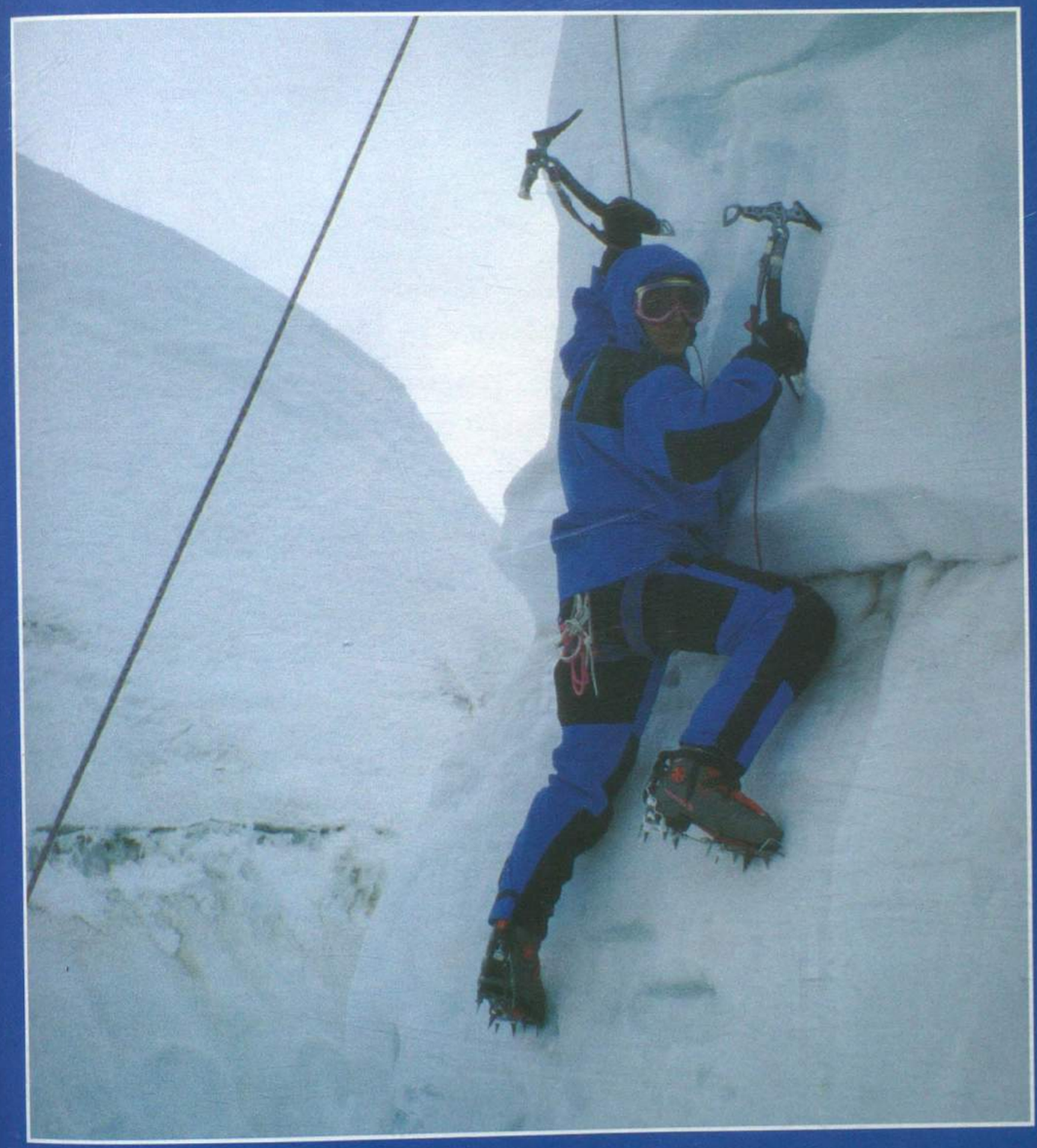


THE Wire

August 1997



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The Wire

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All enquiries regarding subscriptions/despatch should be made to ext: 2087

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Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder
Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

The Wire **is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers**

SOME NOTES ON THE TRUSTEES REPORT ON THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

1. The Royal Corps of Signals Benevolent Fund is a registered charity consisting of The Royal Signals Association Fund, The Royal Signals Officers Fund, The Royal Signals Corps Fund and The Royal Signals Museum Fund. The Corps Committee are the Trustees of the Charity.
2. The Corps Committee are served by a number of sub-committees with objectives such as:
   a. The Finance Committee – financial policy and control of funds.
   b. The Royal Signals Association Central Committee – welfare and benevolence for the whole Corps both serving and retired.
   c. The Royal Signals Institution Council – maintainance of high professional standards and the preservation of Corps history.
   d. The Royal Signals Games/Yacht Club – the promotion of sporting and adventurous activities.
3. Objects:
   a. To promote and maintain the physical efficiency and morale of the Corps.
   b. To relieve either generally or individually by way of donation, grant or loan, the following who are in conditions of need, hard ship or distress
      i) Past and present Signallers and their families and dependants.
      ii) The families and dependants of deceased Signallers.
   c. The payment of donations, subscriptions or grants to charitable organisations concerned with the employment or welfare of Signallers or their dependants.
4. Financial Position:
   a. The Corps Fund – The Accumulated fund has increased by£29.7K. Corps Activities were underspent by £12K against the budget. The value of fixed assets was reduced by £44.3K with the transfer of property to the value of £37.5K to The Royal Signals Museum Fund and the revaluation of The Royal Signals Display Team property downwards by £15.3K. A £15K grant was made to the Headquarters Sergeants' Mess towards the cost of the purchase of a new bar.
   b. The Officers' Fund – Recognised gains through investments of £25K. and expenditure against Officers activities being maintained within budget that resulted in a £31K increase in the value of the Accumulated Fund.
   c. The Royal Signals Association Fund – The Accumulated Fund increased by £87K primarily due to the recognised gains on investments totalling £83.9K. Expenditure on Benevolent Grants was £18K more than that for 1995.
   d. The Museum Fund – A further £108K has been spent in 1996 on the installation phase of the construction of the new building. Receipt of £107.5K from the National Lottery Grant of £200K has offset this. The Corps continues to support the Museum by contributing £23K towards the Museums' running costs in 1996. Donations to the appeal and other fund-raising activities provided £79.4K and £39.3K respectively, for which the Trustees express their appreciation. (See inside back cover.)

MEDAL CORRECTION

In the April *Wire* 'News from the AO's Desk' we included reference to the British Forces Germany Commemorative Medal. We now understand, from the Army Medal Office, that this medal should not be worn with official awards.

We apologise to anyone who was confused by our *Wire* entry.

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CORPS LUNCHEON CATTERICK

The 1997 Corps Luncheon in Catterick is to be held, as usual in the old Headquarters Mess, Vimy Lines, Catterick on Sunday 7th September.
Applications for tickets to RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, DORSET, DT11 8RH
The closing date for applications is 11th August.

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* employers access to a responsive free recruitment service.

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* 4,791 left it having been placed in employment. Of those placed 2,105 were from the Army.
* many more will have secured work following our job search advice.

This service is available from thirty-nine Branches throughout the United Kingdom.....

* Branches are listed in Yellow Pages or Local Directories.
* alternatively contact Head Office at 49 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG or ring 0171 321 2011 or fax 0171 839 0970.
* or better still contact our Branch nearest to your Headquarters - call **Cynthia Pettit** in Salisbury on 01722 334872 and see how she can help you.

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Chest 42" - WO2 (SSM) Crown

For more details ring: 01869 244242

THE 15TH BLANDFORD TOWER HALF MARATHON

Under BAF Rules Permit No 7475
Incorporating The Royal Signals Championships
Sunday 19th October 1997 at Blandford Camp, Dorset

Timetable of Events

1100hrs (Limited to 400 runners)	**Half Marathon**	£4.50 Affiliated £5.50 Non Affiliated £6.00 On the Day
1115hrs (11 years and under not covered by BAF permit/Insurance)	**1 mile Fun Run**	£1.00 entry on the day Prizes and Certificates to all finishers
1130hrs (12-16 years and under not covered by BAF permit/Insurance)	**3 Mile CrossCountry Run -**	£1.00 entry on the day A new undulating and interesting well marked one lap course. Prizes/Certs to all finishers

The Half Marathon Course is multi-terrain, and not officially measured.

Afternoon **Presentation of Prizes**

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Race Secretary, P&RTC 11 Signal Regiment, Blandford Camp, DORSET DT11 8RH. Telephone 01258 482653

ATTENTION ALL "Y" SERVICE PERSONNEL PAST AND PRESENT

A Branch of The Royal British Legion, known as the Garats HaY Branch, has been formed for personnel, serving and retired, who have a "Y" service background. Have you served with 1, 2 or 3 Wireless Regiments, 9, 13 or 14 Signal Regiments, Comms & Sy Gp (UK), 223, 224, 225 or 226 Signal Squadrons, or during the second World War at Bletchley Park or Beaumanor Hall, to name but a few. If so, then you may be interested in joining the newly formed Garats HaY Branch, whose current membership span a lifetime in "Y" service work.

To obtain further details and membership forms, please contact the following: **Bob White**
The Old Manse
211 Forest Road
COALVILLE
Leicestershire
LE67 3SP

FOR SALE

A Garrard's 9ct gold, silver and enamel 'Jimmy' brooch, 32mm high. There is a slight amount of damage to the blue enamel surrounding 'Certo Cito'.
This item originally sold for around £190.00. If you should wish to make an offer please telephone - 01691 610218

SSAFA Forces Help
SIGNALLERS - JOIN UP!!

SSAFA Forces Help need more volunteers from the R. Signals. Caseworkers to offer practical help, advice and friendship to both serving and ex-serving men, women and their families. Supporters to be administrators, treasurers, visitors and fundraisers. We often need team leaders to be responsible for our 102 Branches and 700 Divisions.

SSAFA Forces Help offer training, all out of pocket expenses, team work and we guarantee JOB SATISFACTION. More than 85,000 people call on our dedicated volunteers every year. We need more good people to cover most of the villages, towns and cities in the UK.

Please spare a little time to help a comrade and contact:
Ann Needle
Branch Recruitment Officer
19 Queen Elizabeth Street
LONDON
SE1 2LP
Tel: 0171 403 8773 ext. 223

Ann can send you information and put you in touch with your nearest team.

WRITERS WANTED!
£1000 REWARD

The Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society in conjunction with the Royal Armouries, Leeds, are sponsoring a £1,000 Short Story Competition for 1997. The prize will be awarded for the best entry, fiction or non-fiction, on one of the following three themes:
Military Life
Wartime
Peace

Entry is open to **all ranks, serving or retired, their relatives or friends** and must be no more than 1000 words in length.

A panel of distinguished judges will invite the winner and their family to a prize giving at the Royal Armouries on 29th December. The winning entry will be advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* on Christmas Eve, the 24th December.

Each entry should be accompanied by £5.00 (which includes a £4.00 donation to the charity and £1.00 for administration). The deadline for entries is the 29th August and should be sent to:
Competition Secretary
Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society
Broadway House
The Broadway
Wimbledon
LONDON SW19 1RL
Tel: 0113 243 3300

Indian Airborne Division Old Comrades Association

To mark the 50th Anniversary of the ending of the Raj in India a memorial plaque is to be dedicated. This will take place at Northampton on the 27th September, although the memorial will eventually be permanently installed at the Airborne Forces Museum at Aldershot

Details of the Dedication Reunion can be obtained from: **Mr Ken Flint**
77 Lydia Road, Deal
KENT CT14 9JY
Tel: 01304 359538
The Indian Airborne Division Old Comrades Association will undertake searches to find particular veterans of the Div Sigs.

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THRILLS AND ADRENALINE IN THE MOUNTAINS

by Maj Jon Dakin R Signals

Which would you prefer to do? Dangle over a bottomless crevasse by a rope carrying a 35lb pack and skis, fly in a flimsy harness 3500metres above the ground before spiral diving to the ground or walk uphill on skis for 2 hours to admire the view? Well we did all three and more.

Maj Jon Dakin, Sgt Tim Bird and Pte Dave Pearce standing on the summit of Mount Telliers

During the latter half of April four adventurers set off from Episkopi in search of thrills and adrenaline in the high mountains surrounding Chamonix in the French Alps. The team led by **Maj Jon Dakin** was selected for their alpine skills, physical fitness and 'dare devil' attitude. The expedition aimed to introduce the concept of ski touring and mountaineering. This type of skiing is a mixture of downhill skiing and Nordic skiing, and requires a high level of fitness. Individuals are required to carry and ski with approx 35lbs of equipment, cope with all types of weather and be able to climb and ski in control and safely at all times.

Chamonix is widely acknowledged as the capital of the Alps. It is the home of Mont Blanc which is the second highest peak in Europe (Mt Elbrus is now the highest). More important it is a town that encourages adventure. When elsewhere people are content to ski double black diamond runs, in Chamonix they ski down where others are ice climbing. Elsewhere people are content to paraglide from the mountaintops, here people use paragliders as platforms to bungee jump and skydive from! It is a very interesting town.

Our typical day started a 0700 with breakfast and prep of the equipment. Following a check on the weather, avalanche danger and radio reports, our vehicle was loaded with skis, boots and rucksacks. The intention was always to start by catching the first lift of the day to the highest possible point. This allowed for swift height gain into the mountains and meant that the group could finish the day's tour early during the afternoon and could be clear of the mountains prior to the avalanche danger significantly increasing with the hot afternoon sun. Often our goal would be a certain high col or peak which we would climb to before lunch. We would try to descend via a virgin snow slope. This is the magic of ski touring, you are able to spend the entire day without seeing other people or queuing for a lift and you have the privilege of skiing on untracked snow. During one phase of the expedition we travelled into St Bernard, Switzerland to a mountain hut and spent two days touring the local area. The hut offered basic food and bedding as well as an excellent base to tour from. During the two days we climbed approx 2500 metres in height and covered approx 40km. It was a fantastic experience, although slightly bizarre as monks (who use the hut as a religious retreat) ran the hut. The climax to the trip was an ascent of Mont Tellier (2985m) followed by a superb descent on perfect 'spring' snow.

During the course of the trip the group became more proficient skiers and alpinists. Although the minimum standard required an individual to be able to ski parallel turns competently in all conditions, skiing on untracked terrain requires a higher level of competence than on piste skiing and the emphasis is on safety rather than on style and speed. Using crampons, ice axes and ropes, real dangers, which are frequently encountered, have to be negotiated. Crevasses have to be crossed, rocks climbed and gullies abseiled in order to reach the desired col or peak. On one particular tour, the group had climbed over 800m in two hours to find that the reverse side of the col could only be crossed by abseiling for approx 75m (on a 50m rope!) whilst wearing skis, with the final member of the party backwards climbing the slope using ice climbing equipment. The dangers of this manoeuvre are amplified by our isolation from potential sources of help. For this reason the group had to build up their confidence and trust; confidence in their ability to act safely on the mountain and trust each other. In addition, they all had to be fit enough to cope with this activity at approx 3500m. The final saga of this epic day occurred during the descent.

The snow was heavy and difficult to ski and at about the halfway point **Capt Steve Jee** Inter Corps completed an exciting trick that resulted in a broken ski. Fortunately the group was carrying sufficient equipment to patch it up and make a sturdy repair. The group managed the rest of the descent without incident.

Pte Dave Pearce cresting the Col du Tour approx 2900m above the Chamonix Valley, France

When the weather or our bodies gave out the group continued with alternative activities. The Cyprus Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club kindly allowed the group to use their dual paraglider. This provided plenty of entertainment and excitement.

Dave Pearce 1RGBW managed a 15km cross country flight gaining 1500 metres above take off, at one point climbing at over 6 metre per second using only the thermals for lift. **Sgt Tim Bird** RLC also used his skills as a Joint Services Rock Leader to great effect organising several climbing sessions on some of the many crags that surround Chamonix.

So what did we achieve? Technically we all improved our alpine skills and we were all fitter than when we deployed. More importantly we had enjoyed some unforgettable experiences–some good and some not so good. Finally we have all got a few more war stories to tell!

Climbing at Servoz
Maj Jon Dakin knitting climbing ropes while Pte Dave Pearce climbs below

Front and back cover.

The Editor is grateful for the stunning photographs provided by Major Dakin which we have used as front and back covers of this edition.

A VOLUNTEER ON OPERATIONS – OP RESOLUTE 2

by Capt Lynne Colan - O'Leary
40 Ulster Signal Regiment (V)

Mobilisation began on 1 May 1996 at ITC Catterick with medical and dental examinations and the issue of Combat 95 uniform. After seven days and a small pre-tour training package, theory was turned into practice with the somewhat anachronistically titled United Nations Training Assistance Team (UNTAT) on Salisbury Plain Training Area. Five days were spent either living in the FIBUA village, Copehill Down or Westdown Camp being given briefings and demonstrations which were both succinct and relevant to our tour with IFOR.

A day off in Salisbury allowed us to buy those items which we realised were essential to a good tour and after collecting the now vast numbers of kit bags, boarded buses in accordance with our departure dates to take us to the Air Mounting Centre at South Cerney. I flew on 14th May 1996 directly to Sarajevo from RAF Lyneham courtesy of 'Maybe Airlines'. The 20-minute journey along Sniper Alley as we travelled in the back of 8-tonners to Zetra Stadium was made in total silence. The once impressive Olympic Stadium was now a shadow of its former self with many of its sports pitches turned into makeshift cemeteries. Where once there had been athletes, now there was the BSG of HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde and ARRC TAC.

Our arrival at Zetra Stadium

We had received many briefings, slides and presentations of what Bosnia was going to be like and had seen an especially good BBC news video, with the accompanying soundtrack of 'Crazy' by Seal. Despite these briefings we still weren't quite prepared for the total destruction that we saw. A few people managed to take photos, however many more did not, probably out of respect for those trying to make these shell like buildings their home.

After an in-theatre brief and further admin processing, we were taken to our new home. For the first five days this was to be a CORIMEC (a pre-fabricated building that resembled a put-up shoebox). We were all stunned to receive apologies for the standard of accommodation, after a fibua village this was five-star! Within a few days we moved into the Hotel Serbia. Our hotel was one of four which had previously made up a spa hotel complex in a suburb of Sarajevo called Ilizda, sitting directly under the gaze of the Igman mountains.

I was working for HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde in the G1/G4 cell based in a B Staff Vehicle (BSV) on the 'ramp'. The 'ramp' was built of 24 BSVs all back to back and raised on wooden blocks. Running down the centre were a series of trailers, similarly raised and covered with a track of metal to join the wagons to each other. This was then attached to the back of the hotel in which I lived and which also housed HQ ARRC. For the first three months we worked a pattern of 12 hours on, 24 hours off. This translated as a rotation of day shift, night shift and what was loosely termed time off. In fact this was spent sleeping and recovering from the shift before. There was a lot to learn, despite having already fulfilled a G1/G4 post, information peculiar to theatre needed to be absorbed. Being part of the most technically advanced Corps HQ also meant learning new skills to use all the available systems. The only way to learn everything was to get on with it and quick, everyone else seemed to know what he or she was doing!

Many personnel took every opportunity to see more of the country either by road or by air. Bosnia and Croatia are incredibly scenic and needless to say most visitors to Sarajevo requested a battlefield tour of the city. To relax after shifts and when the situation would allow, personnel would either go on 'physops', physical operations. These eventually included being able to run on three routes of varying distances around Ilizda, visit the ECHOS (a charity run coffee shop/restaurant) within the HQ, watch SSVC or perhaps attend a barbecue/party. As HQ ARRC is multi-national, most nations held parties to celebrate a national holiday or independence from the British so invites were always welcome! Post R

The Scene at HQ ARRC post TDA and the 'Ramp' being dismantled

and R, the G1/G4 workload within the HQ began to increase. We also began permanent 12-hour day shifts. This meant long days, even weeks, but the end result was that all in the cell began to specialise in certain areas of G1/G4 and units had a direct contact for all areas of responsibility. Rumours that LANDCENT would be replacing the ARRC turned into recces and my boss spent much time on meetings and travelling to Heidelberg. G1/G4 was the busiest of all the cells within the HQ–really! At the beginning of the tour work fell heavily on the G1 side of life. I particularly found compassionates to be one of the most gratifying and rewarding aspects to my job. Despite never meeting the soldier involved, it is hands on action to coordinate the call from HQ UK National Support Element (NSE) with the soldier's unit and help them to arrange transport to meet the flight arrangements.

Whereas for the first three months of the tour, G1 had been the dominant area of our work, G4 replaced it in the last three. It began with the return of various pieces of equipment from the Bde to Germany and UK via Split using roulement ships. Then within two months of Transition of Authority (TOA) ARRC to LANDCENT we began the larger job of the withdrawal of the Bde and ARRC HQ, equipment and personnel. It was my responsibility to request the aircraft required from Sarajevo and Split for all personnel and freight. Then, in particular, air movement during TOA from Sarajevo. This all involved long hours and many meetings, however the Bde was well assisted by other personnel with technical expertise which ensured the ARRC staff flew from theatre successfully. In response to a request from HQ 1 Sig Bde I eventually extended my tour by three weeks to leave a week after TOA and demobilise through HQ RLC Grantham on 28 November 1996. Moving from a state of working 12 hours a day, answering phones, working on the computer, giving briefs, representing the Bde at meetings, being in a position of responsibility to nothing was an adjustment which took about two weeks to make. I thoroughly enjoyed my tour for several reasons. The chance for someone in the TA to do such a thing was a great experience. Anyone that thought that we wouldn't play a full part in the operation were wrong and in fact I can only remember one occasion where I was asked if I was TA. Their reaction was noticeable and only went to prove that they genuinely were too naive not to see all the good work the TA was doing there or appreciate that there wasn't a regular doing our job as well. The tour allowed me to meet many genuine people, who were also very grateful for the work that the TA was doing.

Would I recommend anyone to take part in mobilised service? Yes, definitely. And would I do it all again, go 'on ops', go 'up country' or be 'in theatre'? The answer is probably yes, though perhaps not Bosnia again if at all possible. To do so would be to ruin what was a great tour. Anyone who has returned to the same place twice will appreciate that, but perhaps not just yet!

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following:
ALL PHOTOS accompanying Articles for *The Wire*, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they
MAY NOT BE USED

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE–1997

Ex Lightning Strike, the annual Royal Signals University Officer Training Corps weekend, was held over 19-20 April 1997. This year 18 out of a possible 19 UOTCs took part from all around the British Isles.

The teams of 10 Officer Cadets had to negotiate a challenging series of stands provided by regular R Signals Units covering everything from survival to electronic warfare, line laying, satcom, radio controlled movement and vehicle rigging. The odd log race thrown in for good measure also helped keep morale up.

As in previous years the Officer Cadets competed with a mixture of determination and hilarious good humour. The variety of team mascots was extensive, but the plaudits must go to Leeds UOTC with their man sized wooden Toucan!!

The Exercise culminated in a final race provided by 2 Sig Regt. The teams were required to negotiate a tricky course under simulated battle conditions, carrying a Scam Mast and then erect it in the fastest time to win. The proud winners in this case were Queens UOTC from Northern Ireland.

Prizes were presented for the best team performance at each stand. The prize for the overall runner up in the competition was won by Northumbria UOTC. However, this years' overall winners were Wales UOTC.

Congratulations to them for their hard work. A special mention must be made of East Midlands UOTC who won the speckled Jim Pigeon Prize, for the team that best represented the spirit of the competition. We look forward to another storming success next year.

Leeds UOTC with their Toucan

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

JUNE 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Brig S.G. Hughes	2 Signal Brigade
Col G.M. Shipley	BDS Washington
Maj M.G. Hanson BSc (Hons)	HQ LAND
Maj L. Wood MBE	34 (N) Sig Regt (V)
Capt. (A/Maj.) D.S. Robertson	RSS
Capt A.P. Coulston	210 Sig Sqn, 24 Airmob Bde
Capt A.C. Sarginson	DDOR Comms & Surv
Capt. P.A. Smith BSc (Hons.)	RSS
Capt J.H.J. Woods BA (Hons)	30 Sig Regt
Capt D.C. Worden BSc (H0ns)	225 Sig Sqn
Lt (A/Capt.) A.P. Ferris	264 Sig Sqn (SAS)
Lt G.L. Benson	JCUFI
Lt R.N. Byfield	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt P.D. Clifford	7 Sig Regt
Lt N.B. Cullen	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Lt S.E. Hatfield	30 Sig Regt
Lt N.W. Massey	15 Sig Regt
Lt P. Richardson BEM	JCUFI

JULY 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Maj J. Aspinall MBE	71 Sig Regt (V)
Maj T.R. Craven	14 Sig Regt
Maj B.P. Gardner	240 Sig Sqn
Maj (for Lt Col 97) C. Wakerley	2 Sig Regt
Capt D.A. Brisco	Royal Brunei Armed Forces
Capt R.C. Gamble	2 (NC) Sig Bde
Capt R.J. Lovett	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt R.S. Moir BEng (Hons)	HQ Sig Sqn, 7 Armd Bde
Capt S.J. Whytock	RSS
Lt C.I. Russell	2 Sig Regt
Lt (A/Capt) D.A. Stewart	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Lt R.J. Whiting	2 Sig Regt
Lt (A/Capt) P. Wilson BEM	642 Sig Tp (Gibraltar)

Short Service Commission (Late Entry)

WO1 G.L. Benson	30 Sig Regt
WO1 P.D. Clifford	7 Sig Regt
WO1 N.B. Cullen	16 Sig Regt
WO1 S.E. Hatfield	TDT HQ R. Signals
WO1 P. Richardson BEM	RSS
WO1 J.A. Honeyman	14 Sig Regt

Don't be disappointed!

Matter for publication must reach the Editor six weeks before the publication date!

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street. Completely at a loose end. But...why?...The Army's what you're good at. What about joining the TA? It's part of the British Army so you'll still be a soldier.

There are two options open to you. First, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those who wish to serve locally. Which Unit you join will depend on those available in the area you live in. Second, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

The minimum commitment as a member of the Independent TA is 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and 2 weekends. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus.

Anyway, I can't imagine you in a suit and tie all of the time. Go on! Phone or write. We need you.

TA TERRITORIAL ARMY

BE THE BEST

Phone 0345 300111, or write to The Territorial Army, Freepost 4335 (Ref: 9100), Bristol BS1 3YX.

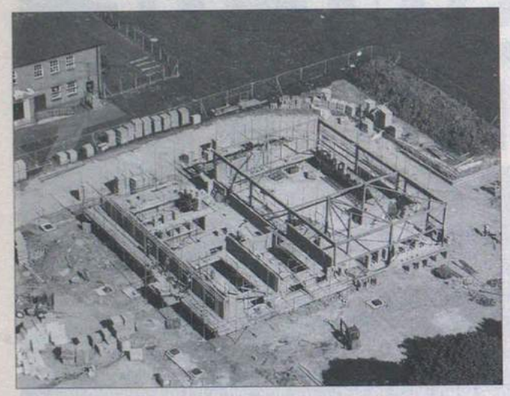
NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS & TRAINING

HQ 11 Signal Brigade

PTARMIGAN TRAINING CENTRE

The Ptarmigan Training Centre, which was introduced to the Corps in the last issue has come along at a fast pace. The photograph below shows the progress of the build, which is slightly ahead of the scheduled completion date of 15 September. The bones of the 162 seat training theatre, the single bay garage and 3 of the 6 lecture rooms can clearly be seen. On completion, the building will have 2 storeys with 3 lecture rooms on each floor. The building will have the facility to import 18 x 7 Way Quads and a capability that can be distributed throughout the centre by means of a trunked network. The facilities are built in to export Single and 3 Phase power and 28V DC to the vehicles parked on the surrounding hard-standing areas. All of the interior rooms, including the theatre, will be fitted for Ptarmigan communications and a fibre optic LAN that will be connected to the CASH LAN in the Bde HQ.

The facility offers a valuable training asset to the Bde's Ptarmigan units, the Bde staff and, when not required by the Bde, an excellent lecture/training facility for the Corps. The official opening of the centre is planned for January 1998, when it is hoped that Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal will carry out the opening ceremony.



Aerial Photograph of The Ptarmigan Training Centre

The aerial view of the PTC shows the position of the Bde HQ, in the top left corner of the photograph and shows the work completed after eight weeks.

EXERCISE SUMMER EAGLE 97

Ex Summer Eagle was a Bde CPX held in Donnington over the weekend of 17-18th May, designed to test and train the communications management and engineering skills of the Bde's units prior to deployment on Ex Able Condor in Germany.

TA and regulars alike travelled from all over the country: 30 Sig Regt from Bramcote (who acted rather schizophrenically as both HI and LOCON), 33 Sig Regt from Liverpool, 34 Sig Regt from Middlesborough, 35 Sig Regt from Birmingham and 36 Sig Regt from Ilford. With all those accents it was amazing that we communicated at all! Complicated further by the scenario writer **Capt Sarah Allan**, who managed to dream up the warring states of Gininskia, Wodka, Ruminskia and the Former Republic of Distilleries, we're all fairly certain of her state at the time!!

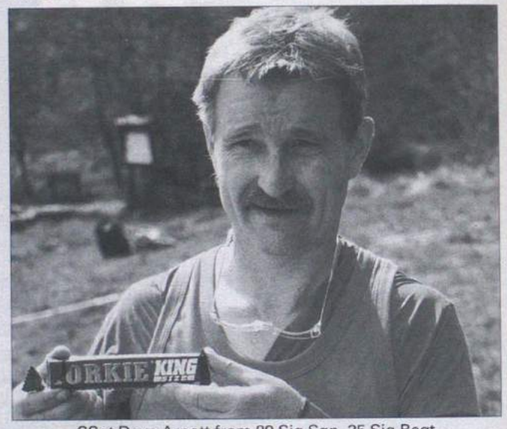
The more serious business of designing an exercise that would practise the Brigade in the deployment of a combined Ptarmigan and Euromux network was finally finished with seconds to spare. Thanks go to the tireless efforts of **Maj Jackie Allan** with extra help being provided by some of the TA members of the HQ–**Maj** 'Willie' **Brown**, **Angus Maude** and **Ian Puddy**.

The Donnington Station Community Centre was taken over for the duration of the exercise. Out went the Wendy House and Ping Pong Table and in came subset and Bird tables. A surprising amount of Ptarmigan and Euromux was still required to provide authentic facilities and structure for the players and thus the sandwich was created. The break of HICON and LOCON trapped the meat of the players. Everyone hit Start Ex at a sprint . . . exercise time elapsed four times faster than real time, therefore communications planning and moves had to be done at warp speed factor 9. Best 'Blooper' award goes to the Trunk Node whose only report on a fatality was a demand for a smashed Landrover Windscreen! Obviously, a future SQMS! Or the case of the very optimistic troop commander who, when asked about a recently deceased soldier, said "he's all right, he's still breathing in fact he's alive and kicking"?

The exercise sprinted on into Saturday night and began again in earnest at 0700hrs on Sunday morning with more successful practising of the Ptarmigan to Euromux (and Brummie to Cockney) interface. The exercise closed with a hot wash-up and a debrief by the Media Ops team who had been filming throughout the exercise, they also had their share of 'bloopers' including a particularly fine golf swing demonstrated by **Maj Ford** (Trg Maj 35 Sig Regt). Overall the exercise was a short, sharp and effective test of the Brigade's procedures, many valuable lessons were learnt.

RACE THE SUN 1997

This years' Race The Sun event, that covered 120 miles in and around York on 13 May, saw the entry of another composite 11 Sig Bde Team. The Team, as in the past, was drawn from both Regular and TA personnel in the Bdes' units. 34 Sig Regt opted to leave the fold this year and entered a Regt Team instead. Thankfully the loss of their talent to the Bde Team was offset by the dozen or so volunteers from 40 Sig Regt, who had joined the Bdes' ORBAT earlier this year. A change to the rules from previous years allowed smaller teams to enter. and had the desired effect of attracting more teams to the event. All in all, a total of 28 teams, including one all female team, competed in Race The Sun 97. The Bde Team came 9th. 34 Sig Regt having beaten them by 56secs!! Thank you to those who entered the events and to all those who provided the Team with the support it needed to compete.



SSgt Dave Arnott from 89 Sig Sqn, 35 Sig Regt, claiming his complimentary Yorkie Bar after completing the Orienteering Leg of Race The Sun 97

FAREWELL TO MICK BOXALL

When I received one of the commanders infamous memos saying 'Sarah, arrange some skiing somewhere, sometime, for some of the Bde staff' I thought not a problem, the perfect chance to combine one of our 'bonding' sessions with a farewell lunch for **Capt** 'escape committee' **Mick Boxall**. So it was that the Bde HQ found itself taking part in 'Ski School' on one of Telford's local excuses for a dry ski slope. Despite 39 years service between them it was the first time **RQMS Steve Buxton** and **Chief Smith** had ever been skiing (what no Snow Queens?), never mind there were a couple of locals keen to show the way . . .

The RQMS and Chief Clerk being given some local instruction

There were no ringers for expert skiers, despite the COS hiring the longest skies possible and everyone had their share of falls, especially at the drag lift!! A good day was had by all and a few 'die hards' made sure that **Mick** was seen off in style many hours later amongst the nightlife of Newport. **Mick** in particular seemed to enjoy his last day with the Bde before going off to join 2 Sig Regt. What about my original mission from the Commander? The less said the better, let's just say that it was not exactly what he had in mind when he tasked me with organising a ski trip!!

Capt Mick Boxall, pleased to be going?

EM
ELECTROMAN

Manage a communications contract in the Sultanate of Oman for the Ministry of Defence. The contract is in the process of expansion at the moment to accommodate a Tropospheric Scatter link and a New Communications Switching centre. Therefore they are looking to employ people with necessary expertise to fill the following positions:

RADIO/TROPO ENGINEER

Knowledge of, Line of Sight radio links and Marconi Tropospheric Scatter systems. Be able to manage a small team of multi national technicians, would suit Royal Signals Radio Technician.

SYSTEMS ENGINEER

Knowledge of, Line of Sight radio links, Marconi Tropospheric Scatter systems, PABX's and Data Communications. Be able to manage a team of multi national technicians, would suit ex Foreman of Signals.

Both positions enjoy competitive tax-free salaries, free medical care, free accommodation, company car and three (3) free flights to UK per year. Personnel who wish to apply or enquire about either of the two positions can send their C.V's or enquire to the following numbers:
Fax 00 968 510605 or 00 968 619985
Tel 00 968 619985 or 00 968 510315/6/7/8
Or write to me: Contract Manager
Static Communications Contract
Electroman LLC P.O. Box 82
SEEB 111
Sultanate of Oman

Defence Special Signals School

CO **Lt Col I. F. G. Henderson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. Clark**

DSSS has formed as an amalgamation of Communications and Security Group (UK), CATS RAF North Luffenham and the Royal Navy SCU Leydene. Currently DSSS remains located at Loughborough (formerly Comms and Sy Gp (UK)) but will move in November 97 to form part of the new Defence Intelligence and Security Centre (DISC) which is located at Chicksands, Bedfordshire. The unit insignia is a hunting Barn Owl which reflects the Defence Intelligence (Signals Intelligence) modus operandi of be the 'silent predator who hunts through the sense of sound'. The background reflects the truly tri-service nature of the DSSS; being a Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force establishment. Currently the unit has 23 Royal Signals personnel on its strength. These are drawn primarily from the Tele Op (Ling) and Tele Op (Spec) CEG, the remainder of the 94 permanent staff (total strength) are from the Intelligence Corps, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

X WING

Three courses involving R Signals personnel have already been held in X Wing; two basic courses and one T1 upgrading course. June saw the departure of the adult-entry basic course. This course comprised of **Sgt Phil** 'Taff–I'm not Welsh' **Evans**, **LCpl** 'Mack' **McNelis** and **LCpl Dawn Poole**. **Sgt** 'office new boy' **Evans** was rather hoping to briefly trade reallocate to Telecommunications Operator (Golf) before joining the next upgrading course starting in July, whereas the remainder were posted to RAF Digby. Once again, more sporting talent to RAF Digby as DSSS sadly loses its star of the football, rugby and athletics teams, **LCpl** 'MacW' **McNelis** and **LCpl Dawn** 'Michael Jordan' **Poole**.

It is with sorrow that X Wing had to bid farewell to **SSgt Dave Hall**, he recently left the Wing upon completion of 22 years service and is deeply missed. Our silver lining with regard to this rather dark cloud came in the form of **Sgt Steve** 'Zeus' **Newton-Roberts**. He joins the team consisting of **WO2 Steve Rofe**, **SSgt Paul Duddy**, **SSgt Craig Shrives** and **Sgt Russel Foster**. **Sgt Russel** 'you definitely need my expertise on this one' **Foster** has recently returned from an enterprise which has taken him on an arduous mission in the United States.

Y WING

SUPERVISOR RADIO COURSE NO 27

May 1997 saw all six members of Supervisor Radio course No 27 successfully passed and were awarded the Corps appointment of Supervisor Radio and promoted to SSgt by **Col R. J. Evans** OBE ADI(S1) on 1 May 1997. The Top Student Award was presented to **SSgt** (Supervisor Radio) **Glen Cuthbertson** at the end of course dinner. To the various establishments throughout the 16 weeks that hosted Course 27 thanks are extended.

The Supervisor Radio Course No 27
Rear Row (*L to R*): Sgt Pestell, Sgt McNally, Sgt Fogg, Sgt Cuthbertson, SSgt Dunn, Sgt Howard.
Front Row (*L to R*): WO1 (Supvr R) T. Malley, Lt Col I.F.G. Henderson INT CORPS, ADI(S1) Col R.J. Evans OBE, Maj A. Weaver R SIGNALS

T1/97 COURSE

T1/97 proved to be a successful course not only in an academic sense (char!) but also dominated all sporting events that occurred during the course duration. Many thanks to the three top instructors: **Ken** 'The Civ' **Cheetham**, **Sgt Matt** 'Not so hat' **England** and **Sgt Bryan** 'Mischievious' **Mason**. May the teddy forever live on.

DSSS SPORT

The Royal Signals Golf Championships were held on 29/30 May 1997 at Ashley Wood Golf Club near Blandford. The DSSS team consisted of **SSgt** 'Stan' **Staniford**, **Sgt Rob Hare** (Captain), **Sgt Nick Roberts** and **Sgt Mark Shaw**.

DSSS Golf Team–1997 Unit Team Winners–Corps Championship

After the first day **Sgt Hare** was lying second with a gross 75 behind **Cpl Rogers** of 11 Sig Regt. **Sgt Roberts** was also in a fine position for the Handicap competition lying just outside the prizes. Overall the team were lying fifth, however, the second day proved to be successful for the DSSS; **Sgt Hare** continued with a gross 76, tied for the lead with **Cpl Rogers** on a total of 151, eventually beating him on countback. **Sgt Roberts** had an excellent round in the Handicap bringing him up to finish second overall. Special mention should be made to **Sgt Shaw** and **SSgt Staniford** who played a vital part for the team. DSSS going on to win by one shot. **Sgt Hare** and **Maj Floyd** (243 Sig Sqn) won the Greensome Trophy competition with a total of 43 points.

INTER-DEPARTMENT ORIENTEERING COMPETITION WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 1997

Within 48 hours of being re-named Y Wing, the new unit had acquired its first trophy! Y Wing won the Inter-Dept Orienteering Competition on Beacon Hill, Leicestershire. The event took place in ideal conditions and involved visiting as many checkpoints as possible within a set time; this nearly proved to be an easier task for some than others (giving an unfair advantage to those who remembered to set their watches!). Members of the winning team were **WO2** (Supervisor Radio) **Andy Marchant**, **Sgt Brian Mason**, **Sgt John Winn** and **LCpls Richie Canale**, 'Chez' **Chester**, 'Ed' **Dickson**, **Ian Russell** and **Jason Waites**.

Y WING WIN THE ATHLETICS

The next sporting achievement was Y Wing winning the athletics. A torrential downpour was not the ideal weather for the athletics competition. However, undeterred by the rain Y Wing fielded a strong team and were hopeful of a good performance. Success was soon gained in the first event the 100m with a creditable first from **LCpl Canale** and a good third from **LCpl Wilks** in what was a very strong field. With the rain continuing to hammer down **LCpl Waites** took to the track and destroyed his rivals in both the 200m and the 400m.

LCpls Dixon and **Cross** could not hold off the strength of the X Wing runner in the 5000m but still managed to maintain second and third position. A broad smile was creeping over the face of the OC and an even bigger smile was crossing the face of team captain **Sgt Smith**. This smile grew even bigger when the captain himself won the long-jump. It was then the turn of **LCpl Wilks** to strut his stuff in the 1500m. His X Wing opponent took an early lead but **LCpl Wilks** was not shaken, by the end of the second lap **LCpl Wilks** was ahead and pulling away with every stride. He crossed the finishing line a clear winner and duly took the applause. **Sgt O'Doherty** and **LCpl Chester** in the steeplechase blew apart all in their way, this domination continued when in the 4 x 400m **LCpl Chester** handed over the third leg to **LCpl Waites** some 300m ahead of his nearest contender. **LCpl Waites** stormed the finishing line and accepted the applause of the drenched spectators. In the field and on the track Y Wing were superior and romped home as overall winners.

Y Wing–winners of the 1997 Inter Unit Athletics Competition

5 COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY (V)

5 Comms Coy (V) has had an extremely good year: its retention rate is high and wastage rate low (possibly the lowest in the TA). Some of the Coy achievements throughout the year have been outstanding. On the sporting side the Company whippet–better known as **Cpl Andy Herd** has shone in many areas. This included first place in the open category for the TA in the Army Olympic Distance Triathlon held in July 1996. He has also registered the fastest BFT in the Unit including the Regular element of DSSS. On the military side **WO1** (Supervisor Radio) 'Dickie' **Henderson**, **WO2** (Supervisor Radio) **Andy Marshall**, **WO1 Ted Roberts** and **SSgt** 'Marina' **Neighbour** (the latter two being Intelligence Corps) continue to serve in Bosnia. We wish well to them all and hope they notice on their return that we will have moved to Chicksands! Congratulations to ex **LCpls Darlington** and **White** for passing the Detachment Commanders' course and also for your promotion to Cpl. Well done.

Recent new arrivals to the Coy include **WO1** (Supervisor Radio) **Ellis Page** and **LCpl Westerman**, both joining direct from their retirement from Regular Service. 5 Comms Coy (V) look forward to a busy autumn and the challenge of relocating to the DISC at Chicksands.

1 Trg Sqn Royal Signals
Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn

SHQ

Sqn Comd — **Maj Steve Vickery**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Anderson**

1 Trg Sqn has as always been extremely busy during the last few months. The OC and his wife, **Michelle** have, however been busier than most as they are celebrating the birth of their first child, **Grace**.

A lot of training has been carried out for the forthcoming Lanyard Trophy, the team consists of: **OC, Capt Crapper, Capt Marsh, WO2 Richards, Sgt Wallace, Sgt Tucker, Sgt Read, Cpl Churchward, Cpl Evans, Cpl Watts, Cpl Marriott.** Not forgetting the importance of the Admin support, carried out by **WO2 Smoothy**, no doubt he will bore the team senseless with his tales of life on the All Arms Drill Course. The team is wished lots of luck and hopefully those early mornings on Therfield Heath will pay off.

All the recruits in the Squadron take part in a charity event during their training, that is either fund-raising or carrying out some manual labour for local charities, during the past year the Squadron has raised £32,000!

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Richard Byfield**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Karl Tucker**

Farewells go to **Cpl Al Hanlon** and his wife, **Janice** who are posted to 2 Sigs and to **Cpl Trev Allan** and his wife **Gabby** who are posted to 1 Div and are very happy to be returning to Germany. A warm welcome is extended to **Cpl McBean** due to arrive soon from 216 Para Sig Sqn and to **Lt Rich Byfield** who must win a prize for spending the shortest possible time at RMCS Shrivenham. The Troop did a sponsored climb of Mt. Snowdon and raised £1,300 for the Special Care Baby Unit at Addenbrookes Hospital.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Lisa Taylor**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Dave Bennett**

Farewell goes to **Cpl** 'Budgie' **Brenen AAC** who returns to his Regiment after a six-month attachment. However, he liked the place so much he's trying to transfer! Unfortunately **Cpl** 'Camouflage' **Sorbie** tried to escape but is not being released until October. Welcome to **Cpl** 'Care Bear' **Bickerstaff** and his wife, **Deborah** from 249 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Mark Eskdale** from 7 Sigs. The Troop spent an excellent day at Luton Fire Station learning to be fire-fighters and getting very wet, in return raising £750 for The Fireman's Benevolent Fund.

'The Dining Out of Cpl Brenen on Ex Final Fling'
From (*L-R*): Sgt Bennet, Lt Taylor, Cpl Sorbie, Cpl Brenen and Cpl Bickerstaff

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Tom Crapper**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Brian Turner**

Farewell to **Cpl Billy Lilburn** and his wife **Lyn** who are posted to 220 Sig Sqn and welcome to **Sgt Brian Turner** and his wife **Sue** from 3 Div. The Troop carried out a Sponsored 24hr Marathon Row and raised £1,000 for Leukaemia Research and MENCAP. Well done to **Capt Tom Crapper** on his success at Captain of Corps Rowing.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Mark Harrop**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Kev Read**

Farewell to **Sgt Kev Read** and his wife **Diane** who are posted back to 216 Para Sig Sqn and congratulations on his promotion to Staff Sergeant. Welcome to **Cpl Mick Aver** and his wife **Dawn** from 1 Div. The Troop followed in the tracks of the Memphis Belle which flew from the camp during World War 2. They cycled round the Airfield for 300 miles equaling the distance of one of this famous plane's bombing missions. The sum of £1,200 was raised which also went to the Addenbrookes Special Care Baby Unit.

ECHO TROOP

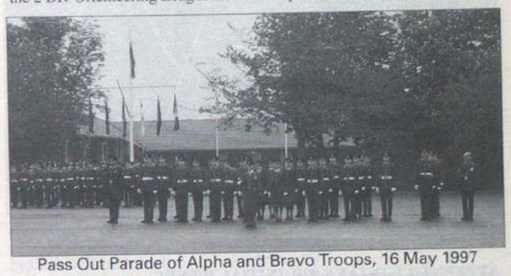
Tp Comd — **Lt Kev Mosby**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Roy Carter**

Farewell to **Sgt Kit Knight** and his wife **Elaine** posted to 16 Sigs and welcome to **Sgt Roy Carter** and his wife **Lynn** posted from 16 Sigs. **Lt Kev Mosby** is on a temporary detachment to RMCS Shrivenham 'Good Luck second time around'. The Troops' charity event was a day spent at Meldreth Manor, a local school for children with special needs where the school made good use of the recruits to paint, decorate etc.

YANKEE TROOP
DELTA SQUADRON

Tp Comd — **Capt Gareth Marsh** (Sleepyhead)
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Bob Wallace**

Welcome to **Cpl Sheard**, who has arrived from 2 Sigs. NFTR. Other Signals news from around the Regiment. Congratulations to **Cpl Davis** nee Richardson on her recent marriage and also to **Cpl Smudge Smith** on his promotion and finally to **Lt Duncan Parkinson** who came second in the 2 Div Orienteering League and who is posted to 3 Div.



Pass Out Parade of Alpha and Bravo Troops, 16 May 1997

INSTRUCTORS WANTED

The ATR has a continual need for SNCOs and JNCOs who have the aptitude and commitment to be a military training instructor. The job at the ATR is challenging and all instructors derive immense job satisfaction. Pre-Tour requisites are attending and passing the Royal Signals Corporals Course and the All Arms Skill at Arms Course.

Further information can be obtained by telephoning 765 4269.

263 (Harrogate) Signal Squadron
Army Apprentices College
Arborfield

OC — **Maj C. S. K. Paterson**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) D. Forteath**

THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS APPRENTICE INTAKE 96C PASS OUT OF THE ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE, ARBORFIELD
by Capt G. P. Newell

Earlier this year on the 18 April the first group of R Signals Apprentices, members of 263 (Harrogate) Sig Sqn completed their training at the Army Apprentices' College at Arborfield. On a bright spring morning, the 89 young male and female Apprentices passed out of the College in front of their families and friends, ready to move onwards to Blandford and beyond.

Momentous changes have taken place to the Army Apprenticeship over the past year. Following the closure of the Army Apprentices' College at Harrogate and the discontinuation of the two year course it has now been streamlined to the Modern Apprenticeship. All Apprentices will be trained at the College in the future. Currently both the R Signals and REME train at Arborfield and complete a course that is split between the phase 1 element at the College, and the phase 2 element at their respective trade training centres. During their time at Arborfield, Apprentices are trained over a 28 week, 2 term course.

On the 9 September 1996 the first R Signals intake, 96C arrived at the College. Entering a new environment both for themselves and the recently arrived permanent staff, many challenges were faced and successfully overcome. The first term is predominately CMS(R), but differs from the ATRs in its inclusion of character development and leadership training. Following a short break the Apprentices move into their senior term. The emphasis then focuses more upon technical and military education in preparation for their eventual movement to the Corps' centre of excellence at Blandford. Leadership and initiative training continue to be an important focus, distinguishing the modern Apprentice from his ATR counterpart. The young men and women privileged to train as an Apprentice are selected with a view to developing their latent leadership potential.

The permanent staff are formed from a variety of military disciplines. They are predominantly R Signals but also with an Infantry influence at section level. AGC (ETS) Officers provide much of the education guidance in their senior term essential to the Apprentices' development. All these varied influences form the Modern Apprentice into a well-rounded soldier with the seeds of leadership and ambition firmly sown.

On the Pass off Parade all of this was evident: A squadron of well disciplined and proud soldiers left the College for Blandford and successful Army careers. In front of a crowd of over 1500 family and friends the R Signals Apprentices stood side by side with their REME counterparts. For the Corps the day was marked in history even more by the attendance of the SOinC (A), **Brig N. F. Wood ADC** as the inspecting officer. Following the review of the Troops, a number of important awards were presented to the Apprentices who had left their mark on the College by excelling in various disciplines. The parade was an appropriate end to a successful period spent as Apprentices. The display of drill was of an exceptionally high standard before the Apprentices marched off the square for the last time. The Apprentices' satisfaction and pride at completing the 28 week course, whilst maintaining the high standards of their two-year Apprenticeship predecessors was clearly evident.

They move on now to Blandford to join their adult entry counterparts. The first of many contingents.

The Royal Corps of Signals Apprentice Intake 96C pass out of the Army Apprentices College, Arborfield
Rawson and Scott Troop lead the march past

Rice Bowl Award for best Apprentice in College for sporting activities presented to AT Stojanovic by the SOinC

APPRENTICE INTAKE 97B, INITIAL WEEKS
by AT 'Paddy' Townley

Penney Tp, intake 97B, commenced their training here at the Army Apprentices College on the 6 May 1997. On that day 49 young men and women arrived at the front gates of the College ready to embark upon the most difficult and challenging 14 weeks of their lives. Some arrived looking bemused and bewildered, some cocky and confident, and some looked as though they had taken a wrong turn during a Green Peace march.

The initial weeks proved to be a huge culture shock. Instead of spending their evenings glued to the television or playing on their Nintendo 64's attempting to defeat 'Bowser', they were being bawled and screamed at by some oversized human being known to them as 'Yes Sergeant'. After the initial induction package the scruffy and solemn looking rabble were put through their paces in a manner not unfamiliar to the reader. But of course 'It was much harder in my day!'

After about two weeks, this motley crew of shell-shocked and timid individuals began to develop a sense for what life in the Army actually meant, and so they began to bear a distant and vague resemblance to the modern day soldier. At the five week point this developing and pulsating chrysalis of Apprentice Tradesmen marked with pride the passing of every soldiers first and most memorable hurdle–Passing Off the Square. With eight weeks to go until the end of the Common Military Syllabus (Recruit) the end of the tunnel is a distant target in an otherwise uninterrupted downward trajectory towards Blandford!

EXERCISE SNOW EAGLE TIGER 97
by Capt E. P. Driscoll

The Army Apprentices College participated in Ex Snow Eagle Tiger, an alpine skiing adventurous training exercise. 41 ATs and eight staff deployed to the Stubai Valley in Austria over the period 18-26 April 97. The aim of the exercise was to train novice and competent skiers to Joint Service Bronze and Silver Alpine Ski Award standards.

Of the six instructional groups there were enough competent skiers to form a top group to follow the Silver syllabus. The majority of this group had had around four weeks skiing experience and were at the bottom end of intermediate. There was then a second group with experience ranging from one to two weeks. The rest of the groups were complete novices and the aim with them was to reach Bronze standard. Despite intensive daily training, only one from the top group (who had had 12 weeks skiing experience) qualified for Silver. The real success, however, came with the novice groups who, due to excellent instruction, reached a standard way above that normally achieved in one week. All passed the Bronze syllabus.

The expedition area was found to be ideal for this form of adventurous training. The main concern so late in the year was with snow conditions, however the obvious benefit of going at the tail end of the season was the reduced cost of accommodation, ski passes, shorter lift queues, travel and food. The snow conditions and ski area far surpassed any expectations that anybody (including some very experienced skiers) had. The Gasthof was at 1200m, the base station at 1700m and the glacier ski area at 3200m. Daily, fresh snowfalls and excellent pisting led to fantastic snow. The area had a very new, comprehensive and quick lift system allowing rapid access throughout. Due to the time of year we had all of this to ourselves with no queues whatsoever. The majority of the runs were rated blue and red making it an ideal beginners/intermediate resort. However, the red runs were no more than blues with the odd steep section and I do not think they would have passed the criteria of a red run in France.

Overall it was an extremely successful trip enjoyed by the Apprentices, all of whom now have their first adventure training qualification under their belt and the ski bug firmly implanted. No doubt some will form the basis of future Regimental teams.

A novice skier looking exceedingly professional

LEADERSHIP CADRE
by AT Andrews and AT Green

Tuesday 27 May was the start of the Leadership Cadre for the Royal Signals Squadron. We started the day with 3 briefings, the first from **Maj Jellard** on the principles of leadership and what was expected from the ATs over the week. Then we had a briefing from **Lt Micallef-Green**, which covered the procedures we would learn on how to consider a mission and give orders to a section. This was related to tasks we might have to perform as a future JNCO. Finally, we had a briefing from **Lt Gibbs** on what was expected of us over the next few days.

The next thing we did was go to The Military Training Wing for some classroom work. This involved theory and practical exercises in considering tasks and coming up with a solution to them. This helped us to think about the command tasks which followed in the next few days, without simply trying the first obvious method of approach. It was surprising to realise just how much detail needed to be thought of before attempting a task.

In the afternoon we had a log-run which included getting the log over an assault course without it touching the ground! This was very tiring and got us working together as a team, which was part of the overall aim for the week.

Wednesday was the start of the real command tasks. We went to the Adjutants General Corps centre at Worthy Down to undergo a set of command tasks and complete an Orienteering course. For this each leadership group was split into two smaller groups, one of the groups had to attempt the command tasks whilst the other group did the Orienteering course. Then in the afternoon we swapped over. These command tasks were to show how well we work as a team and to show who the potential NCO's are, as we all had a turn at being in command of a task. We were debriefed at the end of each task, both on our team and individual performance.

On Thursday we deployed to Bramley Training Area to undertake a set of more challenging Command Tasks based on Military aspects (i.e. crossing 'minefields' and 'ravines' whilst being put under pressure). Later that night we were sent on a navigation exercise, which proved our skills at map reading and walking on a bearing were not as good as we thought. We had to achieve this exercise without the assistance of a member of staff, which made it quite daunting when we went wrong. Needless to say, some of us got more sleep than others!

How many Apprentices does it take to pass up a plank?

Friday. Today was the day to be feeling strong, as the time for the stretcher race arrived. Once again we worked in our syndicates, and constructed a stretcher onto which we placed a railway sleeper, before carrying it around a two mile course. We then went back to camp for a de-briefing and prizegiving. All in all it was an enjoyable time and both R Signal Troops loved every minute of it (apart from the log-run and stretcher race).

NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

The Official Re-Opening Of The Corps Museum–28 May 1997

It is a very uninformed member of the Corps who is not aware that the Corps Museum has undergone a major refurbishment, including the building of a new extension that was opened by **The Princess Royal** in 1996. The excellent news is that the refurbishment programme is now complete and the Museum was officially re-opened by the Adjutant General, **General Sir Michael Rose KCB CBE DSO QGM ADC Gen**, on the morning of 28 May 1997. There were over 200 guests present who represented a cross section of sponsors, Friends of the Museum and members of the serving and retired Corps who have played such a major part in raising the funds that allowed such a comprehensive project to succeed. Many will recall that from the eight contractors who originally competed for the Museum, project tenders were submitted that ranged from £1,200,000 to £2,200,000. In fact the project to extend and modernise the building has been completed for £1,150,000 and a visit to see the finished product is most strongly recommended.

You will find that the majority of the displays have been rehoused in up to date cabinets that set off the contents to best effect. Additionally over £100,000 has been spent on lighting and audio/visual effects. This has changed the whole atmosphere in the building and many of the more experienced members of the Corps will have memories of operating procedures brought back to them with the audio representations that are now very much an integral part of a visit to the displays. Many of the old favourites are still present, of course, but in a far more effective setting and of these the Cable Wagon ranks amongst the most impressive. This is a building which truly has something for everyone and whilst it is well worth a visit for anyone it is of particular interest for those who still or have served in the Corps.

Following the re-opening ceremony at the Museum those present were invited to a buffet lunch at the HQ Mess where **Maj Gen Last CB OBE** welcomed those present and thanked all for their involvement with the project in various differing capacities. **Gen Rose** was asked to make certain presentations to the retiring members of the fund raising committee whilst noting that the need to continue to raise an annual income to keep the Museum going would remain a priority. None receiving these presentations had prior knowledge that they would be called forward. It was a delighted and very surprised last recipient, **Maj Gen Jimmy Hellier**, who was awarded the Royal Signals Institution Silver Medal for his enthusiastic involvement with the Corps culminating as Chairman of the Museum Fund Raising Committee. The Regimental Colonel, **Col Walters**, read the citation for his presentation as follows:

Gen Jimmy Hellier's distinguished military career spanned the years from 1948, when he was commissioned into the Corps after already serving three years in the Royal Navy, until his retirement in 1982. He immediately took up a new career promoting the sales of defence equipment for the MoD. Throughout his career **Gen Hellier** has been noted for the zeal, energy and enthusiasm which he brings to all his endeavours and from his retirement until the present day he has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the Corps.

He was a member of the Corps Committee for nine years, serving for five years as Chairman of the Royal Signals Institution. During his tenure he was largely responsible for driving through the production of the Corps History, The Vital Link, a project which required all his energy and persistence. No sooner was this history complete when, because of the very qualities for which he is renowned, he was invited by the Corps to take on the Herculean task of raising funds for the building of the New Museum. Over the next seven years from 1990 until this year, he and his fund raising group have collected over £1.1 million, a truly astonishing achievement. At the first meeting of the earliest fund raising committee he stated:

'It must be accepted that the climate for fund raising has turned against us, for well known reasons, and instead of the original plan for a relatively short appeal duration, a long haul has now to be faced. The time may come when a complete reappraisal of the objective may be necessary, but this time is not yet.'

These were prophetic words and it is only due to **Gen Hellier**'s tenacity and single-mindedness that the fund raising campaign has succeeded. **Maj Gen Hellier**'s service and contribution to the Corps over a period of fifty years has been outstanding and worthy of recognition by the award of the Institution Silver Medal.

Maj Gen Last CB OBE, invites Gen Sir Michael Rose KCB CBE DSO QGM ADC Gen to officially re-open the Corps Museum on 28 May 1997 watched by many of the 200 guests present.

Members of the fund raising committee, past and present, together with the Chairman of the Royal Signals Institution and the Regimental Colonel.
Front row (*L-R*): Mrs Sunderland-Pincott, Maj Gen Hellier, Mrs Smitherman, Mrs King, Maj Gen Last
Back row (*L-R*): Brig (Retd) Stonham, Lt Col (Retd) Soward, Lt Col (Retd) Paterson, Col Walters, Maj Friend

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE CORPS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR
WO1 (RSM) D. A. DEEGAN

One morning in mid April, I was summoned to the office opposite to be asked by the SOinC what was I doing during the end of the month. 'What ever you want me to do' was my reply. He then explained that he was going on a visit to South Africa and would like me to accompany him, could I check my diary to see if I was free. Having spent one micro second checking my diary and ten minutes clearing it with the wife I found I was free to go.

The aim was to visit the South African Signal Corps and rekindle some of the links lost during the years of sanctions due to apartheid. Having left a message on the answerphone telling the world where I was I found myself on a 747 (club class of course) bound for SA. The in flight movie was excellent not to mention the food and wine (it's amazing how much you can consume in a 12 hour flight). On arrival we were met by our accompanying officers who escorted us to our 'digs' the VIP Suite at the Intelligence Training Centre where we were the only guests with a staff of five to look after us.

After an office call with the DA at the High Commission followed by lunch at his 2 up 2 down 'C' type mansion we went on to visit one of the S. African Signal Regts. It was very interesting to note that they had the same problems as us . . . manning, training, budgets etc need I go on. The day ended with a Bushveld Braaivleis (large barbecue with a few beers). The following day we visited their mobile Regiment, the vehicles were older than the RLs at 7 Sig Regt however the equipment was far superior to the D11 at 7 Sigs. The communications equipment on the whole was very high tech and made to a very high standard, as we were to find out during a visit to the firm who make the equipment later in the week. This day's visit finished with a ride around a small game reserve in a ratel fighting vehicle and another Bri and more beer. Thursday we were up and on our way at 0500 hrs heading south to Durban, an eight-hour journey with a SA RSM at the wheel who managed to hold two mobile phone conversations, eat lunch, and drive at the same time. On route we called in to see one of the 'TROPO' communication stations, then continued to the Umfolozi game reserve were we went on a night drive. We were very lucky to see a leopard as well as many other animals.

The following morning we were up very early to go on a morning game drive. We managed to see rhino, giraffe, zebra, and many more types of game too numerous to mention (I also don't know the names as I am a city boy so they all look like deer with horns to me). Having spent the night in Durban at the Holiday Inn we then drove back to Pretoria to be guests at the super 12s (SA equivalent to the five nations) Rugby match between Canterbury and Northern Transvaal. That night I managed to meet up with an old Corps CC **WO2 Pete Street** now AGC who is attached to the BMATT for three years (what a life). After a days rest, when the SOinC went to visit the DA, and I managed to squeeze a game of golf in (it had to be done), then it was back to 'work'. The next two days were spent with the SOinC and I visiting various units, the School of Signals and communications firms where the SOinC gave some presentations on our Corps and the Bowman project or was that Crossbow or even Archer?

(*L-R*): WO1 RSM van Heerden (Spanners), Col CO EW Regt, Maj James Langley, Col Ian Fordred, WO1 RSM Deegan, Lt Col Bobby Keller, SOinC Brig Nigel Wood, Brig Broekhuizen. The vehicle in the background is a RATEL fighting vehicle

Our final day was spent with a very interesting visit to the Vortreke Monument at Pretoria and a little shopping trip, to buy souvenirs. To summarise the visit was a very interesting one during which we were able to exchange views on a variety of topics, and open new lines of communications with the changed South African Army especially the Signal Corps, whose generosity and hospitality was second to none. They are also the only nation that eat and drink more than the British, not that I would know of course. I believe the next visit is to Australia later in the year, if I am still in this post my diary is free. Sir.

SOinC'S POSTSCRIPT

This was a really excellent visit, the first of its kind for many years. There are great opportunities for adventurous training, joint communications exercises, sporting tours and individual exchanges, all of which I intend to follow up in the months to come. I would like to thank our hosts: **Brig Broekhuizen** Director of Signals, **Col Fordred** CO 2 Signal Regt, **Lt Col Keller** CO 1 Signal Regt and **WO1 RSM van Beerden** (Spanners!) for their wonderful hospitality and also our thanks to **Brig Murray Wildman** DA Pretoria and **Maj James Langley** for arranging the visit.

11 Sig Regt
Blandford

2 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj G. Deans**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) P. Christie**

New arrivals the Squadron cadre includes **Capt W. J. Kirby** as 2IC, replacing **Capt D. Drinkall** and **Cpl Elvis Hemstead** who replaces **Cpl Tweddle**. The Squadron continues to provide the Field Army with soldiers in the Operator, Mechanical and Driver Trade Groups as well as looking after those soldiers on their Class 1 and Crypto courses to name but a few. **Cpl Hemstead** soon made his mark in the Squadron by volunteering (!) to organise the Squadron team for the unit swimming competition. Several members of the Squadron dedicated early mornings and evenings to swim training and whilst the team were not victorious at the swimming competition several were selected for the Regiment team. Still the subject of sport, the Squadron fielded a scratch team for the Inter Sqn athletics and Tug of War competition on 14 May 97. The Tug of War team were runners up to a heavyweight HQ Sqn team whilst the athletics team produced some excellent individual results. **Sig** 'Scouse' **O'Connell** (Triple Jump, Shot), **Sig Winder** (Javelin), **Sig Greenhill** (High Jump), **Sig Jones** 630 and **Sig Maitland** (100m, 200m) were all selected for the Regiment Team which went on to win the Divisional Championships at Andover on 20 May 97. Congratulations to all 2 Sqn personnel who took part at these events.

Sig O'Connell - Triple Jump

permanent staff were in Okehampton, the remainder enjoyed themselves with much financial benefit going to Comic Relief. It all began with all Apprentices making a personal contribution that allowed them to wear civilian clothes for the day instead of uniform. **Cpls** 'Bobby' **Sands** and **Vicky Hopkins** took things one step further by wearing outrageous flares, wigs and flower power shirts but even that was mild compared to events carried out on the 'knock off parade'.

First, **WO2 (SSM) Eric** 'Butch Dingle' **Udell** sat patiently in 'The Chair' with a towel wrapped around his neck. Then came the shaving foam and razor, **AT** 'Ang' **Graham** rubbed in the foam to ease the shaving of his moustache carried out by **AT Leah Snell**. He was very brave and deserves a medal, especially as he admitted afterwards that the whole affair was very painful.

WHAT THE SSM CAN DO, THE OC CAN GO ONE BETTER! This is what the ATs were waiting for! With **Maj Dave Lumb** poised in 'The Chair', two buckets of an awful concoction appeared, carried by **ATs Ruth Kennedy** and **Gareth Ayto**, which were poured slowly onto his head, down his shirt and onto his lap for all present to enjoy. 3 (Penney) Sqn's total contribution was £400. Well done!

WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell loses his moustache, courtesy of AT Leah Snell and AT Ange Graham.

Maj Dave Lumb being 'gunged' by AT Gareth Ayto, watched by AT Ruth Kennedy

EXERCISE SNOWSCAPE–BULGARIA
by ATs Allen and Nicolls

As we arrived at Gatwick Airport on Saturday 22 March the preflight nerves started to show but all were relieved when we arrived at Sofia Airport in Bulgaria safe and sound. The weather was overcast and the temperature was a cool 0 Celsius. After being processed by the Bulgarian passport control in their usual efficient fashion we set off to the hotel. The first thing that struck us en route was the amount of poverty in the country. On arrival we were initially impressed, until it came to the meal-time. The most impressive bit was the bread that was always stale. Then there was the shower and toilet which occupied the same space, which did mean that you could kill two birds with one stone but the toilet-paper was too wet to hold together when the time came to press it into action.

Sunday morning came and we were issued our skiing kit, split into groups according to ability and off we went to the slopes. Being a complete beginner my ski's got very little use as I spent most of the time crawling around on the floor trying to stand up. By the end of the day however, myself, **AT Cpl Kelly Lee**, **AT LCpl Hayley Foster**, **AT Ian Hill**, **AT Andy Allen** and **AT Helen Johnson**, who made up my group had all mastered the fine art of walking on skis, snow ploughing and all the basics thanks to our professional instructor, **Yanni**. As the week progressed so did our skills. The slopes got steeper and steeper until they were no longer slopes but sheer drops, or so it appeared to us. In the evenings we were given time to relax and enjoy the pleasures on offer from this wonderful country with most of the entertainment provided by the permanent staff. On the Friday the ski school laid on a party for us and awarded us with diplomas for our achievements. On Saturday we were brought back to earth again with a visit to Sofia, the capital city where we witnessed the amazing amount of poverty in this country.

The final Apprentices' ski trip was brought to an end with the return to Blandford. The only thing remaining being to thank the PS, **Mr Rod Trenam**, **Col Walters**, **Lt Joth Heywood**, **SSgt Jeff Morris**, **Sgt John Reid** and **Cpl Carl Peters** for arranging such an enjoyable trip and providing the entertainment.

(*L to R*): ATs Hillyard, Berry, Ferguson, Rowbottom, Hill, Ashmore, Harper-Ronald and Hill

WOMENS RUGBY!

'A women's rugby team!' yes that's right 11 Sig Regt has finally decided to form a women's rugby team, at last a bit of rough sport for the lasses, our chance to take on the men so watch out tough guys! **Capt** 'Will Carling' **Kirby** together with **SSgt Ann Adams** organised it and so far it has been successful, with plenty of hotheaded females, raring to scrum down and put in those tough tackles. Obviously the training had to start from scratch, from learning to pass, scrumming, line outs and onto a game of full contact rugby. To be honest it's all down to the hard training sessions and excellent coaching from a number of the male rugby players.

Soon there may be a new fully-fledged England rugby squad with **AT Cpl** 'Bruce' **Lee** flying down the wing, ducking and weaving, we also have **AT Heathcote** the new British bull dog. Now we have to find a Rob Andrew!!.

Back Row (*L to R*): ATs Sheryl Richardson, Jess Limbert, Jodie Wood, Hayley Foster
Front Row (*L to R*): ATs Claire Heathcote, Zoe Dolan, Zoe Dorey, Kelly Lee, Diane Bradley

MAYHEM AT CLAYESMORE
by AT Ange Graham

On Friday 9 May 1997, a number of Apprentices from 3 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt, took part in a charity event, in aid of Muscular Dystrophy, at Clayesmore School. 16 teams of five took part in the challenge, eight of those teams being Apprentices, 12 events ranging from: 'Caress The Custard' which involved a bath full of custard, and jelly and a packet of tic-tacs emptied into it, which we had to find. An Apprentice team called 'The Studs' seemed to go to great lengths to find the tic-tacs and got in the bath for a closer look! 'Virgin the Ridiculous' on which you had to skip on a trampoline. Each team had to have a 'You Bet', one team bet they could keep a straight face for 1 minute. Well they did it through all the Moonies and face pulling, but when a member of the 'Drag Queens' **AT Ashley Beardsley**, began stripping from his dress revealing a bright blue bra, one of the team members began cracking up! There was one event that involved sucking jelly through a straw and then going to another bowl, liquidizing the jelly in your mouth and blowing it out. Most of the teams got a fine for this game because they were caught eating the jelly!

It was an enjoyable evening and all the teams put loads of effort into each event and the PS gave lots of support and encouragement. The final event was the yard of ale where **AT Gordon Thomson** excelled. We then of course looked up to our Troopy, **Sgt Innes**, (Dangerous Kev) but his attempt was far from dangerous. Over all ATs and PS all had a good time. The Apprentices raised a total of £250.

'The Village People'
(*L to R*): ATs Martin, Nicholson, Cpl Greenwood, Gordon, White

BLANDFORD COLTS RUGBY TOUR, DENBOSCH '97
by AT Holloway

On Friday 25 April a group of 30 enthusiastic Apprentices left Blandford Camp for a 4 day Rugby Tour to Denbosch Holland. After a tiring 11 hours on a coach we arrived at our Hotel for a quick shower and change before heading out to Denbosch to sample the local nightlife. Saturday morning was to be a late start, or so we thought. **Cpl** 'Bobby' **Sands** decided that an early morning training session was in order to clear our heads from the previous day. After a few hours running round a rugby pitch we headed for Amsterdam, an event we will remember forever. We arrived in the early afternoon and relaxed tasting the local fruits and looking around the endless amounts of shops.

Sunday brought our trip to Rosendaal Kommandos, who agreed to give us a game after a previous fixture was cancelled. A close game left the score Blandford 21-Rosendaal 20, but I think we were well beaten in the fun and games which followed in the Clubhouse. Songs were sung, beer was drunk, which concluded a day of adrenaline and sweat. Monday brought another long journey back to Blandford and the end of the tour, great fun was had by all attendees, a successful tour

RAWSON TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Gareth Oliver**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Kev Innes**

Rawson Tp welcomes their new Tp Comd, **Lt Gareth Oliver** who has just arrived from 1 (UK) Div in Herford.

FAREWELL TO LT JOTH HEYWOOD

On Saturday 8 March, Rawson Tp held a function to bid farewell to it's Troop Comd, **Lt Joth Heywood**. It was an entirely Troop affair, with entertainment being provided by **AT Dale Richardson** and **AT Chris Crossley** (our 2 budding DJ's), a recited ode by **AT** 'Poss' **Postlethwaite**, followed by a presentation and humorous speech by **AT Carl Walker**. The evening started with loud cheers, rapturous applause, and a standing ovation (But why? They said, What did he do?).

Immediately the scene was set for an enjoyable and relaxing party. So relaxing that, **Lt Heywood** even managed a dance with his girlfriend **Julie**, (we never knew he could). Which only leaves us to say, congratulations on promotion to Captain and Good Luck in the future from Rawson Tp.

AN ODE TO LT HEYWOOD

He is our OC
We all call him Joff.
His interests include shooting
but his number one is scoff.

He doesn't always talk.
But when he does he's loud.
He's not what I'd call big.
But he sticks out in a crowd.

Looking round the Mess
you'll find him at the bar.
And with that 12 bore that he owns
I think he'll go far.

If your asking me
the paras would suit him.
But all he does is volleyball
when he's down the Gym.

He goes out shooting pigeons,
pheasants, ducks and geese.
But if he's going anywhere
he'd better loose that fleece

He is our shepherd
We are his little flock.
just one thing about exercise
Where did you get that smock.

A week has seven days
We see him one or two.
the biggest question of them all
is what does our OC do.

When ever he goes shooting
It's a guaranteed bullseye.
Don't **** off Mr Heywood
'cos he can make you cry.

You'll have a lot to drink tonight
tomorrow will be a blur
but if you remember anything
it will be CHEERS SIR!

SCOTT TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO1 Bob Banner**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Lee Johnston**

As Scott Tp go through life sweeping aside all competition in all that we do, we pause for a moment to bid farewell to the out going Tp Comd, **Lt John Torrell** who goes with our best wishes to become a helicopter pilot with teenie weenie airways. In his place we welcome the new Tp Comd, **WO1 Bob Banner** who joins us from 30 Sig Regt. Due to his wealth of experience he was immediately detailed with taking on responsibility for the Squadrons' military training and final exercises before the Apprentices' graduation.

A WEEK ON DARTMOOR
by AT Ruth Kennedy

Military Training 3 started great!! Sunday morning and everybody felt good after the night before. All ATs paraded at 8.15 am but the DS decided 11.00 am was better, but we were not to know. We got on the coaches at 12.30 pm ready to start our journey to windy Dartmoor, everybody was in quite good spirits considering it was a Sunday. When we got to Dartmoor we got into our accommodation and did some rifle drills ready for firing the next day.

On Monday when we awoke you could not see 5ft in front of you. As we could not fire the DS decided it would be a good idea to do some lessons then the assault course in the afternoon. Good fun, that's what I thought!, after doing a walk through I realised what was involved. A 6 ft water jump that if you fell in you had to keep your mouth closed, and the monkey bars! We were divided into four teams, and while we were waiting to go we watched every girl, apart from **AT McKenzie** fall in. The water was freezing and up to your neck, and OK the first time was fun, but the lads decided it would be good to do it again and I was not amused. Freezing cold and soaking wet! So around we went, I was straight in the water jump on my knees and straight in the water again on the monkey bars.

Tuesday was spent zeroing and attempting our APWT. We did not do very well at this, all we can say is 'at least we tried'. On Wednesday, after another attempt at the APWT we all had a go on the moving target range that everybody enjoyed. For the afternoon we had 'another' session of rifle cleaning at which we were all becoming experts. Thursday we all had a go at pairs fire and manoeuvre; it was great fun and everybody was ready for the night ambush. The night ambush went off with a bang, trip flares, para-illum, mini flares and everything else which made a bang went up in the air. The night went well and everybody was in good spirits as we were going back to Camp on Friday and on leave Saturday.

Happy Birthday to AT Damien 'Dime Bar' Chorlton

AT Jenny Wood was later heard to say 'I want my mummy'

INTER TROOP ATHLETICS
by AT McKenzie

Saturday 10 May dawned bringing with it wind and rain, not the most ideal conditions for an Inter Tp athletics competition, Scott Tp versus Rawson Tp; a fight to the death! Who would be the champion Troop? The weather didn't dampen either the competitors or the spectators spirits and there was great support for both Troops. The first event was the 400m hurdles, won convincingly by **AT Jones** of Scott Tp, naturally. **AT Beardsley** showed his natural talent, yet again, by winning the 3000m steeplechase, showing that he has indeed settled in to Scott Tp very well. He showed his loyalty by kissing the Troop emblem, much to the envy of Rawson Tps, **Sgt Innes**. Both Troop's showed a lot of talent in the track and field events with the overall result going in Scott Tps favour, their points being over double those of Rawson Troop

A number of Scott Tp received medals, **AT Dourley** won three gold, **AT McKenzie** won four gold and **AT Dolan** also three gold, to name but a few. The presentation of prizes by the CO, **Lt Col T. W. Canham** went well with lots of cheering and clapping from both Troops. The proudest people there however, must have been **WO1 Banner** and **Sgt Johnston**, who were heard to utter sarcastic comments throughout the presentation about just how many medals Rawson Tp didn't have! **AT Jones** went up to collect the winning trophy, he being the loudest and most animated of the Scott Tp competitors. A loud cheer was heard as **AT Jones** held the trophy aloft, Scott Tp was again the Champion Troop!!

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please advise the Subscriptions Clerk at RHQ, IN WRITING, of any change of address.

THIS INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE TELEPHONED

Scott Tp with the Inter Tp Athletics Cup.

AT Bradley being presented with her medal by the CO, Lt Col T.W. Canham.

The White Helmets

At the time of writing the Team are a month into the show season and loving every minute of it. Despite treacherous weather conditions–very unfair after months of sunshine–the Opening Show was put on in front of an appreciative crowd of families, friends, sponsors and miscellaneous groups from the Camp. The opening ride produced a few palpitations when a collision threw **Sig Tony Annetts** and **Cpl Rob Downton** dramatically across the arena. Fortunately, neither was badly hurt and they were both able to continue in subsequent rides much to the consternation of their respective parents. The incident seemed to pull the team together even more and, much to their credit, the ensuing performance was faultless. The lunch in the Semaphore Arms was a much enjoyed occasion and a week-end before the road trip to Germany was greatly needed.

The four-day show at Rheindahlen was a resounding success and the team returned with only one injured man–**Sig** 'Togs' **Teague**, who managed to dislocate his (already dubiously formed!) right arm. The trip finished with a certain degree of 'cooperation' between the QRH Pipes and Drums who piped their way around the arena–in their kilts, on the back of the bikes ridden backwards! Trades were exchanged with the aforesaid Pipes and Drums, and the RAF Falcons, in the end of show frivolities and a six-bike fan built in a marquee, on chairs.

We say a fond farewell to **LCpl** 'Tat' **Jenkins** who leaves for greener civilian pastures. The team wishes him and **Sharon** the very best of luck. Also we remind him that we are still here should he have second thoughts about his next employment!

The team have completed a number of extremely-well received shows including an anniversary Beating of the Retreat at 35 Sig Regt, a Royal Star and Garter Military Spectacular in front of HRH The Duke of York, and the three-day Devon County Show. Articles about the team have appeared in numerous local newspapers, radio stations and even the *Daily Express*. At the time of writing, we await an article in the *Daily Star* on the theme of 'Girl Power and the Team Captain' and a promised write-up in the *Daily Mail*. Plans are afoot for a scheduled trip to Australia in September 1998 to perform in the Brisbane Tattoo–the team remains cynical but hopeful.

All in all, a busy but fun-packed start to the season and another, regular reminder to any soldier out there to get in touch with either **Capt Giles** or **Maj Russell** on Blandford Mil Ext 2365 if they wish to find out more. Don't be shy!

SITUATIONS VACANT!!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MOTORCYCLE DISPLAY TEAM

Are recruiting new riders to fill vacancies which occur in the team. Two week selection courses will take place at Blandford.

No previous experience is necessary - all you need is guts, determination, fitness and a sense of humour.

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NEWS FROM BOSNIA

MND (SW) HQ and Sig Sqn (207)

OPERATION LODESTAR

The Squadron arrived into theatre, by air and by train, during mid-April and immediately set about taking over from 20 Bde and 200 Sig Sqn (swapping 'mailed fists' for 'desert rats'). We knew we were in for a Summer tour and so the initial snow took us a little by surprise. However, fans have now replaced the heaters as the Summer heat kicks in. We are now settled in to our corimecs, our Sky dishes are wired in and we are almost used to our daily fix of smoke from the local burning rubbish tip here at the Banja Luka Metal Factory. Visitors to the Factory so far have included the pop group, The Stranglers, the Minister for Armed Forces, the Secretary of State for Defence and more importantly, Underwraps, those scantily clad female dancers from the CSE show.

200 Sig Sqn hand over to 207 Sig Sqn
Majs Cameron-Mowat and Richardson and
WO1s (RSM) Atkinson and Jones

QM'S DEPARTMENT

The QM's department, uncharacteristically, has been working long hours, seven days a week and mumbling about water rationing, air conditioners and early morning PT. It has been noticed that even **Maj Drain** (QM/Camp Commandant/long distance runner/guitar player) and **RQMS Catchpole** were putting in eight hour days. **Cpl** 'Percy' **Percival**, with his chameleon-like hair, informs everyone that he 'has to go to Split to liaise with the right people who are able to ensure we get the right equipment'. Meanwhile, on return from his well publicised visit to the Cannes Film Festival, **Sgt Al English** continues to 'pack them in' during his film nights.

TECHNICAL/LINE DETACHMENT (PROBLEM TERMINATORS)

The detachment is enjoying its tour of Bosnia with the guys working very hard and gaining lots of experience in their chosen fields. **LCpls John Ford** and **Scott Marlow** spent sometime adventurous training down at Brac and returned to the workshops with skin the colour of beetroot. Most of the time is spent trying to educate people on how to use their Sky satellite systems or trying to tune in the TV to the video (the RD element of the Squadron being the worst culprits). Goodbyes go to **Sig Paul Clack** who has been given a free transfer to MT along with **Sig Jason Knight**. Promoted to the Tech/Line Det is **Sig** 'Daz' **Burns**. He will enjoy his stay.

COMMS TROOP

Alpha and Bravo Tps have amalgamated for the tour and seem to be working well together even though Alpha Tp are having play-station withdrawal symptoms and Bravo Tp are having the alcoholic equivalent. **LCpls Lee Cox** and **George Johnson** and **Sig John Tran** are just three of the TA/Reservist augmentees who are helping with the amalgamation.

Cpl Mick 'Mad Dog' **Hatton** deployed to Sjenokosica rebro along with **Sig Mark Young** and immediately 'briefed up' the other cap badges co-located on the site as to what he expected of them in his own 'softly, softly' style. **Cpl 'JC' Cordery** and **Sig** 'Psycho' **Smith** went to Lisina hill top (which is so close, yet so far from the Metal Factory). Lisina had a white stone, 20 Bde 'mailed fist' etched into the hillside for all to see. 7 Bde were contemplating a neighbouring 'red rat' equivalent until the land owner charged us rent. If that wasn't bad enough, the summer weather has produced a jungle-like covering of ferns which has blanketed all the hard work of 200 Sig Sqn.

Cpl 'Taff' **Hamblin** went to Gola Pljesovic with **LCpl Simon Stadden** where they live underground in tunnels and have not seen daylight for some weeks now. Radaljici hill top site is fortunate enough to have **LCpl** 'Woss' **Gleave** (congratulations on promotion) and **Sig** 'Gaz' **Jennings**. The short straw, Ivovik rebro, went to **LCpl** 'Twitch' **Meakin**, **Sig Dave Moore** and **LCpl** 'Shaky' **Blackburn**.

Sgt Caulfield and Lt Carter
with Malaysian Signallers at Ivovik Hill Top Site

However, once the snow had melted, they managed to get all the important things done to the site (Sky set up, dart board hung etc). **Sig Chris Moore** and **Sig** 'Gorgeous' **Broderick** enjoy the pizzas, doughnuts and choc-ices that are available to them at rear-link CANBAT, Coralici whilst **LCpl Kenneth Birkett** and **Sig** 'Chocolate Mouse' **Alston** opt for their own cooking at MALBAT, Livno. **LCpl** 'Daz' **Mordecai** and **Sig** 'Blair' **Jones** get Dutch cheese and mixed showers at DUTCHBAT, Sisava and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Woolley** (congratulations on promotion) and **Sig Darren White** have half of the UK female, teenage population writing to them at CZECHBAT, Ljubija. **Cpl Dave Rimmer** has been heading up the radio room and all his hard work will no doubt earn him a stint at the Ivovik holiday camp. **Cpl Nick Ulley** has spent his time here banished to the depths of the COMCEN, only coming out at night when civilised people are asleep.

Sig Moore, LCpls Blackburn and Meakin at Ivovik Holiday Camp

BOSNIA–MY FIRST MONTH
by Sig J. Doughty

The roar of the engines and the final small adjustments to our earplugs and we were off. The time was around midday, the date was the 15 April 1997 and the venue was Hannover Airport and the beginning of our six-month tour of Bosnia Herzegovina. As the Hercules sped down the runway, there were some very unsettled and nervous looking faces, it was easy to tell what was going through their minds as the same thing was going through mine. What if something goes wrong? But no, nema problema, we were in the safe hands of the RAF and now they were providing us with approximately three and a half hours of glorious sleep. All right, so I lied, three and a half hours of restlessness, painting a picture in your head of how it's going to be. Until, that is, you step off the plane at Banja Luka airport and the reality hits you. Gone were the thoughts of green rolling countryside and hot sun but, instead, white rolling countryside and freezing winds. It was snowing! After a three-quarters of an hour coach drive, we arrived at the Banja Luka Metal Factory, home for the next six months. After being processed into theatre, it was straight to the cookhouse for a meal before locating corimec 'G4' for a well deserved nights sleep. As if it wasn't already obvious how long we had left in Bosnia, small reminders left by the previous occupants told us and informed us of what we would be getting up to in the months ahead. Cheers lads!

The next few days were spent settling in and making the rooms as homely as possible and then it was onto the hand-over/takeover of jobs. I was given the position of Chief Liaison Officer driver. After being introduced to my new boss, **Col Pickup**, I was shown my vehicle, a Mitsubishi Pajero (Shogun). I became the happiest man in FRY.

It took a few days to get on my feet, to get to know my way round camp and become familiar with all the road routes and certain locations that we would make weekly visits to. We visit the Vitez area on Thursday when the Colonel visits radio stations to broadcast in Travnik, Novi Travnik, Vitez and Busovaca. The reason behind the broadcasts are to keep the local people aware of what SFOR are doing in their area, other general information, advice and finally, worldwide news. Another regular detail is to take people on a tour of Hamburine. Hamburine is located about one kilometre outside Prijedor. It was originally an area that contained three villages but is now reduced to empty, uninhabitable structures or rubble, a product of ethnic cleansing. The daily use of the vehicle soon clocks up the miles and the 53,000km mark was reached. My predecessor informed me that this was the servicing point so a trip to Sarajevo was needed. The first thing you see as you enter Sarajevo is a sign saying 'Welcome to Sarajevo 84'. This conjures up pictures of Eddy 'The Eagle' Edwards. Then you turn into Sniper Alley. The speed limit is somewhat slower than it was in days of old but I soon arrived at my destination, Zetra Stadium. This was the place that had 'done the British proud' when Torvill and Dean won gold. What an anticlimax! Scaffolding, shell holes in the roof and the rink itself was no longer a home for ice but for corimecs and vehicles. The service was finished in a day and I left Sarajevo with a feeling of disappointment. What a waste!

Next on the agenda was the CSE show, a change from the norm and time to bring on the dancing girls. A well deserved good night was had by all. The Stranglers topped the bill and, although they've been around for awhile, they still knew how to get the crowd going. And that about brings me up to date. Only five months left to go. Doesn't time fly when you're having fun? Wish you were here? I doubt it.

BOSNIA–MY FIRST MONTH
by Sig M. Young

With all our training completed, the flight details confirmed and all of our lads fitted out in the very impressive 'Soldier 95' kit, we set out on our journey to the Former Yugoslavia. The majority of the Squadron went by air whilst a few chosen men loaded the fleet of wagons (with freshly painted 'Red Rats' and 'SFOR' motifs) onto an ageing flatbed train which, if advertised in 'Exchange and Mart', would have read 'high mileage hence low price' or 'spares or repair'.

We left Hohne railhead at lunchtime on 12 April 1997 on a journey that would take us through five countries and vast changes in culture. On board, we settled in as best we could. We passed most of the time grabbing some well earned sleep but played 'Risk' when awake. The game which turns friends into enemies. After a few warm-up games the atmosphere certainly became a little heated. **SSgt** 'Slightly Unstable' **Ferris** won most of the games.

We finally arrived at our destination, Novi Gradiska, to be greeted by a few grinning faces belonging to 200 Sig Sqn. We offloaded the wagons and set off for Banja Luka Metal Factory. I was due to deploy in two days to a rebroadcast station at Sjenokosic. This hill top is directly skyward from Donji Vakuf. We were placed in temporary accommodation that consisted of a large tent inside the factory. The two days soon passed and before I knew it I was jammed into the back of a Land Rover and taken alongside **LCpl Mick** 'The Governor' **Hatton** to 'SJ'. The ride was, to say the least, a little bumpy. It took some three hours to reach the site as conditions were less than ideal for a jaunt uphill in a fully laden Land rover. However, we were soon introduced to the other element on the site, **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Flatman**, **Sig** 'fishmong' **Fisher** and two lads from the Green Howards. **Cpl Hatton** and myself soon got into a fair and unanimous shift system where I got the 2100-0900 hrs and **Cpl Hatton** got the rest. Within the first week we had three feet of snow which caused great problems for the vehicles trying to get up the hill to do resupply and such like. Then the weather began to pick up and within a few days we had a barbecue.

Cpl Hatton (left) inadvertedly gives his age away
to Sigs Alston and Moore

Soon after, I left the hill top for Comms Tp during the first rotation and returned to the Metal Factory to take over a 'crash out' Land Rover. I was pleased for the change in scenery and a room with a few luxuries. Well that's the first month of the tour gone and I am looking forward to my R and R. I'm restricted to how many words I put to paper so I'll end with the well known saying. 'You're better in than out'.

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'NAAFI IN PARTNERSHIP'

Reports of the demise of Naafi are unfounded. Instead people will see a new Naafi, a professional and dynamic organisation offering choice, efficiency and value for money. To achieve this Naafi is working in partnership with leaders in particular business areas, using their expertise to help provide an unbeatable service.

In March Spar was awarded the contract to convert Naafi's 200 UK shops into a world class operation. Newly refurbished shops, with longer opening hours, will have a more extensive range of stock, focused on what the customer wants.

Naafi, not merely content with modernising its clubs, is going into the fast food business.

In conjunction with Eurest, part of the Compass Group, trial partnerships are being conducted to introduce a number of leading branded foods to clubs, for example Mama Mia Pizzas and Not Just So Donuts.

Other initiatives from Naafi include the creation of Naafi Select, Naafi's new mail order catalogue and a new financial services company, Warrior Group. Naafi Select offers non food goods to Service personnel worldwide at high street prices while Warrior Group will offer all of those services currently available through Naafi Financial Services as well as many new products.

The Armed Forces can be assured that Naafi will continue to service as it has done since 1921. There is a positive future for Naafi and most importantly, its increased profits are returned to the Service's welfare funds.

Naafinews

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HQNI and 15 Sig Regt BFPO 801

CO **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. J. Pellant**

The Regiment has had a busy two months; having finally relinquished the 'ball and chain' of Lisburn Station responsibilities, we have taken the opportunity to address long overdue internal restructuring. The new, leaner HQ Sqn is taking shape from its plush, albeit temporary, SHQ portacabins tucked in at the back (or is it the front?) of RHQ. Comms Branch has been the victim of workers' drills to create more offices from their previously exclusive lavatory facilities; they now have to share with the rest of us! 233 Sig Sqn, too, are engaged in radical changes to create a more efficient organisation.

Of course this has not detracted from the Regiment's main function in support of operations in the Province and all the squadrons are gearing up towards the possibility of a hot summer ahead (not just in meteorological terms). The Regiment has continued to excel on the sports field with the female basketball team winning the Army Championships and the waterpolo team winning the NI Championships. The Regiment also gained a string of second places for the shooting team at NISAAM, the athletics team at the NI Championships, and the orienteering team at the Corps Championships. Hard training is ongoing for the Lanyard Trophy and by the Tug-of-War team which is about to commence the season, including participation at the Royal Tournament and the Royal Braemar Games.

A sprinkling of officers from the Regiment and R Signals units in the Province also found time to conduct a management seminar with BT. This was a great success, not least by virtue of the venue for the event; The Causeway Hotel on the north coast (thank you BT!). **Maj Gen J. D. Stokoe CBE** (late R Signals) addressed the seminar and, in a separate function, presented LS&GCs to **WO2 (SSM) C. F. B. Hymas** and **SSgt G. R. Weavers**. He also presented **Mrs** (formerly LCpl) **Lorraine McGregor** with the GOC's Commendation for her outstanding work here in the Lisburn Commcen; her husband, **Sgt McGregor**, is still serving with the Regiment.

Mrs (formerly LCpl) Lorraine McGregor is presented with the GOC's Commendation by Maj Gen J. D. Stokoe CBE

Maj Gen Stokoe and the CO with LS&GC recipients WO2 (SSM) C. F. B. Hymas and SSgt G. R. Weavers and their wives

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj G. N. Hegarty**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Cheslett**

THE DAWNING OF A NEW HQ

The seeds were sown sometime ago to put the Regiment back to its original shape and after much thought it was agreed that the Station side of life were now old enough to stand on their own feet. The planners set about relocating the resurrected HQ Sqn HQNI & 15 Sig Regt, but alas all was not to run smooth. The story started back in the beginning of March, the hushed word was that the portacabins would be here by the end of March, it came it went, so did the Sqn Comd, to sunny parts for a long overdue rest (holiday). The SSM was left to fend for himself, homeless and on the streets he took refuge in the Trg Wing along with another lost sole (**Sgt Chris Davies**) who had been lost for a great deal longer. Times were hard; with little food and no money they whiled away the hours with a few potential Sgts and Cpls doing the usual things, like running and running with heavy things and then running fast without heavy things. Before long the portacabins arrived and were quickly put out of sight of the locals living in their tower block as this may be seen as lowering the tone. It wasn't long before the new Squadron began to flex its muscle, coming a charitable sixth in the Mercury Cup athletics followed by a creditable fourth in the CO's Cup Swimming (both equating to last), however a special mention must go to **Capt Fred Whichelo** who ran well to win both the 1500m and 5000m against tough opposition, and the team Captain, **Sgt Tony Martin** who organised the Squadron athletic team. Now the Squadron has settled into its new found premises (with a great deal of help from MT 'fatigue' Tp) things will get better trust me.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

The Squadron says hello to **Capt Geoff Williams** and hopes he settles in well, and enjoys himself, and goodbye to **Sharon** and **Sgt Mick Kilburn** who have now gone to Blandford to undertake his YofS course, we wish him and his family well in their future.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON–MAY 1977

Sqn Comd **Maj D. Whimpenny**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Hymas**

The Sqn Comd continues to lead from the front, through the Inter Squadron Rugby, NISAAM and now Adventure Training, while the Tech Adjt/2IC has been extended again. There has been a fresh round of poisoning scares, as the Ops Offr, **Capt Dave Dolling**, seeks out new victims for his latest consignment of Bacardi 151. The SIO, **Capt Phil Clark**, has fallen in love with a woman this time, and **Georgie** the mutt is looking dejected. Would anyone like to take her on before she is dragged down to a range practise? The Squadron welcomes **Capt Lynn Burrell**, who will take over as Sqn Comd E Tp, sometime in the future.

This month's articles are from E Tp, who organised the Mercury Cup Athletics, A Tp and G Tp, who are nearly up to establishment at long last.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 (RQMS) Sartorius**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Concepcion**

Alpha Tp has undergone its usual change in personnel. **Capt Bob Bunten** USO, **SSgt** 'Swifty' **Swift** and **Sgt Neil Wheatley** have now left for pastures new. **Capt Bunten** is not being replaced whilst **SSgt Nicky Goddard** replaced 'Swifty' and **Sgt Andy Purdy** escaped from 233 Sig Sqn to replace **Sgt Wheatley**. The farewell drinks and barbecues were excellent; even snow and heavy rain couldn't deter the strong turnout. **Sgt Bob Palmer** and **LCpl Helen Nolan** are congratulated on organising the events. Congratulations also must go out to **WO2 Fiona Nelson** on her selection for promotion to WO1. (Not sure about the posting to 233 Sig Sqn though. Still you can't win them all!!)

The CO's cup has come around again, with the usual array of activities. The Squadron came a gallant second in the swimming, after many hard fought races. The high standard of all swimmers could easily be identified as the final result rested on the last race. All swimmers are to be congratulated on a great result. The Troop is still providing both competitors and supporters in all Regiment sporting events! **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hymas** is still boring everyone to death with tales of Tug of War. On a more serious note he continues to raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital and to that end is now organising Ex Silver Child. This consists of a walk and bike ride from the Midlands to London. We wish him well and hope that you get loads of sponsorship money.

We are still waiting for the departure of the Tech Adjt, **Capt Charlie Cooper** who still hasn't gone. He was originally due to leave in March, then May and now who knows when? We are all enjoying his leaving do's though! On a final note, an immaculate conception has occurred between our Tp Sgt **Mick** and his wife **Ann-Marie**. The Troop wishes both of them happiness with their new arrival due in December.

GOLF TROOP

Yet again another hectic period has engulfed us and welcomed Golf Tp to the month of April. As usual we have had another new batch of young thrusting technicians posted in, and none posted out. Golf Tp is now so large that next week we declare war on China. New arrivals include **Cpl Matt Quirke** from 1 Div, **Sgt Dave Baddely**, who it would appear had a very long paper round somewhere within the Arctic circle (either that or he has a second hand head), and last but by no means least **Sgt** 'Gez' **Walker** also from 1 Div. Already we can see a problem, as we also have a **Cpl** 'Chez' **Walker** in the Troop. Thankfully there are no physical similarities between the two, however for those who still cannot tell them apart **Cpl** 'Chez' **Walker** has three ears and six fingers on each hand. The operation to remove the webs from between his toes has been a complete success and he now feels confident enough to wear sandals in public. The down side is that we have lost a valuable member of the Squadron swimming team. Other goings on have included various Troop members having fun and causing mayhem on a pistol users course, especially it would seem **SSgt John Greenwood**, who, as a weapons instructor and all round keen follower in the ways of the warrior was seen to demonstrate his skills to the Troop and leave them frozen in awe. Basically, as a wearer of the coveted cross rifles, **John** could not hit water if he fell out of a boat (obviously pistols are not de rigueur in Bosnia). We can only hope he is a better shot with the rifle. I would at this stage like to point out that I was ordered to write this last paragraph as day on day off duties are not the way I wish to spend my last remaining months here. **Cpl Dave Brown** deserves a mention after one of those odd quirks of life. After a freak accident in which he nearly had his feet cut off when the chain on his motor bike snapped, he yet again dodged death in a more social context; suffice to say that he won't be representing the Squadron at boxing.

For those of you who are interested, **Sgt** '70's' **Muggleton** was finally charged with the wearing of hair from a past decade, and was sentenced to a Max Wall haircut.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON SHQ

The small but elite team which makes up Sqn HQ would like to welcome **LCpl Graham** as the new Squadron clerk and say a sad farewell to **LCpl Pugsley** who has departed for Romeo Tp.

INDIA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Richard Newhouse**
SSgt **SSgt Frank Corrigan**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

A belated farewell to **Cpl Brent Rushton** who has gone to Bosnia and is currently working in a COMMCEN and also to **Sig Helen Mulloy** who has left the Army to be with her husband in Blandford. The final belated goodbye to **Sig Andrew Wood** who has left for Civ Div after many years loyal service to the Corps. Belated welcomes go to **Sigs Brett Holdsworth** and **Bobby Betts** and **Cpls Dave Knapman** and **Dave Burke** whose arrivals have previously gone unannounced.

The Troop had a bit of a barby on 16 May to say farewell to two of their longest serving members–**Cpl** 'Dinger' **Bell** and **Cpl Vince Saunders** both going to 16 Sigs. All the best fellas and thanks for all you have done. Now to say Hello to **Capt Newhouse** and to congratulate him on passing his Captains course. Also Hello to **SSgt Frank Corrigan** and **Sigs Dez Simpson**, 'Daz' **King**, **Steve McCluskie** and **Steve Massey**.

CONGRATULATIONS

These go to **Sgt McNeill** on his promotion and to **LCpl Callaway** on reaching that first rung on the ladder. Congratulations also go to **Cpl Saunders** on his recent marriage to **Zoe** and **LCpl Rycroft** on his marriage to **Jackie**.

Tp Comd **WO1 (YofS) Andy Drummond**
2IC **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow**

CONGRATULATIONS, HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Firstly congratulations to **LCpl** 'Boots' **McGregor** for recently receiving the GOC's Commendation for outstanding services during her tour with the Troop. There have also been a few recent comings and goings. **Sigs Jeff Hyland** and **Jimmy Mathieson** have both gone to see if the grass is really greener in Civvy Street. Meanwhile **LCpl Tracey Hendin** kept herself busy by getting pregnant, promoted and posted to 16 Sig Regt all in one month (they say things happen in 3's). Also gaining promotion was **Sig** (now LCpl) **Richie** 'Scouse' **Lloyd**. Congratulations and good luck to all. The Troop would also like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members: **Cpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** and his family, **LCpls A. J. Peters**, **Sarah Fursman**, **Sigs Alvin Black** and **Carrie Whitworth**.

SPORT

McKelvie Hockey. It all started a few weeks prior to the competition when I (**LCpl Lloyd**) was given the unenviable task of not only winning, but retaining the McKelvie Hockey Cup. Nothing but a win would suffice.

Training sessions were a must and were taken on by **LCpl Greg** 'what do I do now' **Cox**. Over the next couple of weeks a team was selected, and what a formidable team it was! The day of reckoning eventually came round and tension was high. We had three games to play with the opposition being Romeo Tp, India Tp and TM Tp. Having destroyed Romeo Tp earlier in the week, a win would be inevitable–it was, thanks to **Phil** 'Hit and Hope' **Robson**.

Next to face the talented 10 were India Tp, the only team to score a goal past us. However, with players like **Cpl Wayne Robson** the 3-1 result was inevitable. The last game against TM Tp ended goalless and on the final whistle the celebrations began.

Commcen Tp–McKelvie Trophy Hockey Champions
Back Row (*L-R*): Cpl Fursman, LCpl Sharon Rogers, LCpl Cox, Sgt Corlett, WO2 (YofS) Drummond
Front Row (*L-R*): SSgt Manktelow, Cpl Robson, Cpl Newman, Sgt Robson, LCpl Lloyd

NI ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

This brought the Fitties out of the woodwork and stars like **Sig Alvin Black** were born. He proved his worth both in track and field–winning the 400m hurdles, long jump and high jump. The girls also did extremely well with **SSgt Linsey Manktelow** winning the 200m, the 400m hurdles, long jump and high jump. **LCpl Sharon Rogers** and **LCpl Sarah Fursman** ran the 400/800m respectively with some fine results.

CO'S CUP AND NI SWIMMING COMPETITIONS

Finally swimming with **LCpl Sarah Fursman** playing a huge part in winning the CO's Cup for the Squadron. In the NI Championships, she also won the individual freestyle.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Rich Rumsey**
YofS **WO2 (YofS) Bingham**

As the 'Marching Season' commences the Troop continues to be heavily tasked in all aspects of its role in Province. In addition to the usual commitments, work has recently started on the rebuild of the Troop lines, expertly co-ordinated by **SSgt Paul Brown**–ear defenders are now an essential part of the working dress–in **SSgt Paul Brown**'s case an extremely large set of amplivox.! After the inmates of the Maze prison recently attempted an unsuccessful tunnel escape from their compound, Romeo Tp has just been issued the perfect counter to this tactic. 'Micro Tech'– in the form of **LCpl** (ex Cadet SSM) 'Inckle' **Scott Davis**. During the Inter Tp swimming (obvious whale joke alert) the Troop led ably by **Sgt Polly** 'He's not slim' **Perkins** came fourth, out of four. This obviously was not where the smart money would have been if a wager were to be placed on the competition, however, if there is anyone out there who wishes to invest a few thousand pounds in either Ginsters or Bowyers in Blandford now may be a good time to sink your money into this potentially lucrative field.....Why? Well **Sgt Danny Heakin** has started on his mission not only to complete his Yeoman's course but to eat the 'Interesting Georgian Town' of Blandford out of all convenience food! Should there be any sightings of **Sgt Heakin** (pictured in the now mandatory YofS 'walking out attire') feel free to wish him every success along with: **Sgts Steve Buckley**, 'Bear' **Convery** and **Bob** 'Sanke Pliskin' **Bleasdale**.

Sgt 'Bear' Heakin in YofS 'walking out attire'

TM TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt (TOT) Gig Plumb**
Tp 2IC — **WO2 (FofS) Ian Rutherford**

There have been several changes to the Troop since the last issue of our illustrious magazine. New additions have been numerous and we would like to welcome **Cpls Matt Clarke**, 'Geordie' **Robinson**, **Stu Murray** and **LCpl Al Hayhurst**.

Congratulations are definitely in order for **Cpl** 'Stan' **Stanbury** on passing P Company and his posting to the 216 Sqn. Also all the best to **Sgt Brian Large** and family who are on their way to 30 Sig Regt. A well done also to **Sgts Matt Clarke**, 'Georgie' **Robinson**, **Stu Murray**, **Bernie Steadman** and **Harry Dunlop** on their recent promotions. A special well done to **Harry Dunlop** and his wife **Nikki** on the birth of their daughter.

With promotions and arrivals the social side of life has also been busy with the Troop proving that despite having the best looking bunch of blokes in Province we can't bowl for toffee. This fact was borne out in the ten pin bowling match organised by **Sgt Les Crowder**. Even though the bar closed at 2030 hrs the competition continued until the early hours of Saturday morning. The gladiators of the Troop, **SSgt Jim Duncan**, **Sgts Jon Maxwell**, 'Taff' **Drew**, **Mick Openshaw** and **LCpl Brian McClean** visited Windsor on the world Tug of War tour and came a creditable second despite coming up against formidable opposition. They have promised to win the Royal Tournament–we shall see.

MERCURY CUP ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1997

This years Championships got off to the ideal start when the organiser actually managed to book perfect athletics weather conditions; yes Ireland actually managed to go a whole day without rain. This was a welcome bonus after last years 'four seasons in one day'. 39 Bde got off to a flying start with two wins and two seconds in the first four events, fine victories for **LCpl Goulden** (Discus) and **Cpl Mantle** in the 400m hurdles. However, the loudest applause in the 400m hurdles went to **Cpl Campbell** (225 Sig Sqn) whose legs failed him in the home stretch and after collapsing to the ground after hitting a hurdle managed to pick himself back up and complete the race. 39 Bde's lack of strength in depth began to show with disappointing performances in the 400m, 1500m and 5000m. Their early eight point lead was quickly being whittled down by 233 Sig Sqn who very rarely came outside the top three placings. The most notable field performance coming from **Sig Black** in the High Jump, who having comfortably cleared 1.80m decided to retire so he could concentrate on the Long Jump. 233 Sig Sqn's best track performance clearly came from **Capt Rumsey** who managed to do the 400m and 800m double, as well as having time to have a quick chat to his fellow competitors whilst overtaking them. However, the outstanding track performance came from **Capt Whichelo** (HQ Sqn) who decided to take on the challenge of doing the 1500m and 5000m double. Believing he would cruise to a fairly comfortable victory in the 1500m, **Capt Whichelo** set off at a fairly comfortable pace. However, he soon realised he was in for a hard race, when **LCpl Burke** (8 Bde) decided to step up a gear and push the race along. The race went right to *The Wire*, with **Capt Whichelo** only just snatching victory by the finest of nostril hairs. The 5000m proved to be a much easier run for **Capt Whichelo**, winning by just over one minute.

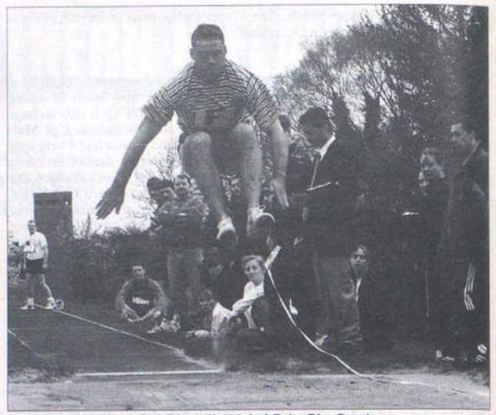
The best and closest race of the day was the 4 x 100m relay, the first three placings separated by only half a second. Victory eventually going to 225 Sig Sqn who after a poor first leg handover managed to claw their way back after an excellent third leg from **LCpl Wilkins** and a fine glory run to victory by **WO2 Steele**. At the end of the competition no one could touch 233 Sig Sqn, who ended up runaway winners.

MERCURY CUP

Placing	Squadron	Points
1st	233 Sig Sqn	80
2nd	39 Inf Bde	70
3rd	3 Inf Bde	65
4th	8 Inf Bde	57
5th	225 Sig Sqn	54
6th	HQ Sqn	51

INDIVIDUAL EVENT WINNERS

Event	Competitior	Sqn	Time/Dist
100m	**WO2 Steele**	225 Sig Sqn	11.50 secs
200m	**LCpl Ridsdel**	39 Inf Bde	24.19 secs
400m	**Capt Rumsey**	233 Sig Sqn	55.10 secs
800m	**Capt Rumsey**	233 Sig Sqn	2.13.33 secs
1500m	**Capt Whichelo**	HQ Sqn	4.14.81 secs
5000m	**Capt Whichelo**	HQ Sqn	15.59.86 secs
110mH	**Cpl Mantle**	39 Inf Bde	17.44 secs
400mH	**Cpl Mantle**	39 Inf Bde	1.02.87secs
Relay 4 x 100m		225 Sig Sqn	48.30 secs
Relay 4 x 400m		233 Sig Sqn	3.48.86 secs
H/Jump	**Sig Black**	233 Sig Sqn	80m
L/Jump	**LCpl Stranks**	3 Inf Bde	5.98m
T/Jumo	**LCpl McIlroy**	8 Inf Bde	12.78m
Discus	**LCpl Goulden**	39 Inf Bde	35.25m
Shot	**WO2 Durrant**	HQ Sqn	12.30m
Javelin	**WO2 Meggit**	3 Inf Bde	46.50m



LCpl Risdell (39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn) getting some air time in the long jump

Commander Comms NI, Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson R Signals, presents Sig Black of 233 Sig Sqn with the Winning Team Shield

A posse of PTIs on a podium: suitable captions are welcomed!

XL

CO — **Lt Col N. C. Beacom TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) J. S. Black**

WELCOMES AND GOODBYES

We warmly welcome the new QM **Capt Dave Chrystal** and **Suzi** to the province. Also, we welcome the new Adjutant **Capt Dominic Sharkey**. May their time with the Regiment be an enjoyable one.

Farewell to the QM **Capt John Standen** who now returns to his old stomping ground in Loughborough. **Mandy** will be glad to have him home but not so the mobile phone companies which **John** kept in business during his unaccompanied tour with us. We wish a fond farewell to the Adjt **Capt David Cathro** and **Penny**. We always thought it wasn't entirely coincidental that a Scot should marry someone named after money!! The future of the Corps is in good hands with **David** in Blandford as are the profit margins of local hamburger joints. Troop Commanders will have no trouble recognising him–he's the one with the offensive eyebrows and blackthorn stick!!

Handing over the 'In-tray'
David Cathro (cream shirt) hands over to Dominic Sharkey

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Capts Maurice Stanley** and **Robin Finlay** on commissioning. Not only is this a defection for the pair of them from the Sergeant's mess but also a defection to HQ Sqn from 66 Sqn! Nonetheless the Regiment is all the better for their continued service and all the best for the years ahead.

EXERCISE ANDORRA FINN 1: 16-23 MARCH

Report by WO2 (SSM) G. E. Cook

Having tested the delights of Aviemore and Bulgaria in recent years, the intrepid skiers of the Regiment decided to be more adventurous for their annual ski training. Seventeen members of the Regiment set off to sample the more challenging slopes of Arinsal and pal in Northern Andorra. The aim of the week was to introduce as many people as possible to Alpine and Nordic ski techniques as well as the ability of the stalwarts. The trip was organised by **WO2 (SS) George Cook** and **WO1 (SVWO) Barry Skinner**, founder members of the Clonaver Ski Club. All enjoyed a week of excellent skiing although by mid afternoon the heat made the lower slopes rather sticky. However this gave the OC LAD **Capt Victor Beggs** some respite from what is not his true vocation in life (**Victor** was back squadded from the under 5's group). **SSgt Gary Shaw** was accredited with honorary instructor status for his help to the training staff (Certificate is in the post). For our more experienced people the races were so tiring a rest was what was needed most. **WO2 (FoS) Robert Dixon** and **WO2 (SSM) Derek Irvine** are still wondering were **SSgt Donald** (the old man) **Holmes** gets his energy from. He still found the energy to help out at the Ski Reps Cabaret turning out to be the star performer with his ability to encourage audience participation! By the end of the week all the students were tested and awarded their proficiency certificates. The aim of the week was achieved and all went home with not only their new found skills but an excellent suntan and a promise to return next year.

First Day 'Blues'
The Instructor is looking back down the slope for the ones left behind

40 Sig Regt (V) Belfast

SSgt Gary Shaw demonstrates how to lie down with skis on, closely watched by (*L-R*): Cpl Mark Reilly, WO2 Robert Dixon, SSgt Mark Barass

RACE THE SUN 1997

The Regiment provided seven team members for the 11 Bde composite team. The team travelled over to Stranraer early on Tuesday 13 May to Strensal Camp where they prepared their equipment for the next day. All team members acquitted themselves well in what was a very difficult competition. It was obvious by the times recorded that they had trained hard for the event. Our thanks must go to 34 Sig Regt for their excellent admin support including the post race barbecue which was most welcome. The team members were: **WO1 (RSM) Black**, **WO2 White**, **SSgt** 'Ginge' **Coburn**, **SSgt** 'M' **Barass**, **Sgt** 'Spence' **Ord**, **Cpl** 'Army Barmy' **Anthony**, **LCpl** 'Who needs a map' **Amos**, **LCpl** 'The Fish' **Giles**, **LCpl** 'Biker' **McKay** and **Sig** 'Speedy' **Lindsey**. The main aim of the event was to raise money for York based charities and also for individual units' local charities. All the team members would like to thank those who gave money and the Somme Hospital in Newtownards will benefit from the fund raising events. The gauntlet has now been thrown down to other members of the Regiment to support this worthwhile and physically demanding event next year.

SSgt Mark Barass strides out

Cpl Anthony finishing his forced march

66 (CITY OF BELFAST) SQUADRON

This has been an extremely busy period for the City of Belfast Sig Sqn which has covered many activities including arrivals, promotions and the usual social events. In March the Squadron held its first ever formal dinner during which we said farewell to **SSM Stanley** after 28 years service with the Squadron. At the same dinner we said farewell to **Lt Ian Craig** as he moved to 85 Sqn–thanks for your lively service with us **Ian**. It was also a pleasure to welcome two new Troop Commanders to the Squadron–**Janette Ferry** and **Andrea Bowen** (both ex QUOTC). Other promotions during the period were **Sgt Johnston** to SSgt and **Sigs Barclay**, **Fulton**, **Marshall** and **Ouldfield** to LCpl–our congratulations to them all. We also say welcome to new recruits who have just finished their recruits course and joined the Squadron–**Sig Stewart** and **Sig Leckey**. The Squadron, together with the rest of the Regiment, deployed on Ex Eagle's Fire (the 107 Bde FTX) in April and on Ex Executive Stretch in May when, as the sponsoring unit, we made sure all the young executives were stretched to the full. Both exercises proved to be a great success. **Lt Jeni Ballagh** has just returned from Canada and is attacking her social life and duties with a new vigour. We have despatched **OCdt** 'Paddy' **Watson** to Sandhurst and wish him well, well, well.

As we write the Squadron is working furiously in preparation for Ex Able Condor in Germany. There is a definite air of excitement as this will be our first deployment with 11 Bde which all of us are looking forward to.

85 (ULSTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON
1997 CORPS SAAM

The 1997 Corps SAAM saw a massive gathering of the Corps at Ash Ranges near Pirbright. The Squadron entered a team for the Regiment after only one weekend of zeroing and geling as a team and came back with five gold bars for each team member and the prestigious APWT Trophy for 1997. Team members included **2Lt** 'I will demonstrate how to clean a rifle barrel and get attention' **Dempsey**, **LCpl** 'I am not getting married, Honestly!' **Anderson**, **LCpl** 'Bosnia Vet' **Giles**, **LCpl** 'Clarkes mate?' **Miskelly**, and last but not least **Sig** 'chocolate biscuit belly' **Clarke**. Well done team we will return next year to lift more silverware.

EXERCISE PIED PIPER

Further displaying their military skills to the full the Squadron represented the Regiment in this 107 Bde military skills competition narrowly missing the silver award but scoring highly on a score of 10,256 points. The team consisted of **2Lt Craig**, **Cpl McCann**, **Cpl Curry**, **LCpl Anderson**, **LCpl Sanlon** and **LCpl Giles**.

The Squadron are sending away seven new recruits on their recruit course to Colerne training camp. On their return they will begin their allocated trade training cycle. These recruits have joined us a result of the new recruiting campaign that has been implemented in the Squadron. This process has been an invaluable tool for the Squadron to enable us to achieve our target of trained soldiers for the end of the year.

69 (NIH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Over the period 11-13 April 1997, 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn (V) provided HF Comms to HQ 107 (U) Bde (also known as CSSG(U) for the duration of the exercise) staff for Ex Eagle's Fire. Eight members of the Squadron deployed a day early to set up, remoting 12 lines into the HQ and EXCON using 2 FFRs. Comms were also established by the Squadron for 204 Fd Hosp RAMC (V) and maintained by **Cpl Bromfield** and **LCpl Golligher**.

Ex Eagles Fire is the first time that the Squadron has deployed in a Bde Sig role. Operators had their first experience of dealing with the staff and likewise it was probably the first time HQ 107 Bde staff had been advised on the voice procedure and use of BATCO by a Signaller. Secure comms were also provided by the Regiment using EUROMUX however more traffic was passed using HF. We are please to say that comms stayed in well and we did not receive any complaints. The exercise was an excellent experience for the Squadron and despite being utilised in an unfamiliar role, we proved that this was also well within the capabilities of the Sqn. We look forward to Ex Eagles Fire–the summer camp!

The Squadron would finally like to send their warmest congratulations to **SSgt Lyttle** on receiving his Lord Lieutenant's Certificate.

3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (203)
BFPO 809

Sqn Comd	**Maj C. R. Owen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) K. R. Winkles**

OPS TEAM

Ops Offr	**Capt R. J. Webb**
Yofs	**WO2 (YofS) R. Rutherford**
FofS	**WO2 (FofS) S. Steven**

WALLACE AND GROMMIT DEPLOY TO SOUTH ARMAGH

In the unending quest for better communications in our TAOR no potential site is neglected. No military or RUC base is free from the attentions of our Sites Manager **SSgt Andy Dick** (RUC Canteens apparently have great COUGAR potential). Recently our horizons were extended yet further with a trial of a green field site in South Armagh. This unit is not established for such a deployment and equipment and manpower had to be gathered from across the Corps in order to conduct a site trial. 1 (UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt are particularly thanked for the services of **Sig Lowe**, Dvr Elec. Having seen the work of the Irish Tourist Board **Sig Lowe** was looking forward to a trip to the Emerald Isle. Unfortunately, he did not realise it was the output of the Republic's Tourist Board he had seen and that South Armagh does not feature in ANY tourist brochures.

Following a helicopter insertion **Cpl Dave Hannam** and **Sig Si Lowe**, operating from a T-MAT Sangar steadfastly provided COUGAR communications for two weeks, enabling assessment of the worth of their location as a permanent site. Our boys received defensive protection from various multiples drawn from the Armagh Roulement Battalion, who rapidly nicknamed them Wallace and Grommit. 'We like cheese and crackers', and speculated endlessly on the contortions necessary for two persons to live and work in the confines of a T-MAT. A remarkable reluctance to leave the .30 calibre protection of the T-MAT almost certainly enhanced their natural gymnastic ability. During this deployment our team worked hard to maintain communications and, despite some characteristic Ulster weather, morale remained high. With the trial now safely concluded TM Tp would just like to point out **Cpl Hannam**'s lack of mail whilst deployed was due to the failure of anyone to write to him, not a break down in administrative support!

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt L. Launders**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt S. Parke**

The past few months have witnessed comings and goings in Comms Troop on a grand scale. Changes at the top include **Sgt Sam Parke** and **Bernadette** who have recently arrived from Colchester (we don't exactly know where!). **Sgt Nick Oldcroft** and **Rachel** headed off to Germany to show the Gunners how to communicate. Hello also to **Cpl Lee Johns** from 16 Sig Regt, **Cpl** 'Ted' **Heath** and **Alison** from 17 Port and Maritime (Hello Sailor!), **Cpl Steve Bartlett** from 20 Bde, **Cpl** 'Billy' **Bremner** from 21 Sig Regt, **LCpl Ian Cowan** from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Stan Martin** all the way from 8 Bde, and last but not least **Sig** 'Not So' **Smart** from the factory.

All the best to those deserting the ship for civvy street: **Cpls Paul Wray**, **John Seaman**, **LCpl Mick Ross** and **Kelly**, **Sigs Paula Haddock** and **Mick Robbie** and finally our resident pugilist **Sig** 'KKY' **Kirkbride**. We especially thank KKY for his freelance performance in the Whynge Inn (now renamed the Bermuda Club) prior to turning professional.

Finally moving on but not out are **LCpl Sean** 'Rigsby' **Oliver** off to 7 Sig Regt, **LCpl Andy Armstrong** going to Donnington (presumably to put out fires). Then there's **LCpl Mandy McHugh** who is going airborne in Aldershot, **Sig Dave Parker** who is staying in Province and **Sig James Reginald Hunter Smith** (Jim) who has managed to charm his way into 1 Sig Sqn–Well done. Those of us who haven't run away continue to stagger on providing the cutting edge of the Squadron's comms support to 3 Inf Bde and recovering from all the goodbye bashes. We do manage to find time for some extra curricular activities–**Cpl** 'Ted' **Heath** was the hand picked ambassador for the Squadron at the Secretary of State's Garden Party at Hillsborough Castle. He was disappointed not to meet **Mo Mowlam** who was called away to Westminster but somewhat comforted to find that **Her Majesty the Queen** had taken her place.

LCpls 'Lestor' **Richardson** and **Scott Harriman** successfully completed the Belfast Marathon raising £350 for Cystic Fibrosis and proving that the rumours of couch potatoes in Crypto aren't entirely true.

YOUR COPY OF THE WIRE, ARE YOU GETTING IT?

Cpl 'Ted' Heath clearly impresses Her Majesty the Queen and the GOC at the Secretary of State's Garden Party

NI FIRST AID COMPETITION

Team: **Sgt** 'Doc' **Sherwood** (captain)
Cpl 'Nurse' **Cullen**
LCpl Fisher
LCpl 'Paramedic' **Martin**
Sig Hoggard
Cpl Raby
Cpl McKeowii
Sig Parker

Once again it was that time of year for individuals to show off their CPR, EAR and triangular bandages. No not Comms Tp annual function but the NI First Aid Competition. Once the RSM had sorted through the hundreds of volunteers the elite team began training. The day of the event arrived and the team was raring to go, but we had no choice and had to attend, so off we set for Magilligan Training Area. We arrived in plenty of time to get the kit prepared, focus our minds and have some lunch. At 1100hrs we started off and as we passed the other teams you could see the worry on their faces: we were heading in the wrong direction.

There were six stands consisting of every day events such as a shooting, a car bomb, an RTA, an air crash, a sea rescue and a farmhouse fire. Our medical standards were high and many lives were saved that day. Not enough however, there was just one unconscious casualty who in the chaos and smoke of the air crash we failed to find until it was too late. The competition was a great success but unfortunately not for us–we did however learn and practice many new skills in what was a fun and well organised day.

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
BFPO 801

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. J. Healey**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D. McCluskey**

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) S. F. M. Lawes**

It has been a somewhat hectic period for the department with the handover/takeover and PRE. Time was found though to despatch **Sgt Sean Hyland** on his Sergeants Course from which he has just returned. We wish him congratulations on the pass. **LCpl Lynn Sheridan** managed to fit in her Class 1 course, well done only the Corporals Course to crack now! We would like to welcome **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Brummie' **Lawes**, his wife **Anke** and daughter **Shelley** from 1 Armd Div. **Sig** 'Sticky' **Bunn** joins us from 3 Div and **Sig** 'I'm a Telemech not a storeman' **Ufton** from 9 Sig Regt. We hope you all have a pleasant and safe tour in the Province. **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Gaz' **Stoker** has left us and joined 7 Sig Regt at Krefeld as the RQMS (A), we wish you, **Joni** and **Lauren** all the best for the future. We hope that your fingers don't get too tired from stacking all those blankets.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Paul Merry**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kev O'Neill**

ACTION!

The combined team of **LCpl Si** and **Sig Laurie Ridsdel** have crossed the Irish Sea for the last time on their way to HQ ARRC in JHQ, and with them go their two mad dogs, Lisburn Station has never been so quiet. All the sports teams in the unit will sorely miss **LCpl Ridsdel**, we are a man down in every discipline now! **Cpl Steve Clarke** now recovered from a broken arm (see last issue of *The Wire*) and has departed for 19 Mech Bde at Catterick, he even managed to lift a pint glass in the Horseshoe before leaving. **Cpl Cowan** joins us from Catterick he has been here for about two seconds and is already looking a little bemused. **Cpl Royston Davies** has latched himself into the unit from 4 Armd Bde along with **Cpl Marie McChesney** from Donnington. She is proving to be greener than the greenest green soldier. **Sig Docherty** has rocked up from Herford and has within the first month competed in the Swimming Championships and has been deployed in the mainland with the Royal Irish to act as CIVPOP, her rock throwing skills are of the highest order!

SSgt 'Wee Jock' **O'Neill** has been educated and is now qualified for promotion having passed his EFP2, he was most definitely the teachers' pet, he should pay extra, extra messing, for all the apples he took from the Mess! The girls from the COMCEN missed him while he was away. The Tp Comd was feeling brave one afternoon and decided to allow the riggers to practice him in rapid descent off the mast, wings or no wings they managed to scare him. Where is **Cpl** 'Muz' **Murray**? Apparently he was last seen on a course, but which course? Answers on a postcard please to . . .

INCIDENT OF THE MONTH

The Commanders' Rover Group continue to be jinxed. Last month saw the foot down the rabbit hole episode, this month it is entirely different. The Rover Group were escorting the new Secretary of State for Northern Ireland around some of the hot spots of Belfast when they had to stop at a red light. The Intelligence world keep warning us of the chance of an attack on stationary vehicles at red lights. So on the look out for possible attack the new IC of the Group, **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Cain**, on one of his first trips saw a youth heading towards the vehicle with something in his hand. At first he thought it was a 'coffee jar bomb' but quickly realised that it was a tube of shoe whitener. The youth sprinted to the front Armoured Patrol Vehicle and proceeded to write IAR on the side in two foot high letters. The future of PIRA is obviously in the hands of Dyslexic children!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Steve Hodgson**

There has been only one new arrival, **LCpl Neil Wardale** from 1 Armd Div who is to replace **Cpl Evans**. **Cpl Evans** has already departed for Blandford and his T1 course. Talking of T1's **Cpls Bevan** and 'Rosy' **Lee** have both been successful in passing their T1 crammers at Worthy Down. **Cpl Bevan** and **Sig Dryden** have passed their rigging courses at RAF Digby, they apparently can't wait to get up the masts! A highlight for some was the visit of an SSVC camera team to shoot some pictures of personnel doing what we do. **Cpls Reeve**, and **Davidge** and **LCpl Ship** have apparently appeared in front of the whole SSVC populace of Germany and Cyprus. You might have thought they would have preferred some better looking members of the unit.

Last but not least we would like to say farewell to **Lt Steve Hutchinson** who has been on his Officer attachment before going to Blandford to do his Troop Comd's course. Although only with us for a short time he managed to make quite a considerable contribution to unit life. Good Luck.

Sig Allison Lloyd the first female employed on Rigging Duties in 39 Infantry Brigade

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRST AID COMPETITION (NIFAC)
by SSgt Kev O'Neill

A Memo arrived on my desk one winters' day, it had Jiff Job written all over it. 'Staff,' it said, 'Rustle up a team for NIFAC, the details are in the Admin Instruction attached. Any problems come and see me in a month when I get back from a course' Signed **WO1 (RSM)** 'Good Bloke' **McCluskey**. RSM's note: A little bit of poetic licence in the last paragraph!

Having a fair bit of leave to fit in myself, I looked around for a suitable candidate and found a willing lemming in **Cpl** 'Kildare' **Pryme**. Crossing out staff and inserting **Cpl Pryme** I left him to it and went on leave, managing to fit in a EFP2 course into the bargain. The day before the competition the RSM asks me, "How are the team doing?" Having completely forgotten about it, I bluffed him and told him that it was all squared away, not a problem on the horizon. Luckily for me the now fully qualified Team Medic and resident member of ER, **Cpl Pryme**, had 'cracked on' and had recruited the cast of casualty to give us a fighting chance. The team consisted of **LCpl Lee Asquith**, **LCpl** 'Fergie' 'Last minute sub' **Ferguson**, **Sig Jim Dryden**, **Sig** 'If me tabs don't kill 'em me first aid will' **Haggath**, **Sig**, now LCpl, 'Geordie' **Tonks**, and **Pte Adam** 'I'll do the CPR' **Harman**, plus **Cpl Pryme** and me.

The team arrived at McGilligan Training Camp in good spirits due to an unusual bout of sunshine rather than the normal rain. The competition consisted of six stands. To talk you through all of the stands would be like watching several episodes of 999. Whilst marching around the competition we were continually impressed by the way in which the casualties died before our very eyes. After various amputations, heart failures, crashed planes, wailing infants and numerous cases of burns and shock, the team were very conversant with ATD 5 (First Aid). A special mention to **Cpl Matt Pryme** who dashed about better than any trauma doctor. Without his efforts the team could never have achieved the very creditable position of seventh out of the 21 teams taking part. An excellent effort by everyone that took part, Well Done!

ATHLETICS TEAM NEWS

The Athletics Team has had some success. As winners of the Mercury Cup against all R Signals Units, we were feeling quite confident going into the Minor Units Championships. Unfortunately we were just beaten into second place by 3 Bde. No excuses, but next time we'll definitely have a Pole Vaulter. Well done to those who took part and a special mention to **Cpl Jason Mantle** for his excellent performance.

NORTHERN IRELAND SKILL AT ARMS COMPETITION (NISAAM 97)

Early in April, six members of the Squadron took part in NISAAM 97. Managed by **SSgt Colin Maguire** the team consisted of **Lt Paul Merry** (Team Capt), **Cpl** 'Tech' **Davidge**, **LCpl J. C. Moses**, **LCpl Wayne Goulden**, and **Pte** 'Baz' **Jutson**.

The weather at Ballykinler was as kind as ever and proceeded to rain testing the team's Goretex to the full. The standard of shooting varied greatly. **Pte** 'Baz' **Jutson** headed the list as the person that came last the most. **LCpl Goulden** was placing bets on doing the two mile March and Shoot in 16 minutes, in reality it was 2.5 miles and took 23 minutes to complete. The team was much better for the experience after listening to **LCpl J. C. Moses**' theories on life and were pleased with the position of second in the Minor Units Championships to a very talented 5 Regt Army Air Corps Team.

Back row: Lt Paul Merry, Maj Healey (Sqn Comd), WO2(RQMS) Gary Stoker MBE, SSgt Colin Maguire, LCpl Wayne Goulden. Front row: LCpl JC Moses, Cpl Dav Davidge, Pte Baz Jutson.

VISIT OF COMMANDER COMMUNICATIONS N. IRELAND

Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson visited the Squadron on 29 April 1997 for his first visit since relinquishing command of Lisburn Station. After short briefs by the OC, and **WO2 (YofS) Jerry Hughes**, he was taken to two sites in West Belfast where work was being carried out by the unit. Afterwards high tea was consumed in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess where the two members of 15 Sig Regt won the cake eating competition!

'Top of Divis OP prior to the RSM being thrown off by Commander Communications for being better looking than him'. (*L to R*): WO2(FofS) Paul Redmond, WO1(RSM) Darrel McCluskey, WO1(RSM) Steve Pellant, Commander Communications, Maj Rob Healey, Lt Paul Merry.

NORTHERN IRELAND SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Squadron swimming team took part in the N. Ireland Swimming Championships and came away as N. Ireland Minor Units Champions and go into the zone finals in a bid to make the Army finals for the fourth year in succession. Well done and good luck at Bramcote.

8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
BFPO 807

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. J. Perry MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Fisher MBE**

CORPS SAAM/NISAAM 1997
by Sgt 'Dez' **Eldridge**

April saw the Squadron participate in two major Skill at Arms Competitions. The first was the Corps SAAM held at Ash and Pirbright ranges between the 6-11 April. All of the Corps was represented by their various Regts and Sqns, culminating in the best shots shooting it out, for best Corps, best Unit and best Individuals. There was more silverware on show than at an Antiques Roadshow special. However, Hugh Scully would be hard pressed to date some of the trophies. The Squadron's team was ably led by **Sgt John O'Hanlon** who is a veteran of this sort of thing. **Sgt O. J. O'Hanlon RLC** went on to win best non R Signals shot, within the R Signals competition. **Sgt** 'Dez' **Eldridge** was often heard asking, 'Right **O. J.** what is the 3rd exposure of the 2nd practise on the Roupel shoot,' at breakfast, apparently because he was always on first each day and just wanted to be sure he got the shoot right. It was not because after a heavy night at the 'Fox' in Bisley he could hardly remember his own name. The team also comprised of **Cpl** 'Tripper' **Smith**, **Sig** 'Mince' **Brown**, **Sig** 'Wallet' **Hellyer** and **Pte** 'Browning' **Catchpole**, who also won a trophy (but we won't go into that).

The whole competition was very well organised, it was a big learning curve for the younger members of the team, and a really enjoyable week. There were plenty of hot dog stands and shooting stalls to interest everyone and there was obviously a lot of effort put in by all parts of the Corps, to promote shooting in the Army.

NISAAM took place at Ballykinler from 21-25 April and by contrast, it rained most of the time. However, with the lessons learnt on the Corps SAAM, 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn were in high spirits prior to the competition. We had lost **Sgt O. J. O'Hanlon**, **Cpl** 'Tripper' **Smith** and **Sig** 'Wallet' **Hellyer**, but we were glad to hear that **2Lt Cochran** was coming straight from Sandhurst to join us! She arrived at work, her first working unit, at 0830hrs and by 1400hrs she was on her way to Ballykinler (Did she mess up her rifle drill at the Sandhurst graduation or what?). Also onboard was **LCpl** 'Daz' **Smithurst**, who will do anything for a good 'session' away from SYSCON. We were the only team in the Minor Units iron sights competition that met the criteria laid down by the organisers. The aim of the criteria was to promote this competition among the younger members of the units. Unfortunately other teams seemed to be a bit top heavy with senior Cpls and Seniors, but like the Murphy's 'I'm not bitter'. Another well organised week with ranges negotiated and a march and shoot, which 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn did particularly well in, beating all major and minor units in the March phase.

Within Northern Ireland each Infantry battalion has a R Signals Sergeant attached as their Rear Link Detachment (RLD) Sgt. **Sgt Steve Brown** is the present incumbent of the job with the Ebrington Resident Battalion, presently the First Battalion the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. Here is his job specification.

WANTED–AMBASSADOR FOR THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS
by Sgt Brown

JOB TITLE	RLD Sgt
HOURS	'**Some**' late nights and may have to work '**Some**' weekends.
JOB DESCRIPTION	Day to day life will be varied and interesting.
MUST BE ABLE TO	1. Work well with Crypto. 2. Be able to discuss the finer points of ECM cover within a riot base line to an irate Company Commander. 3. Instruct and be the resident expert on every thing to do with Signals and 'Wiggly Amps' including: Cougar Radio. Northern Ireland Callsign matrix. EW within the British Army. Keyboard skills. 4. Be able to liaise with the British Telecom Liaison Officer and the homicidal wives asking why their phone hasn't been connected yet. 5. Act as the liaison officer between the Battalion and those 'things' up at Brigade. 6. Be fit and keen to show the Infantry that not only are we good tradesmen but professional soldiers as well. 7. Be diplomatic when asked 'You're Signals, can you wire up my car stereo or fix my TV?'. 8. Cope well with operational fastballs and pressure. 9. Socialise well with the endless round of Battalion and Brigade Cocktail parties (only to foster good working relations). 10. Be able to carry out the normal roles of a Troop Sgt.

But above all else have a sense of humour to deal with the different head-dress and customs of the Infantry. If you think this type of job would suit you, you should apply up the normal chain of command.

SPORTSMANS' DINNER

What better way to honour the Squadron's sporting legends than to make them look smart, wear a collar and tie (yes, even **Sgt Des** 'Mandate' **Eldridge**) photograph them looking all lovely and then to get them 'MASHED' at a sit down dinner. The order of play was assembly, a few diet lagers, the photograph with our lovely **Sybill**, and then onto the meal. What a photogenic bunch the sportsmen are with **Cpl Rob** 'Eubank' **Pointer** and **Cpl Cav** 'Gel Boy ' **Baber** looking particularly gay, I mean bright. A special mention must be made of **Sgt Carl** 'The Ref' **Budding** and his ball boy helpers who provided outstanding service throughout the evening and certainly kept the wine flowing. With the meal over it was time for the presentations, too numerous to mention individually. However it would be unfair not to mention **Sgt Col** 'Cluster' **Bentley**'s wooden spoon for falling over at the start of the 100m race during the Mercury Cup. The Sportsman of the Year Award went to a deserved winner, **LCpl Shaun McIlroy** for his all round contribution throughout the year. The evening was rounded off nicely by the guest speaker who paid particular attention to **Cpl Stu** 'Soup' **Crossman**. We cannot give the guest speakers name, because he told us not to. The players then moved off to the Waterside Bar to dance until the early hours of the morning.

Attendees at the Squadron Sportsmans' dinner

MERCURY CUP ATHLETICS

The Mercury Cup is a R Signals (NI) competition involving events as diverse as Military Skills to Potted sports. The latest event was the Athletics and even though the Squadron didn't win the competition that didn't stop our resident poet laureate **SSgt Keith Williams** writing this little verse.

They came from far and wide,
to represent the 8 Bde side,
down to Lisburn for a bit of a run,
getting our butts kicked, oh what fun.

The throwing game was hard and tough,
we couldn't throw the discus far enough,
the spear fell flat, the shot fell short,
we're getting good at scoring nought.

The lads who played the jumping game,
went all out for a bit of fame,
poor 'Biscuit' jumped, but never scored,
nobody watched as they were bored.

The running game goes round and round,
sweating, perspiring, that panting sound,
All of the runners went off really fast,
Colin tripped and came in last.

The relay was the final race,
our last chance to save Squadron face,
the finish line, in the distance, it beckoned,
we thought we could win, but only came second.

The race winners got up to receive their prize,
to say we won nought would be telling lies,
super Shaun was our triple jump champ,
we'll be back next year, after a major revamp

EXERCISE SALTY SEADOG FINN 1
by Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick

Day One: Twas a wet an' windy day when the scurvy crew met at Bangor marina, the craft we sought, sailed under the carriage **Ram Harry**, 'she be on jetty d1' came the dusky tones of the old seadog harbour master. (Well to be truthful he was a 24 year old post graduate, but salty seadog sounds more romantic.) The motley crew set off down the jetty, passing all the dream machines, you know the ones, the ones that look more at home moored in Rio with half a dozen scantily clad minx's prone on the coach roof, the ones that you would not get any change from £150k. With the crew floating dreamily down the jetty all anticipating what pose-mobile we would be hunting in this weekend. Then we saw her, a 28 foot ruffian commissioned in the year of our lord nineteen hundred and seventy nine, with a gleaming livery of burgundy and neon (hang on, hang on, lets get this tale into its' true prospective. **Ram Harry** is a claret and blue 18 year old boat, which has definitely seen better days due to the fact she's had more squaddies through her than Belfast City ATLO.)

Luckily enough **Ram Harry** was u/s, broke, knackered, in proper terms unseaworthy. We had no option but to wait for her sister ship *Lady of Moyle* (the Lady) a larger vessel built by the Victoria boatyard of Gosport length overall of 34 foot, to be mega truthful a much better craft, with a pose factor of oodles. She was on her return leg of her previous charter, so there was ample time to crack on with much needed admin. **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** and **LCpl** 'Manc' **Singleton** deployed downtown to get rations, whilst the rest of the crew waited eagerly on the jetty for the arrival of the Lady. With the sun just past the yardarm the Lady arrived, and after a hasty ho/to we were on our way. The weather was fair, the state of the sea was calm and the crew eager. The course was set Portpatrick, Scotland. With the confident purr of the Volvo diesel, we motored out into open water, after a quick crew brief the sails were set. This was no easy task as **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** and **LCpl** 'Manc' **Singleton** were on their maiden voyage. Lunch was next on the agenda and gender played no part in allocating that specific task. **2Lt Cochrane** was only too happy to be chained to the galley. However, words failed me when I glanced down the companionway to see the entire contents of the fridge laid out on the cabin table, with the wind getting set for a good blow. Jobs on deck were next up for grabs. The afternoon sail went well but, it was soon time to set about shaking out the sails and getting ready for our run into Portpatrick. To say the leading marks that show the channel into port were difficult to spot is a slight understatement. But with the great skill and seamanship of the skipper we slowly motored into port, with just 60 cm of water below the keel of the Lady. With the Lady safely put to bed for the evening, it was the turn of the crew to switch off from the first day's sail. The first day was used as the crews introduction to the noble art of offshore sailing, so with safety first, man overboard drills were discussed then practiced followed by basic manoeuvres such as sail setting, tacking and helmsmanship (steering) before dropping all sails ready for port. Portpatrick, Scotland is a tiny quiet fishing port, which was used in the 17th and 18th century as a embarkation port for the troops deployed to Ireland, with streets named 'Garrison Rd' and 'Barrack St'. Cobbled streets lead to half a dozen pubs and hotels, serving a mixture of tourists and locals. So 'as in Rome' the motley crew made their way to the nearest food-serving hostelry, where we enjoyed the set menu for a modest fee, followed by a jolly evening of banter and beer. With the final task of the night, the checking of the securing warps, all was well and time to retire.

Day Two: Most of the crew sprang out of their bunks at the crack of dawn, then promptly returned, due to the fact that the heavens had opened and the wind was picking up. But we were here to sail and sail we did. The smell of coffee soon got the crew together, and the boat was soon prepared for sea. At 0800 the lines were slipped and we motored out of port on the rising tide. Once we were clear of the protection of the harbour defences the full force of the wind over tide, caused the boat to pitch and roll. Due to the fact that we had three novice sailors on board, the skipper decided that **2Lt Cochrane** was not as sure footed as she thought she was, so sadly the helm was swung and the bows punched through the waves towards port. The day was not completely wasted, because the crew did a great impression of Enid Blyton's Famous Five, exploring the caves that riddled the coastline. We can defiantly recommend the nightlife of Portpatrick, the locals friendly, in fine voice and enjoying a good sing song.

Day Three: What a glorious day it turned out to be with loads of wind and loads of sun. To make things more interesting we were challenged to a race by the crew of *Maximise* a boat out of Carrickfergus. The course was decided, and the sails set. The race ended some 40 nautical miles later with 'the Lady' taking a substantial lead over *Maximise*. There were sad faces all round when we came alongside for the last time. The boat was unpacked and cleaned. With 'the Lady' put to bed the crew left for their journey back to sunny Londonderry.

Skipper (Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick) at the helm with 2Lt Kerry Cochrane looking on

The first of the Salty Seadog Finn exercises went extremely well, all who took part enjoyed it and all will be back.

Skipper	**Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick**
Mate	**Capt Colin Vandin**
Crew	**2Lt Kerry Cochrane**
	SSgt 'Shuggy' **Hughes**
	LCpl 'Mane' **Singleton**

EIGHT-HOUR SPONSORED SWIM
by LCpl Minns

Following the death of a local two-year old boy, it was decided to raise money to supply a specialist transportation vehicle for the local hospital. The Squadron has taken as it's main charity effort for the year to raise money towards the equipment. The eight hour sponsored swim was the Squadron's first charity event towards this goal. The team was due to consist of 12 members but due to operational commitments the eventual number was seven.

The Swimming Team
Back Row (*L to R*): SSgt 'The Fish' Hughes, Cpl 'Duncan Goodhew' Butler, LCpl 'The Octupus' Pointer, LCpl 'Ariel the mermaid' Utley
Front Row (*L to R*): LCpl 'In at the deep end' Minns, WO1 (RSM) 'Paddle Hands' Fisher MBE, Capt R. J. 'The man from Atlantis' Watts

First Hour:	Slightly delayed start and then 'The Fish' was off.
Second Hour:	All is fine with length after length being polished off.
Third Hour:	Everyone is into the routine and we're well on our way.
Fourth Hour:	404 lengths gone and we are half way there.
Fifth Hour:	Another 118 lengths gone then **Capt Watts** gets a bright idea? Reaching 1000 lengths in the eight hours.
Sixth Hour:	Mission Impossible is well underway.
Seventh Hour:	Mission Impossible is becoming Mission Possible.
Eighth Hour:	The 1000th length was completed just before the end of the eight hours.

25km were swam by the team and we are well on our way to raising the £1000.

ROYAL SIGNALS (NI)
QUARTERMASTERS' DEPARTMENT LUNCH

The Squadron's QM's Dept recently hosted the R Signals (NI) QM's Dept lunch and judging by the letters of thanks the event was a great success. The aim of the lunch was for all Royal Signals Officers and SNCOs working in the QM's Mafia in Northern Ireland to get together and discuss important QM's issues. It also acted as a good meeting and get to know each other forum for all the QM's representatives. It wasn't just a good excuse to get together for some good food and drink whilst reacquainting yourself with old friends and telling a few war stories. To all the Units that attended, thanks for making the day a great success and see you next time.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Griffiths**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Wareing**

Life within Comms Tp certainly cannot be defined as predictable, as SYSCON and COMMCEN start writing edition 19 of the monthly shift roster. However, as the old saying goes, 'Variety is the spice of life!' So thanks to all those faithful suppliers of fastballs (Sirs, FofS and YofS). The last month or so has been quite a physical time, the Troop being actively involved in a plethora of events. The Mercury Cup athletics team would not have been quite the same without **LCpl Sean** 'Daley Thompson' **McIlroy** fresh from his AIPT Cl 3 course. The Lanyard training continued with **LCpls Smithurst**, **McIlroy** and **Williams** with **Sigs Archibald** and **Barrs** 'hill walking' in the Three Peaks. However, the highlight of recent months, especially for SYSCON was the grand opening of the brand spanking new 'SYSCON Kitchenette'. This no expense spared facility with all Mod Cons has meant the YofS was actually witnessed making a brew. In order to wind down from such a momentous event the Troop had a disco and barbecue. This event was organised and run by **LCpl** 'Mac' **McWha** and **Sig** 'Stroppy' **Barrs**.

We would all like to welcome **LCpl Steve Birch** and his wife **Elizabeth** and **Cpl Jim Toms** to the Troop. We wish you a safe and enjoyable tour. Finally congratulations to our resident chippy **Andy Carr** on his promotion to LCpl.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Hughes**
BTNILO	**Sgt Williams**

HELLO, GOODBYE

Having successfully completed his EFP1 course, **Cpl Jim Burnham** has left the Troop for education on his T1 course. Don't worry it's only 12 months long and Wegberg can work wonders. To replace Jim, straight from his T1 is **Cpl** 'Mouse' **Lever**. 'Mouse' is a Rodeo Tp vet but this time he has left his false beard and nose at the airport and is ready for a real tour.

'HELTER SKELTER'

The riggers have got to the bottom and then back up to the top of most of the masts in the Brigade area in recent weeks. **Sig Paul Creely** as his last positive action was up and down them like a dervish, while the site manager, **Sgt Andy Craig**, deposited a new denso like substance on the earthing points of the northern most legs. **Cpl Mark Butler** has advanced to rigging by numbers but continually got his canoe caught up in the hauling lines, **Sig** 'Pip' **Roberts** just looked on aghast.

'A HARD DAYS NIGHT'

After another re-rig, Omagh Ops room was ready for refitting. As is the way over here X hour was set for dark o'clock. The lucky team consisted of **Cpl Jim Burnham** and **Sig** 'Noo Noo' **Miers** on tools and spanners aided by **Capt** 'COMMO' **Vaudin** and **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** on political backup and kettle duty. An initial forward recce on KFC Omagh was disappointingly unsuccessful and proved an omen for the nights' activities. A two-hour job turned into a nightmare scenario and as if by magic dawn soon appeared. On leaving, Comms were in and the mission successful, however they proved to be a forerunner for the horrors of M day.

'LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS'

A change in Battalion TAORs meant a change in Net configurations, the day of judgement became known as M Day. Teams were deployed to various strategic positions in what appeared at the time to be an overkill tasking. Everything was relaxed as M hour approached. Suddenly as the changes occurred instead of the desired new nets coming into existence a huge mismatch of nets appeared while simultaneously the radio cabinet in Omagh disintegrated leaving **Sgt Col Bentley** balancing eight radios on various parts of his body. After everyone had calmed down, order was restored and a particular outstation was informed of exactly what was required and by a simple flick of a switch the correct nets appeared. We will not mention here which outstation it was but you know who you are!

'DR ROBERT'

LCpl 'Manc' **Singleton** was admitted to hospital recently and in a change round from normal procedures he donated his grapes rather than receive any.

'YELLOW SUBMARINE'

SSgts Keith Williams and 'Shuggy' **Hughes** were on a well deserved R and R (?) recently and found themselves on a water sports adventure, luckily neither drowned and are now completely dry.

'HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN'

Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick completed his Field Firing Qualification whilst at the same time beating the world record for the 60 yard dash. This may have had something to do with his vertical 51mm mortar launch–scatter!!!

'HERE COMES THE SUN'

On a glorious day (a rare thing in Londonderry) TM took on Comms Tp at football. Amazingly the Troop could field 12 players whilst Comms Tp complete with several ringers could only field ten. The more skilful Comms Tp took an early lead but were unable to cope with the unorthodox TM Tp football style epitomised by **Cpl** 'legs akimbo' **Crossman**. With top goal keeper **Cpl Gareth** 'the cat' **Dearden** aided by **Sig** 'chopper' **Setchfield**, TM Tp held Comms Tp at bay and them found themselves with a sizeable lead thanks mainly to **Cpl** 'Josey' **Wales** and **LCpl** 'Zico' **Singleton**. Inevitably part of the team had to deploy for an urgent operational reason but by then it was to late for a Comms Tp come back and TM Tp held out for a stunning victory. Not that we mention this every time we walk into SYSCON.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

OC	**WO2 (RQMS) Higgins**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Chivers**

First thing on the agenda is to welcome **LCpl Jason Steen** RLC and his family to the Dept. **LCpl Steen** has recently been posted in from SP BN HQ ARRC and we all wish him a happy and successful tour of duty in sunny Londonderry. The RQMS in particular is happy with the new arrival because of his devotion to the cause (Man Utd). Any individual out there in the stores world who are also devotees to the cause and require their career prospects to soar should contact the RQMS with regards to their posting to Londonderry. It follows therefore that if one has come in then one has to go. Though the possibility of **LCpl Holloway** reading this is very remote, this Dept would like to thank him for all his hard work during his tour.

The Squadron recently held an Inter Tp Clay Pigeon competition at Ballykelly, the home of 1 Cheshire. The result could have been predicted before the competition took place because as everyone knows QMS is full of cowboys. It goes without saying that QM's Dept wiped the floor with the competition and finished a well deserved first. A special mention goes out to the 'Three Amigos' **Cpl Carl Duncan**, **Cpl Eddie Porter** and **LCpl Dave Wardle** on their especially good shooting. It was just a pity that **LCpl Wardle** isn't a good all round sportsman, read on!

Congratulations also to the dept for finishing runners up in the Inter Troop BFT competition which considering the size of the Dept was quite an achievement. It must be said however, if we didn't have **LCpl** 'The Slug' **Wardle** with us we may have won.

MOTOR TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

OC	**WO2 (MTWO) Simpson RLC**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt O' Hanlon RLC**

The MT Tp has been involved in many different competitions and renovations since the last edition of *The Wire* but before we start, there is some new blood in the Dept we would like to officially welcome. Welcome therefore to **Andy Green**, 'Pompey' 'Sticky Fingers' **Pearson**, **Mark Moffat**, 'Taff' 'Flip Top' **Besley** and **Dan** 'Forest Gump' **Canning**, we hope you all have a successful, enjoyable and peaceful tour.

On Sunday 11 May, 'Robbo' (the Dept's Tom Cruise lookalike) and PEC of the Waterside bar, organised a Squadron Families BBQ day. This turned out to be an excellent afternoon of mayhem, with rug rats in the corner playing in the Bouncy Castle and all the parents attempting a sing a long with the karaoke. **Paul Allen** and 'Scouse' **Woosey** were the DJs for the afternoon and belted out some popular tracks that had the entire club in hysterics. In particular a mention must go to the OC, **Maj Perry** for his rendition of the Gary Glitter classic 'Leader of the Pack'. An enjoyable day throughout and thanks to everyone involved in making the event so successful, including the bouncers for removing **WO1 (RSM)** 'Old Blue Eyes' **Fisher** from the karaoke machine.

We would like to congratulate **Sgt John O'Hanlon** on his promotion to SSgt and **Pte Debbie Uttley** on her promotion to **LCpl**. Lastly congratulations to **LCpl Si** 'Sebastian Coe' **Burke** RLC on coming first at the Northern Ireland Athletics Championship 1500m. To win this he beat all the Major as well as Minor Unit teams and will now go forward to the Army Championships.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
BFPO 15

CO	**Lt Col P. A. Pratley MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) T. J. Keates**

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Soldiers of the Regiment have received the following awards for their outstanding contributions to the Regiment's work in Operation Resolute 2: Joint Commander's Commendation **2Lt A. S. F. Hutton**; **WO1 (RSM) T. J. Keates** Commander MND SW's Commendation: **2Lt S. Gough**; **LCpl K. E. Hannon**; **LCpl R. D.Tilley** RLC, **Sig B. K. Gallimore**.

And we also congratulate **LCpl C. A. Wight** of 32 Sig Regt (V) who was attached to the Regt, on her Commander MND SW's Commendation.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS

Winning the British Army (Germany) Athletics finals and earning a place at the Army finals has already guaranteed that the Regt has had a great 1997 Athletic season, and it's only half way through. It was a season that kicked off with an Inter Sqn competition held in the Jahn Stadium in Herford. Cunningly disguised as a means of conjuring up inter Sqn rivalry it was obviously just an attempt to spot new and emerging athletic talent. HQ Sqn cleaned up most of the individual prizes. They won the whole competition with some great performances coming from **Cpl** 'Buck' **Rogers** who stole 1st place from **WO2 (RQMS) Gary Smith** in the 5000m. **Sig** 'Chappie' **Chappell**, new out of training, gained first places in 400m, 400m hurdles, 4x100m relay and 4x400m relay and of course instant acceptance into the Regiment Athletics team.

The Regiment team then did a frantic period of training before competing, against the two renowned sporting units 28 and 35 Engineer Regts, in its Zone B qualifier for the BA(G) Athletics Competition. An excellent day's athletics saw the Regiment qualifying for the BA(G) final, putting the Engineers squarely in their place. The eight team mens' final, held in Sennelager Stadium on a glorious Saturday, saw the Regiment's athletes gaining some excellent results, beating 2 CS Regt RLC and regaining the trophy. The womens' team finishing a very credible third place in the hard fought 5-Team competition held concurrently. Perhaps the most noteworthy result was **LCpl Andy Howe**, who leading in the 400m hurdles, fell injuring himself at the second to last hurdle but got up to finish third. The team demonstrated strong all round performance, with individual wins by the likes of **Cpl Andy George** (now the Army number one hammer thrower) and **Cpl** 'Brassie' **Braysford**. To end the day, and in celebration of their success, the team threw their manager **Maj Mick Pawlak** into the steeplechase's rancid water jump, infecting him with some virus from which he still hasn't recovered!

1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt Athletics Team, BA (G) Champions 1997

ARMY HOCKEY FINALS

An excellent second place in the BA(G) championships, for a team that was newly formed and had not played together, earned a trip for the Regiment's Women's Hockey Team, to the Army Inter Unit finals held in Aldershot. The majority of the team headed back to the UK, with **Sig Lulu Turnbull** behind the wheel, whilst the remainder cut short leave to compete. Clad in a particularly attractive strip (more suitable for a football match) the team sallied forth onto the pitch under the guidance of coach **LBdr** 'H' **Hunt** and put in an excellent performance. Only failing to reach

the final by two goals to the Royal Irish Regt. Star players included **SSgt Bernie Smith** consolidating the defence and the newly discovered **Sig Amanda Wright**, co-ordinating the forwards with a bit of cheeky stickwork. As with any decent sporting event, the players put in an equally sterling performance off the pitch and might even have been mistaken as 'Spice Girls' in downtown Aldershot. The success of the team this season, has generated great hopes for the future and with the expectation of doing even better next year.

EXERCISE RHINO LINK–THE TRUNK PERSPECTIVE (CHEETAH TP, 201 SIG SQN)

Ex Rhino Link provided the Trunk Sqns their first opportunity since returning from Op Resolute to retune their skills, which had lapsed slightly because no-one moved whilst in Bosnia. Minor problems, always to be expected, were encountered and overcome. TN 051 was confronted by 50 German Panzers on their initial location, who were rather jaded, (largely because they were in their own barracks), were soon sent packing by the Ops team of **SSgt Jeff Clarke** and **SSgt Andy** 'the skier' **Brown**. As the rains poured down the Relay Ops, **LCpl** 'Flo' **Watts**, **Sigs Gavin Cooper** and **Andy Gallagher**, battled in a scene reminiscent of their last days in MND SW to keep both detachments and masts from sinking in the ever-increasing mud. **Sgt** 'Loz' **Moore**, **LCpl Joe Smith**, **Sigs Niki Hannon** and **Sig Paul Heywood** (on loan from 208 Sig Sqn) achieved minor miracles in keeping the Switch from crashing. Despite numerous crypto and technical faults and all amidst the most luxurious of locations 'Tengerne Barn' (a barn specifically built by an entrepenuerial local for Trunk Nodes using the proceeds from former exercises).

Sig Karen Gunn driving the first panzer on Ex Rhino Link

EXERCISE RHINO LINK
AN ARMOURED HEADQUARTERS PERSPECTIVE
(212 SIG SQN)

With the cobwebs firmly swept out from our Panzers and adopting the third shape for the Headquarters since reconstitution at the beginning of the year, Ex Rhino Link was our first real chance to try out the 'new improved' form of the headquarters. A new command team in the guise of OC **Maj Mark Adams** and **WO2 (SSM) Steve Hughes** and the skills of the DMIs, **LCpl** 'Tris' **Dunbar** being one of many. The Squadron set off and from obscurity there came new stars. **Sig** 'Rosie' **Rose** proved himself to be a driving force in the message centre with claims of having passed copious amounts of message traffic whilst on the move, which was almost commendable, if only for the fact he was supposed to be driving at the time. **LCpl** 'Windy' **Gale** succeeded in mastering the art of the high dive off panzers although unfortunately broke his leg on his first attempt. **Cpl** 'Daz' **Bailey** who managed to get the new ATacCs demonstration equipment to work on the third attempt and then achieved a personal best on Solitaire whilst conducting familiarisation training. **LCpl Ivan Muckle**, demonstrated a desire to join the Army Mountaineering Society, although we think his application is likely to fail when he fell off a not particularly high wall. Finally congratulations to **Capt James Anderson**, who found the only dry, non smelly exercise locations in North Rhine Westphalia but forgot that panzers being notoriously noisy can easily annoy nearby housing estates, hence our departure two days after arriving hastened by the local residents committee.

2Lt Paul Buck and Sig Kelly Wellburn
try out the newly arrived ATacCs terminals

Tales rushed around the Regiment on the exercise grape vine, capping them all was **2Lt Paul Buck**, who newly arrived in the Regiment, made his mark after becoming temporarily navigationally challenged and leading panzers through the market town of Enger. Turning them around, led to one panzer breaking down in the centre of the busiest junction in town, and as if on call the CO arrived to take photos. 211's Rebro Tp, notably **LCpl** 'Smudge' **Smith**, was fending off German students with a big stick as they found their detachment deployed on the Lubbecke Ridge on the bank holiday. A large crowd gathered around their det for an impromptu festival and the crew naturally refused to consort at all. Not far away **Cpl Stevie Stoker** and his team found themselves inconvenienced when the German contractors left the Portaloo with the door jammed firmly by a tree. And finally, **Sig Stacey Payne** managed to get herself casevac'd by dropping the hatch of a panzer on her mouth. She shattered two of her front teeth and ended the exercise chatting up the dentist who was trying to save her from having a permanent lisp.

PROJECT RUMANIA Report by Sig Karl Knowles

For the past four years the Regiment has visited the town of Baia Mare to carry out renovation work and to deliver aid to needy institutions within the town. On the first trip of 1997, 14 members of the Regiment, after a week spent sorting aid (clothes, paint and furniture) and loading the blue painted DAFs, set off on the lengthy journey which didn't see us reach Baia Mare until three days later. We travelled from Germany to Austria, then onto Hungary and finally into Rumania. The majority of our time during those three days was spent waiting at the borders while the mountain of customs paperwork was sorted out. Despite PXRs on each trip the Regiment has made to Rumania each describing what paperwork is needed, most of the border crossings have a habit of changing their procedures every time we arrive, which continues to give **Sgt Bob Inglesant**, the mainstay of the trips, no end of headaches. Fortunately, despite the customs, the journey out passed fairly smoothly and we only had to call on the services of **Cfn Nick Brand** on one occasion to look at a flat tyre.

While we were in Baia Mare, the work concentrated on two institutions. Firstly we were involved in the renovation of some of the bathrooms at the 'Meadows' Orphanage, which caters for children with learning difficulties. The bathrooms were in a bit of a mess when we arrived and before we could begin **Sig Pete Knapman** had to turn his hand to a bit of plastering, to give the paint something to stick onto. With the painting underway, **Sigs Andy** 'Longman' **Carter** and **Jim O'Mahony**, caused only a minor 'faux pas' when they discovered that in a former communist country like Rumania, the locals for some reasons have something against red painted doors! It was however soon rectified. Secondly we tried our hands at a bit of painting in the children's ward of the local general hospital. Unfortunately, having not been painted for 25 years the walls were a bit dry and we lost count of the number of coats of paint which soaked straight in and had to be redone. Apart from all of the restoration work, we also delivered aid to various other institutions. At many of these **Sig Faye Woods** somehow succeeded in keeping the sweets she had brought for the orphans hidden and out of the grasp of the rest of the group, thus allowing her to give them away to those who were more in need. We also visited the local TB clinic, a baby clinic and a nearby Gypsy school. This last school was set in the middle of a gypsy village and was a particular eye opener. It still had rows of wooden desks of the type last seen in the rest of Europe in the last century, not that the village itself was any better, being mostly made out of mud huts. As **Sig Louise Neblett** put it, it finally made you appreciate living in the block. In the two weeks that we were there, we think we achieved an awful lot and at the very least certainly brightened up the lives of some of the children. However, there is still a substantial amount of work to do to bring these institutions up to some kind of Western standard. The next trip later this summer will be able to continue where we left off.

EXERCISE DOUBLE DIAMOND by 2Lt Caroline Skillman

With the Regiment fooled into believing that we were going on a particularly arduous adventure training expedition, myself and five other members of Specialist Tasks Troop collected our essential belongings (hair dryers, rollers, 'HELLO' magazines...) and set off on Ex Double Diamond. This is a ten-day sailing expedition on the Baltic Sea. After an anxious few days prior to the trip wondering whether we could still go, caused by skipper **Cpl** 'Windy' **Gale**'s panzer-dive, a last minute replacement was found in the shape of **LCpl** 'Lee' **Sharp**. A Halberg Rassy 31ft yacht, named *Mallard*, and the Corps yacht, *Quicksilver* skippered by **LCpl** 'Del' **Whyman** (on detachment to the Club from this Sqn), were chartered from the Adventurous Sail Training Centre, at the British Kiel Yacht Club. This was to be an intrepid expedition into unknown seas (well at least to those of us on the expedition).

By the end of the first day everyone found their sea legs and **Sig Sally Griffiths** had only just narrowly missed performing the man overboard drills. We averaged seven hours sailing per day and each evening we sailed to a different Danish port for a run ashore. **Cpl Kev Cooney** used his culinary skills to full effect and **LCpl Al Joy** excelled himself with daily egg banjos. Other members of the expedition were not quite as successful. Previously unknown talents were discovered, including **Sgt** 'Dougie' **Douglas**'s impressive helming ability and **Sig** 'Shacks' **Shackleton**'s swimming skills. The sailing value gained from the trip was tremendous, especially the 32 hour return leg involving night navigation and shifts on the helm with **LCpl** 'Paddy' **Briscoe** and **LCpl Al Joy** leaving the occasional signature in the water along the way. Ex Double Diamond turned out to be a great trip which everyone enjoyed regardless of whether they spent all their money in some Danish port or left a little something for those who will undoubtedly follow.

2 Sig Regt
York

Ex Banff Ebor saw elements of 2 Sig Regt jetting off to Canada for 10 days skiing. The first test, of ensuring everyone arrived at Heathrow, was accomplished but ensuring everyone was on the same flight was a different matter. **Capt Lynn** 'I must get on the flight, I have all the money' **Burrell** and **Lt Rachel** 'snow is cold when you touch it' **Harvey** shunted everyone onto the round the world flight but decided a direct route would be more civilized. The rest of the group finally touched down in Calgary late in the evening to be greeted by the above-mentioned duo that had scammed a flight that was four hours shorter! The 18 degrees and heavy snow was quite a shock and Trails End somewhat resembled Ice Station Zebra. Sunshine Village was attacked the following day for the group to be scrutinized by **Maj Stuart McNeish**, **Capt Katrina** 'Can I be mentioned in *The Wire* for this' **Glasgow** and **Cpl Paul** 'Cheesy' **Robertson**. Lake Louise and Nakiska were visited during the week as the task master instructors made sure the group did a lot of skiing. The hope that everyone would be too exhausted in the evenings to go out was not achieved and Line Dancing was a popular evening activity.

Quick take the picture before somebody falls over!

As the group became more adventurous and ventured further across the slopes the reorg call of 'Moose7' or 'Caribou' could be heard. 'Elk' did not have quite the same ring but if all else failed **SSgt Bob** '1 2 3 up' **King** and **SSgt Paul** 'Maclad' **Gardner** entertained us as we froze on the lifts with their rendition of 'Old York, Old York.'

The 10 days was topped off with the more reckless donning of snowboards and annoying all the skiers by sitting in the middle of the pistes. The final night was spent in Calgary with **2Lt Helen Martin** acquiring a baseball cap and a sweatshirt. The question is what did she give in return? **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Corrigan** topped off the hands across the water exercise by demanding of the pilot, 'Are you driving this ******* bus or what?' San Fransisco Duty Free shops were raided with **Cpl** 'Evil' **Edna Bullivant** buying the much sought after 'Moose!'

Daily 'O' Group

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

HQ SQUADRON

CO — **Lt Col G. R. Leach**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) K. Fitzpatrick**

'Ease up Captain, the engines won't take it–The Regimental programme is overheating,' said Dr Spock aka the 2IC. But Captain Kirk knew how to change the laws of physics and with a deft touch of the controls launched the starship 'Tricorn' into corners of the Wessex Galaxy where no man has gone before. That's Life in 3 Div Jim, but not as you knew it.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Graham Complin**
SSM — **WO2 Geoffrey Hawkins BEM**

With the OC, SSM and YofS fast approaching the final furlong, the Squadron gears up for the biggest hurdle yet 'Ex Lion Sword'. With no time to reflect on past glories the troops knuckle down to the preparation stage for exercise.

WO2 (YofS) Hawley, Maj Graham Complin and
WO2 SSM 'Onslow' Hawkins relaxing at the end
of another grueling Ex Red Tricorn

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Alan Garrett**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Jim Stillie**

And so Overloon Tp moves into Spring. The highlight of the season so far was the Troop Outing: ten-pin bowling with a slap up meal and a Troop Polaroid. We cannot remember which team won, but **Sig Richie Hay** had the best score of 206. Unfortunately, the Tp Comd had to leave early for dinner with the CO–by no means was he wimping out!

Although the Squadron came last in the Regiment Skill At Arms Meet, congratulations go to **Lt Alan Garrett** and **LCpl Brian Owen** for being selected for the Regiment Team. Should be a good skive–it's about time after all those football players getting more time off than Santa Claus.

We deployed on Ex Red Tricorn 2, which was much better than normal as the Squadron now has another Troop to set up as Divisional Main. 'They' can't give us the hassle all the time anymore. We also had a nice time when the CO killed off many of the Squadron hierarchy. The problem was that everything went far more smoothly than normal.

The Tp Comd seems to have developed a jinx; he commanded two panzers on the final move and they broke down within half-an-hour of each other, both from overheating. He broke two more when he let the students drive around at breakneck speeds on the UOTC competition, Ex Lightning Strike. It was rather stressful when they both packed up due to overheating (again) within thirty seconds of each other. What do you do when your panzer-driving stand has no panzers to drive? You borrow some rather smaller, more Land Rover shaped ones. If you thought officer cadets in 436s were dangerous, then you should see them in rovers. A special mention must go to **LCpls Briggs** and **Edwards** for co-driving with them. Those boys deserve medals and/or valium. Other jobs included setting up some FFRs at a nursery school for a bit of KAPE. Obviously, due to recruiting problems, we are trying to get them in early. **Cpl Towers** did very well pretending to be on a radio in the Falkland Islands and the kids enjoyed playing with the horns.

HELLO AND GOODBYES

We extend our big hand of welcome to **Sig** 'Barron' **Knights** and **Sig Ronnie Allan**. We also, sort of, said goodbye to **Sig** 'Gibbo' **Gibson**, though we don't want to talk about that.

Lt 'let's see if I can break this Panzer' Garrett

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt John Harrington**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Crawford**

The seemingly endless task of reconstituting the Divisional Alternate Headquarters has all but finished (apart from the odd map board) and is now officially known as Waterloo Tp. The Bowman trials have been completed and the Troop is now a more wholesome size. **Capt John Harrington** has returned from his brief training role at ATR Winchester to head up the team of **SSgt Andy Crawford**, **Sgt** 'Mo' **Morris**, and **Sgt** 'two expeditions, as I'm the only JSMEL' **Dillet**, just in time to see the majority of the work completed! Thanks go to **Capt Blair Mitchell** and **SSgt Crawford** for their time and effort in resurrecting the Troop.

Three weeks after Easter Leave the Troop was on Salisbury Plain in all its glory to gain the seal of approval by the CO. The exercise was extremely successful apart from one or two mishaps that are worth noting. **SSgt Stevie Cooper** was yet again foiled by the elements, namely 'Hurricane Pennings' which physically upturned the whole of the staff just before the Sqn Comd was due to inspect it. **SSgt Cooper**'s heroic attempt to hold down the tentage by himself was to no avail, and the wreckage was cleared, eventually. **Sgt** 'where was that water tank?' **Morris** managed to become slightly disorientated on the night move of the headquarters across Salisbury Plain and finally made the correct location two hours late. As the other two packets had made it on time he did not have much of a leg to stand on, and took the barrage of abuse well. On a sporting note, the football players (they know who they are, and are mentioned all too often) were gracious enough to only miss one day of the exercise, but I'm sure they will do better next time. The Inter Squadron Athletics Competition proved to be a stumbling block for the team (the Squadron came fourth), but there were some fine performances from the Troop, namely **Cpl** 'Alrie' **Alford**, **LCpl** 'last hurdle' **Wilson**, and **LCpl Ross**.

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Katy Caie**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Jon Clarke**

Our first star of the day in the Inter Sqn Athletics was **LCpl** 'Judith' **Chalmers** who'd obviously been trying to keep his pole vaulting talents quiet. On the day he strutted his stuff and earned a well-deserved third place. **LCpl Andy Wilson** showed just what he could do with a pair of spikes although he wasn't really fast enough and finished second to the same person twice. Never mind Andy, maybe next year. The loudest round of applause came for **Sgt** 'Doctor' **Martin** when on his third attempt in the triple jump actually made it into the pit. Jonathon Edwards watch out!

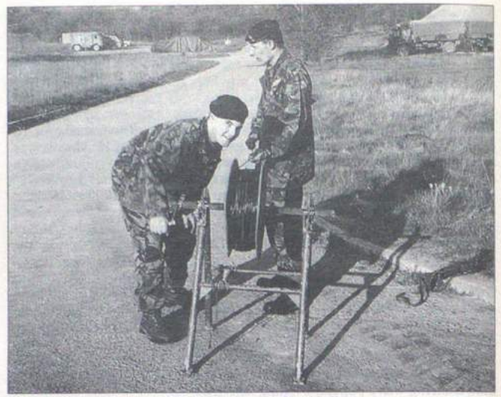
It has to be said that if it wasn't for **Sig** 'Fester' **Westerman**'s fight with the fifth hurdle he would have one by a country mile. If that's possible in 110metres?? The females of the Squadron dominated the field with some excellent first places for **Capt Jayne Appleby** in the 100m and **2Lt Katie Caie** in the 200m. There were some impressive second places for **LCpl Natalie Kemp** (Javelin) and **LCpl Nikki Wilkie** (Long Jump). We saved the best till last for the relays, females from 202 Sqn won the 4 x 100m by a clear margin. Well done girls! The lads came fourth in the 4 x 100m and third in the 4 x 400m. A lot of effort went into the events to make it a successful occasion, although the beer tent could have stayed open a bit longer!

HELLO AND GOODBYES

Welcome back to the Army to **Sig** 'Petty' **Officer** who has re-enlisted after four years as a civilian. We say a fond farewell to **LCpl Andy Miller** who has left for Northern Ireland, **LCpl Holden** off to 30 Sig Regt and **LCpl Jackie Milnes** who is leaving the Army after nine years valuable service.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy must be received six weeks before the publication date



Sig Sands and Sig Hall demonstrating that 'Linies' do occasionally work

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj P. W. Glibbery**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) T. P. Crane**

After an extremely hard exercise season 206 Sig Sqn will be flying off to French Canada in October to sample life in the Canadian Army on an exchange visit, Ex Maple Exchange. The success of any exercise depends on the Recce. Ex Maple Exchange is no exception. The Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Glibbery** and **WO2 (SSM) Terry Crane** sacrificed work (it was hard but someone's got to do it) in Bulford to fly off to Quebec for a week to ensure that the Squadron make best use of their relatively short visit in October. After initial problems due mainly to the language barrier, the obstacle was finally overcome through the successful use of the Sqn Comd's Franglais and the SSM's emphatic sign language. The Squadron can now look forward to a varied two weeks that will include white water rafting, pony trekking and the inevitable odd challenge against our Canadian cousins.

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt N. C. Bruce**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt C. D. Kidd**

EXERCISE RED TRICORN III, SECOND FORAY AND LION SWORD!!

The culmination of training over the past 10 months was the deployment of the Regiment on Ex Lion Sword. Once again Mons Tp played an integral part, as the Troop responsible for the building of, and communications for, HQ DSG. **SSgt Chris Kidd** had tears in his eyes as he watched, for the last time, DRASH being erected. Mind you, these were tears of laughter aimed at his replacement, **SSgt Richie Bell**, as the new DRASH Circus Tent Ringmaster. Not content with having his own empire within the Comms Ops DSG part of the HQ, **SSgt (YofS) Graham Moody** proceeded to 'poach' a number of personnel for the newly forming 'Graham Tp.'

Sgt Andy Mapstone now part of the aforementioned Troop is to be congratulated on breaking the World Sleep Accumulation and Food Consumption records. He is now so fat that he registers on the Richter scale when he walks. Has anybody seen the Squadron Recce Officer, **Capt Nick Bruce**? Answers on a postcard please!!!!

CAMBRAI TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt A. Fennell**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Day**

Once again 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt represented the Division with the Honour Guard made up from the Lanyard Trophy team members, along with a contingent from the QLR at the anniversary of 'The Normandy Landings' on 6 June. After arriving on the afternoon of 5 June the Honour Guard carried out a number of rehearsals on a somewhat alarming parade ground at La Breche which still resembled a building site. As **LCpl Phil** 'look at my pecs' **Maybury** commented, 'They've had 53 years to put it together and they still haven't managed it!' Once the rehearsals were over it was time to hit the town of Caen under the illustrious leadership of **Maj Adam** 'Count Dracula' **Ewell**. The Ceremonies went very smoothly and were very moving. Most of us didn't get back to the accommodation until 4 a.m. due to the hospitality of the locals and the Veterans. Some eyebrows were raised amongst the veterans at the speeches delivered by **Padre Kevin** 'Loose Cannon' **McGarahan** (no pun intended) and the unique saluting of **2Lt Joe** 'Bergen Belly' **Harvey**. Everyone involved in the trip enjoyed themselves and it was a real pleasure and honour to meet the Normandy Veterans who were more than happy to see us and talk about their experiences.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj R. A. Mulholland**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) A. Campbell**

RACE THE SUN 97

The team left Bulford with the intention of having a good time. They would train each day and then do our best during the event. We expected to be in the top five. However, early on in the day we realised that there was a real chance at winning the event. So it was 14:03 hrs later that we were handed the trophy at Imphal Bks. We traveled to Ripon on Friday 9 May giving us five days to settle into the accommodation and train. This gave the admin party a chance to familiarise themselves with the course, memorising routes to and from the drop off points. Competitors were able to train on their respective legs so on the day there would be no surprises. On Tuesday 13 May we had a day of rest, I suggested a visit to the museums of the Harrogate District but this was met with little enthusiasm. The event started at 0500 hrs on the river opposite Imphal Bks. Up until the end of the fourth leg the lead swapped between ourselves and 2 Sig Regt. Then from the Hill Run, **Sig Andy Dunn** charged up Sutton Bank to capture a lead we maintained to the second massed start. Between legs seven and 12 we did not drop below third place with the team clawing back the lead. **SSgt Dave Rook** (Cycle Orienteering) finally stole the lead back as he ran across the finish line with his bike on his back after a puncture. Over the next four legs we maintained our excellent results finishing no more than a couple of minutes behind. The tension mounted as the scores were added up, we knew that we had done well and were quietly confident. Overall the team had an excellent week, enjoying the time away, training and having a few quiet beers, all with the bonus of a trophy to bring home.

The winning team

SHQ TROOP

Tp SSgt — **SSgt V. Kimber**

The Troops' comings and goings seem to have quietened down over the last couple of months, with fond farewells to **Cpl Andy Vause**, leaving for civvy-street, and **Cpl Dave Sangster** for the hustle and bustle that is COMMCEN Wilton. Also **Sig Andy Keatley** returning to the White Helmets and **SSgt Vince Kimber** who is off to Belfast recruiting, having asked for the south coast of England!! We welcome into the Troop **LCpl Andy Anderson** and **Sig Adam Burman** from Blandford. Most of our recent effort has been geared toward Ex Lion Sword, with many long hours being put in by our various departments to ensure the serviceability of the Squadrons' equipment for the Exercise. Also during this period a few of the Troop members were away helping the Regiment win the 'Race the Sun' competition. Congratulations to the following on their efforts **SSgt (SQMS) Dave Rook** (try riding the bike Dave), **Sgt Jim Robertson**, (don't ask about the prize), **Sgt Neil Sorley** and who could forget **LCpl Rog** 'Jaws' **Teasdale**. Finally congratulations to **Cpl Kev Waring** for passing his 2–I entrance exam–that'll be another slab then–cheers **Kev**!

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt N. Morris**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt B. Hogg**

The Troop is currently out on Ex Lion Sword and all is well. New arrivals include **Cpl** 'Jimmy' **Frew** from 33 Sig Regt–Welcome to the real world. **LCpl Parkhill**, **LCpl Appleby**. **Sig Johnson**, **Sig Hemley** all from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig** 'Foes' **Davis** from 1 Div, and last but not least **Sig** 'Pocahontas' **Mates** from Blandford. The Troop is planning several jolly days for a change, as we all know, all work and no play etc. **Sig** 'Porky' **Longsword** continues to baffle everyone and was last seen in the middle of a Dorset field finding his bearings. Don't worry **Longsword** we all love you 'Really'. A couple of sad farewells also for this bulletin **Cpl** 'Stevie' **Davis** leaves us for 1 Div and **Sig** 'Birthrill' **Bithell** departs for sunny 7 Bde. This Troop is like a change parade. Finally **LCpl Hazelhurst** leaves the Royal Corps for Civ Div. Good luck to all until next time.

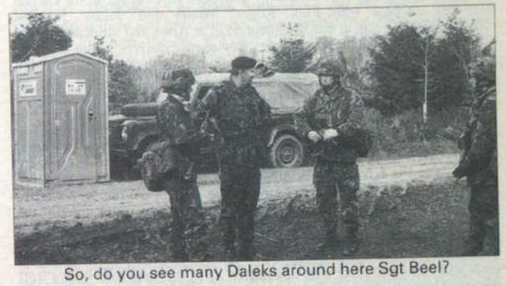
Lt Nick Morris prepares to kiss the CO at the RSAAM

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt F. Hay**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Hill**

Oman Tp has had another busy few months on exercise and then going on exercise again! A number of Troop members have been posted on to better things. Good luck to **LCpl** 'Bobby' **Ball**, **Sig** 'Victor Meldrew' **Buckingham**, **Sig** 'Devo' **Stenens** and **Sig** 'Kipper' **Kilpatrick**. Congratulations also go to 'Tweedle-Dum' and 'Tweedle-Dee' (AKA **LCpls Luke** and **Hoggart**) on passing their RSCC.

With Spring in the air a number of the Troop have taken the plunge and deserted the single life for the married patch. Good luck to **Cpl Steve Croft**, and **Amanda** and to **Cpl** 'Tomo' **Thomson** and **Lou**. The memories of what they have left behind are summed up in the photo of a recent visit by the SOinC. He is seen discussing accommodation outside the single soldiers' block with **Sgt Beel**.



So, do you see many Daleks around here Sgt Beel?

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt A. J. R. Stead**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt R. Lang**

The new team were put to the test for the first time in April on Ex Red Tricorn 2. This was a build up to the Regiment main effort Ex Lion Sword. Things ran smoothly for the majority with only a few minor mishaps. A night move tested everybody, especially the night vision of the drivers. Comms proved a little problematic in our new location. It compared to bad television reception. If you stand in the right place the picture improves. It was with this reasoning that the switch crew were ordered to move around until the link came in and then stand perfectly still for the remainder of the night.

The Troop had five members involved in the successful Race The Sun 97 team. They included **2Lt Andy Stead** (Orienteering), **Sgt Ian Blair** (Moor Run) and **Cpl Steve Ford** (River Run) competing with **Cpl** 'Eve' **Eden** and **Sig** 'Taff' **Jones** as part of the admin party. A couple of days training in Ripon and on the course both during the day and at night proved the deciding factor. **Sgt Blair**, streaked past all the opposition shocking them by choosing to run in his underwear. On the other hand **Sgt Robertson** (SHQ) his running partner was obviously impressed by the size of his Yorkie Bar.

Sgt Ian Blair compares the length of his Yorkie with Sgt Jim Robertson

257 (REAR) SQUADRON

Contrary to popular belief since the Squadrons' departure to the Falklands the remaining members of the rear party have been extremely busy. Headed by **Maj John Hornby MBE** the rear parties achievements have been impressive. We managed to break the old Foreman **SSgt (FofS)** 'Hank or Frank' **Potts**, who is now employed at 34 Sig Regt (V), we wish him the best for the future. Stepping into his boots is **SSgt (FofS) Rick** 'Stormin Norman' **Gorman**, fresh from the Foremans Course, welcome to the Squadron. Also at the helm is **SSgt Dave** 'the rave' **Haley** who has well and truly been through the baptism of fire (which is the rear party) and is now 90% asbestos. **SQMS Dougie** 'fishman' **Piper** aided and abetted by his approachable little friend **LCpl** 'Taff' 'Monty' **Dilling** are currently checking the worlds CES, good work. The little elves who live in the garage have been carrying on with their nocturnal visits, sneaking about installations, doing second line inspections and A jobs, much to the

relief of **Cpls Ritchie Townsend**, **Tim Smith**, **Joe Naden** and **LCpls Madgewick**, **Conlon** and **Warrilow**, collectively known as 'the workers'. The consensus of opinion is that **Cpl Ritchie Townsend** should be put forward for a decoration for bravely offering his jelly babies for sacrifice on the elves last nocturnal visit. **Cpl Mark** 'Scouse' **Fairclough** and **LCpl Andy Pursglove** are currently missing in action having been sent into the old storerooms with the brief from the FofS, 'Sort it out and make it work.'

CATERING DEPARTMENT

RCWO	**WO1 Beaumont**
Master Chef	**SSgt Mepham**

Life in the Catering Department has been going at full swing since the return from Easter leave. Firstly we bid farewell to the Master Chef **SSgt Graham Lewis** on promotion, to take up position as RCWO of the Green Jackets next door in Kiwi Barracks. In his place came **SSgt Garry Mepham** again on promotion from 1 Staffords. Life outside of the kitchen has seen success with **Ptes** 'Roger' **Moore** and 'Jacko' **Jackson** representing HQ Sqn at the Regiment Skill at Arms and ultimately at the Div SAAM. The Regiment athletics saw representatives in the shape of **Cpl Linda Way** 3000m and the up and coming star in the sporting field in the shape of **Pte** 'Remmie' **Remmington**. After a disappointing 100m he went on to finish a close second in the 400m hurdles and won his place in the Div semis at Plymouth later in the year. He was also part of the team featuring another of our stars **Sgt Chris Trowbridge** who journeyed to Yorkshire for the Race the Sun competition coming away eventual winners. Well done to them both. On the domestic front we shortly say good-bye to **Pte Kirsty Mackintosh** albeit temporarily to have her baby in September. We wish her and **Chris** all the best for the future. As if you needed to be told the exercise season arrived with its usual force in the shape of Red Tricorn 2 and Red Tricorn 3, Second Foray and Lion Sword which involved the whole of the platoon being deployed into the field. With the adventure training season now upon us and exercises at Squadron level still being run there won't be any let up in the work load until a well deserved leave in August.

QM (T) DEPARTMENT

QM (T)	**Capt J. MacKay**
RQMS (T)	**WO2 (RQMS) G. Ritchie**

The department is at last starting to find its' feet once again after a very busy year. Bosnia, moving location, ORBAT 97 and reconstitution to name but a few however, we have come through with colours flying and look forward to a more peaceful finish to the year.

Welcome to the new arrivals. We have a new QM (T), **Capt J. MacKay** who joins us from Northern Ireland. Hope you enjoy your tour.

We say farewell to **Cpl Helen O'Connor** and her husband **Paul** who are off to Northern Ireland. Also farewell to **Sig Alison** 'bigger bump now' **Read** who is posted to civvy street as a mum to be. Sadly we also say farewell to senior members towards the end of the year, **WO2 (RQMS) Gary** 'I'm only 35 honest' **Ritchie** on completion of 22 years service. **SSgt Derek** 'when was that block inspection' **Livesey** who is hoping to be posted up north for his final two years (SORRY). **Sgt Alan** 'I'm throwing the towel in' **Hunt** on 23 years service. **Sgt John** 'Bilko to his friends' **Edwards** on 22 years service. **LCpl Steve** 'my poor old back' **Pettitt** who is to get a medical discharge after 16 years service. Good luck and best wishes to you all! Finally congratulations to **LCpl Jenny** 'who put that gate there' **Holden** on her promotion–Keep smiling **Jenny**.

The Workers–QM Tech Department

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7 Sig Regt
BFPO 35

CO	**Lt Col Mike Dyer**
RSM	**WO1 Pete Griffiths**

7 Signal Regiment Boxing Team

RHQ

As usual the Regiment has been involved in all manner of activities over the last few months, the most memorable being the recent visit of the Master of Signals and his wife **Sylvia** to the Regiment. This will be the last official visit of the Master to the Regiment that he once commanded back in 1969. Naturally we tried to make it one that he would remember.

The visit began in fine style with the Regiment Boxing night. The flutes and drums of the 1st Bn Coldstream Guards provided the pomp and ceremony during the evening, in between the seven hard fought boxing bouts. To their credit all the boxers stayed on their feet, and provided the Regiment with an outstanding spectacle of novice boxing. After the prize giving it was off to the Sergeants' Mess for a curry and beers with the team. Day two of the Master's visit was spent issuing a large number of medals to what seemed like half the Regiment. With many still due their IFOR medals it was too good an opportunity to miss. Then again to the Sergeants' Mess for the LS&GC presentations. Along with the presentations were 3 HQ ARRC Commanders Citations to **Sgt Ronald Clark**, **SSgt David James** and **Cpl Gordon Stenhouse**.

Next the Master was taken to see the delights of the Rheindahlen show held in JHQ. By chance, the White Helmets display team was on hand to give a fine display of mad motorbiking, finishing with the Master taking the salute. Then it was back to the Officers' Mess for a ladies night to formally say goodbye to both the Master and **Sylvia**. We wish them the very best in their retirement.

Master of Signals presents LCpl Nick Chapman with his IFOR medal

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (TOT)** 'Noddy' **Baugh MBE**
Regt FofS	**WO1 Carl (FofS)** 'Boris' **Shead MBE**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Huw Evans**

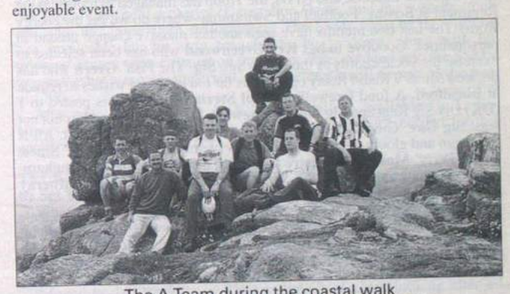
The Troop Newsdesk, managed by **Sgt Craig Brankin**, finds some interesting news to update you all on. We certainly would have had a Tp photograph with many of the 25 personnel present in relaxed pose but unfortunately, the Unit Press Officer, **Capt Gerry Knight**, decided to have a camera print failure for the first time in ages. The photograph will follow in due course. On the shopfloor, the Regiment FofS has recently been seen scowling as he struggles to try and please all of the people all of the time with the Unit UWI Programme. 'Boris' has been looking thinner and gaunter than ever, struggling to get through his paperwork to the gold at the bottom of the in-tray–his future posting to Wilton.

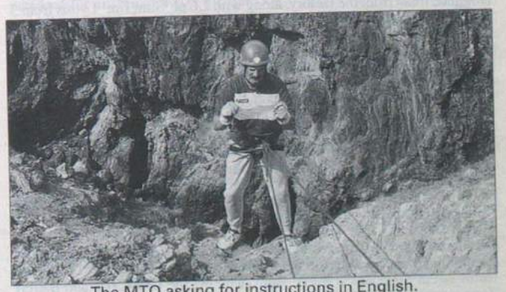
The Troop Admin is again left in the hands of **Sgt Steve Pulman** because **SSgt Huw Evans**, **Sgt Tim Mayner** and **LCpls Evans** and **Hudson** have all escaped to Cyprus on Ex Lion Sun. Others are away on their Sergeants Course or sweating over future FofS Selection, leaving 10 workers on the shop floor on a good day. We have been blessed with some new prisoners direct from Blandford in the form of **Sgt Justin March**, **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Watkins**, **LCpl Brian Sutherland** and **Sig Helen Sheffield** and we wish them and their families an enjoyable tour. We also welcome our best store-man, the one and only **Cpl Mick** 'Barnsley' **Potter** who likes to swing the lamp and identify the less positive points about the department, all young soldiers and the Troop stores. **Cpl Richie Musgrove** and family have escaped back to the UK, for his T1 course, farewell and good luck. Our congratulations also go out to **Cpl** 'oh it hurts' **Thomas** who recently returned from the Army Boxing Championships with a shiny silver medal, well done indeed.

HQMT

MTO	**Capt Barry Spiers**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Jimmy Rock**

Between 3-20 May 1997 the Troop deployed on Ex Wagonwheel Backstop for an Adventure Trg period at Penhale Trg Camp in Newquay, Cornwall. In glorious weather, the Troop took part in various activities including a two-day mountain bike expedition, rock climbing, abseiling and walking. Other activities included Clay Pigeon shooting (in which **Sig** 'Geordie' **Harrison** found his true vocation) and golf, where the Troop holds the course record for the most balls lost in the lake. Has the MTO received his shares from the Dunlop Golf Ball Company? Many thanks go out to **Sgt Les Tobbell** and **Cpl Calvin Kielty** for organising this enjoyable event.


The A Team during the coastal walk
(*L to R*): Sgt Les Tobbell, Capt Barry Spiers, Cpl Alf Beeson, Cpl Paul Deaville, Sig Daz Smith, Cpl Calvin Kielty, Sig Naza Pybus, LCpl Kev Welch, LCpl Stu Mead and Cpl 'Geordie' Harrison


The MTO asking for instructions in English.

Finally, many congratulations go to **SSgt Jimmy Rock** and his wife **Jacky** on the birth of their son **James Jnr**, the first of the Rock rugby squad.

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Alan Stringer**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tony Barry**

There are several new members of SHQ Tp since the last edition, so a welcome to **Capt** 'Trucker' **Russell** who takes over as Sqn 2IC, replacing **Capt Andy Knott** who makes the step up to Adjt. Other recent signings include **LCpl** 'Don't worry Mr. Mannering' **Jones** and **LCpl** 'Woody' **Woodward** who seems to reside somewhere in the Squadron dungeons practising various torture techniques in readiness for Squadron PT

sessions. But we must also say goodbye to **SSgt** 'Where's my uniform' **Hurge-Mogg** who moves to a dimly lit part of the Regiment to join the newly formed CIS Tp.

The sporting members of the Squadron have also been very busy during this time. So congratulations to **SSgt Rob Hood**, **Sgts** 'Gaz' **Williams** and 'Splinters' **McKinnon** as well as **LCpls** 'Ron' **Dixon** and 'Scotty' **Haynes** for helping the Regiment football team to its most successful season ever by winning the BA (G) Cup in fine style. The Squadron was also well represented in the recent waterpolo tour of the UK, with **Sgt Kev Wood** and **LCpl** 'Dolphin' **Barr** selected to join the squad.

With summer upon us, the Squadron is in preparation for Ex Able Condor, Squadron Summer Camp and not forgetting block leave. So, with the promise of sun, sand and OSC there should be few dull moments over the summer.

TRUNK NODE 011

Tp Comd — **2Lt** 'Not so' **Young**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Neil James**

Firstly, welcome to **Sig Sean Suffield** and farewell to **Cpl Eddie Aggar**, off to lovely Hohne just in time for another tour of Bosnia. **SSgt Neil James** spent the whole of the recent Regiment Exercise (Ex Woodland Flight) trying to find **Mary**–apparently she works in a Switch somewhere. At the same time, **Cpl Gill Ralley** discovered a major weakness in the Army respirator–apparently it doesn't protect you from the persistent agent in a Portaloo. However, on the sporting front, the recent Regiment Boxing Night had triumphs for the Troop; **Sig Matt** 'Haymaker' **Dudman** and **Sig** 'I play football' **Lord** both won their fights convincingly.

The threat of UWI (Unwelcome Inspection) this month has prompted half the Troop to desert us in favour of the sunnier climes of Cyprus and Ex Lion Sun. **Cpl George McMinn** doesn't mind though, as there is nothing he loves more than working on the vehicle park.

TRUNK NODE 012

Tp Comd — **Lt Trudy Robinson**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Paul Robson**

What a couple of months! In between vehicle inspections from hell, our first Regiment Exercise and ATDs, the Troop has managed to represent the Regiment at Boxing, Football and Swimming–where do we get the energy from? The last two months have seen another massive change around in personalities. Goodbye to **Sgt Kev Greenwood** who has been selected to exercise his vocal chords as the Provo Sgt, **Sig** 'The Fish' **Green** who has decided life as a Radio Relay operator is far too easy and wishes to retrade at Blandford. A fond farewell to **LCpl Stevie Banks** who is posted to 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt and **Sig** 'Stupid' **Stewart**, off to 24 Bde and last but not least **Sig Gav** 'Ginger' **Bevan** who has been posted to 2 Sig Regt. All is not doom and gloom, welcome to our new members, **Cpl** 'Geordie' **Smee**, **LCpl** 'Perry' **Mason**, **Sig Claire Churchill** and **Sig Stevie Buckingham**. Posted in from training are **Sig** 'Nige' **Rowbottom**, **Sig** 'Ruby' **Murray** and **Sig** 'Hoppy' **Hopkinson**.

Thanks to **Sigs Matt** 'Gimp' **Smith** and **Gav** 'Ginger' **Bevan** in their participation and achievement in the Regiment Boxing competition. Congratulations also to **Cpl Robbie Love** and **Sig** 'Ruby' **Murray** who have managed to spend more time on the football field than the vehicle park.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Keith Whitehead**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Chris Ward**

Oscar Tp would like to welcome **Sig** 'Shaky' **Taylor** and **Sig** 'Hoggie' **Hoggett**, fresh from the factory, along with **LCpl** 'Slim Jim' **Lyons** from 3 Div. Papa Tps new arrivals include **Cpl Middleman** from 2 Sig Regt, **Sig Craven** from training and **Sig Johnson** from 1 ADSR. They also welcome their new Tp Comd, **Lt Stuart Scott**. Quebec Tp welcome **Cpl Sheridan** and **Sig Murray**. The Troop also congratulate **LCpl Taylor** and his wife on their new arrival–**Chloe Danielle Taylor**, and **Sig** 'Smudger' **Smith** and his wife on the arrival of their second child–**Samuel Thomas Smith**. There were, sadly, several farewells in the Squadron: Oscar Tp said goodbye to **Sgt Steve Pope**, who is off to Corsham and **Sgt Mick Paining**, posted to Blandford. **Sig** 'Fergie' **Ferguson** left Quebec Tp and the Army for sunnier climes and the Troop wish him every success in Australia.

Sig Kev Dade represented the Squadron on the Regiment Boxing Night on 1 May and put on a first class fight. Commiseration's go to **Sig** 'Clankers' **Clancy**, whose fight with the SSI, **SSgt Ian Philips**, was cancelled. Maybe the challenge was just too much for the SSI! The Regiment Swimming and Waterpolo Teams are to be congratulated on an outstanding result during the BA (G) Zone finals, held at JHQ. The male teams swept the board at every event, winning the UKSC (G) and BA(G) Zone trophies whilst the ladies swimming team won the UKSC(G) events and qualified to go through to the BA(G) finals. We wish the whole team every success in the BA(G) Finals taking place in Hohne on 18/19 June.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Mark Thorek**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Chris Naylor**

Happenings in 'Radio Comms Are Us' Squadron have been as diverse as usual, starting with a three week exercise period which culminated in Ex Woodland Flight. Amidst implementing a new 'Concept of Ops' and rewriting SOPs, the Squadron quickly rose to the challenge, when tasked at the 11th hour, to supply five detachments in support of Ex Prairie Eagle 3 in Poland. More about that later. Two weeks after their departure the crews returned to achieve the fastest turn around in history in order to deploy on Ex Lion Sun. Yet despite the departure of many members of the Squadron to Cyprus (to top up the sun tans!), the activity on the 'tank park' has been fast and furious with the continuing programme of DTIs and UWIs and just when the dust was settling CDT arrived . . . results to follow!

Sport has featured strongly in Squadron events with 232 literally sweeping the floor with the Regiment Boxing night, held in the presence of the Master of Signals. The controlled aggression of **Sigs Danily**, **Flook**, **McPherson**, **Rimmer** and **Simms** provided a win in almost every category. The Swimming and Waterpolo fraternity have been undergoing intense (suntan) training and competing heavily this month and the Golf swingers of the Squadron also seem to be getting plenty of practise in.

The list of Hails and Farewells is as extensive as ever. The Squadron has worn out the current Ops team that will shortly be replaced by a new dynamic regime. Farewell to the easy going style of **WO2 (FofS) Lloyd Bowlby**, who is posted on promotion to Army CIS Eng Group (CPD LO–Cyprus) and a very warm welcome to his replacement, **WO2 (FofS) Andy Rickman**. Goodbye to the boyish good looks of **SSgt (YofS) Mark Whiting** who is also posted on promotion to 39 Sig Regt (V) and good luck to **Sgt** 'Gaz' 'I didn't faint' **Clapham** who is off to RSS on his Foreman's course. Delta 'sickies' Tp have had to say goodbye to far too many to mention (not least of which was **SSgt** 'Badge Collector' 'Doc' **Halliday**) and a hello to an equal number! Romeo Tp has been shedding Dets wherever it can and has shrunk from Squadron size to almost single figures. A very successful Troop Exercise proved the high standards of Det drills, including being able to erect a 9x9 in pitch black (or blindfolded) and almost losing **Sig Nex** in a mast erecting competition. As for the comings and goings of Romeo a big welcome is extended to **LCpl** 'Ollie' **Oliver** and **Sig Fallows**. Congratulations to **LCpl** 'The Colonel' **Bagnall** posted on promotion to 30 Sig Regt and farewells to **LCpl** 'Crusty' **Hobbs**, **LCpl Fletcher** and **LCpl Pollock**; all the very best in 'Civ Div'. Finally **Lt** 'I want that done by yesterday' **Lloyd** has warned the Troop to sleep with one eye open from now on after they put her forward for 'Out of Use Troop' Comd.

The future of 'Satdown' Sierra Tp hangs in limbo awaiting restructuring, returning full circle back to HF comms and creating eight HF Dets from scratch for the next Regiment exercise. However, Satellite training continues with **Cpls George Sutherland**, 'Sid' **James** and **Morgan Kielty** wangling a 501 course in Blandford. The Troop also says good luck to **Sgt Good** and his family on 'Goodie's' posting on promotion to the land of sheep droppings and sharp knives (sshh).

Tango Tp has been pretty much untouched following the Regiments' most recent change-arounds. However, they still have to make their debut on exercise since the return from Bosnia and Ex Able Condor might just be the opportunity to show the 'new and improved' version of ARRC's Tactical HQ. Will they really be able to put up the 18 x 36 in record-breaking time? The pressure is on! With the Squadron focused on the upcoming Ex Able Condor and beyond . . . will the pace ever slow? Finally, congratulations **Maj Mark Thorek**, Royal Australian Signals on Australia's outstanding efforts in the Texaco One-Day series!

Sig 'Sperm' Firth shows Cpl 'Dusty' Miller how the 'hamster wheel' should be done.

EXERCISE PRAIRIE EAGLE 3
by 2Lt 'Ostrich' **Rae**

232 Sig Sqn was recently given the opportunity to send a composite Radio Tp to Poland in support of a Battle Group exercise for 1RTR, conducted by Combined Arms Field Training Group (Germany). As I was already attached to the Squadron in-between leaving Sandhurst and starting Tp Comds Course at Blandford, it was decided this would be a perfect opportunity for me to see how the Royal Signals provides communications support. Besides, they said, it will be fun.

The first problem was getting to Poland and this is no mean feat. We drove to the edge of the BAOR road map and then, with the aid of the sun, one more packed meal and a route card kindly donated by 1ADSR we continued East. At least, we did until **Cpl** 'Barnsley' **Crookes** and **Cfn Crompton** decided to park their LAD Bedford into the back of **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Maher**'s Land Rover. They were obviously concerned with not getting enough work during the exercise and decided to create some. Despite not being expected at the staging post at Prenzlau, we were issued yet another packed meal and escorted the last few miles to the border. Once into Poland, the local police escorted us to the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area (DPTA), our new home for the next two weeks. Despite being assured we had been booked into the best hotel on the Training Area, space was tight and so we spent our first night cuddled cosily under the stairs.

The training area itself is unlike anything from my Sandhurst exercises spent in Wales, not least because of all the relics left. As well as the battered tanks left on the skyline, we got a look at the pre-Cold War assault course for the Polish Paras. Unfortunately, my attempt to look cool while demonstrating the 'hamster-wheel' failed miserably, hence the new nickname! Our comms support took the form of providing the equipment for EXCON and HICON (where the Bde staff pretend there are another two Battle Groups to command), Rebros for the Observers and the Battle Group, and a couple of dets with operators for the observers. I then took the opportunity to ask as many questions as possible with the excuse 'I'm just out of Sandhurst'. **LCpl** 'Colonel' **Bagnall** kindly made sure I knew how to put a mast up, while **Sigs** 'Sperm' **Firth** and **Kelly Turner** taught me all I know about different antennas. There was also the chance to help play 'enemy' with the Coldstream Guards, along with **Cpl** 'Rollmat' **Martin** and **Sig** 'Mast Boy' **Ainge**. The lesson of the day was don't try and stand on a bridge when a Saxon wants to take it. I do hope he's feeling better!

9 Sig Regt
BFPO 59

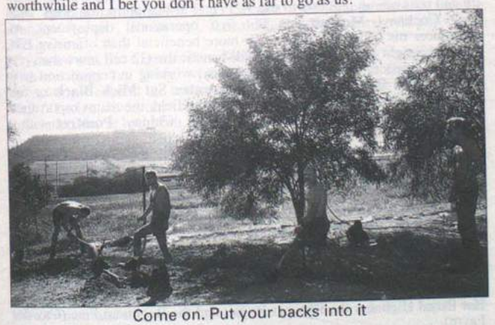
DOWN FROM THE CLOUDS

Every now and again the serving personnel and the families based on Troodos station pluck up the courage to venture down the hill to the land of bright lights, fast food and two-way roads. The occasion that warranted this bold move was to provide assistance to the New Nicosia Dog Shelter located in the Athalassa area of Nicosia.

The dog shelter is a Cypriot registered charity and for the last two years it has been the adopted charity of Troodos station. The station comprises of JSNTC, ESG, Mountain Tp 259 Sig Sqn and Golf Tp 9 Sig Regt. Throughout the two years the station has provided assistance to the shelter whenever possible and has raised in excess of £300. In addition we have re-homed four dogs here at Troodos with another possible success if the arm-twisting pays off. Sadly 'Ben the twin cab chaser' came to an untimely end. The shelter is run on a purely voluntary basis with both cash and material being in short supply. On occasions our visits have simply been to take the dogs out for walks, an experience that some of them have never had. Recent visits have been as glamorous as clearing the cess-pit and digging a soak away and drainage ditch. This charity work has its plus points you know!

The shelter has now reached bursting point with some heart rending decisions to be made about its residents. Fortunately they have been generously given the use of one of the buildings within the UN buffer zone at Nicosia airport to use as an overspill and last week we ventured down to set about building a perimeter fence and kennel runs. An impressive sight we made as stripped to the waist to enjoy the sun we set about our task. It is generally considered that we were all too white to go brown as we simply reflected the sun.

Our task completed we returned to the balmy climate of Troodos to reflect on our efforts, swindle a bit of cash out of people in the bar and compare notes on the phenomenon of the Nicosia dual carriageway thing. If you feel you could help in anyway, even taking a dog on its first walk ever, then give **Cordelia** a ring on 02-362092. It may not be local but it is worthwhile and I bet you don't have as far to go as us!



Come on. Put your backs into it

BABES ON TOUR!

Ex Maidens' Revenge began at 0830 hrs with all recruits on parade. Oh! Oh! **Recruit Inshaw** had left her bike leant against the flag pole!! Off to gaol she went. The drill then began with **SSM** 'Mutant' **Slaney** leading the parade for inspection by **RSM** 'Screecher' **Duckworth**; the insults began culminating in a journey to Melanda Beach for further military training.

We arrived–fairly relaxed. Debus and bergens on our back we marched into unknown territory (at least 200m). 'This can't be it,' was heard all around. 'Line up!' was screeched loudly, so the maidens obeyed. We were put into Sections, issued our survival kit that consisted of a 24 hr ration pack and a peculiar rubber thing, apparently for holding water. Now it was **Pete** 'the snake' **Mills'** turn to take us under his wing and teach us how to survive. Very interesting! Now on to map reading, first aid, PT and driver training all the Maidens performed exceedingly well and felt confident that if they were 'called up' they would have no problems. It may need at change of tack though as rising at 0530 hrs after a busy night fighting the enemy is just not on; particularly when you're ordered into the sea at very low temperatures!! A big thank you from all the Maidens to the Staff who looked after us, a thoroughly good time was had by all and as soon as the blisters have healed we'll be fighting fit for MNMR2. Beware, revenge is sweet!!!

WIVES CLUB GENERATION GAME

WO2 (SSM) A. V. Slaney tastefully removed his kit recently and raised the princely sum of about £75, for Cancer Research. The 9 Sig Regt and 33 SU Wives Club held a charity 'Generation Game' and the evening 'took off' with this impromptu performance! The SSMs input to the evening was invaluable but his strip brought the house down, along with his trousers! Purses were emptied on the stage, notes wedged into the SSM's trousers–what a mover–Imperial Cancer Research will benefit to the tune of £700.

After note: **WO2 (SSM) A. V. Slaney** will be available for Ladies Nights when he leaves the Army no resettlement advice needed for this gentleman of the night!

TRUE BLUE IN A SEA OF GREEN
by Sgt W. A. Smith RAF

Where was 9 Sig Regt I asked myself when my posting notice came in? It was in Cyprus. I would have three years of sun, sea and to my horror the Army. Yes, I was going to work with those green, keen and very military minded people. By Sherpa and by plane the 'crab', his family and the world record for unaccompanied baggage made their way to Cyprus.

I found myself working in RHQ as the Chief Clerk looking after all administration for RAF Element Personnel at 9 Sig Regt. An Army of green uniforms surrounded me. True blue had finally met the sea of green. But what did they make of me–cries of 'crab' were heard. My close ally, the navy clerk briefed me on the dos and don'ts of Army life. I was prepared for anything or so I thought. I was Royal Air Force and nobody would change me. I would not change my view about the Army–yes I was narrow-minded.

Well what a shock I had, those 'green jobs' were no different to mine–only the women of course. I am ashamed to say that our perspective in the RAF of Army personnel is that they are mindless individuals who cannot think for themselves. This I can confirm is not true. Maybe the Army has some strange ways of doing things–but don't we all? For example, the Army likes to keep themselves fit by amusing themselves with CFTS and BFTS. They laugh at our level of fitness. I am now going to remind all you green jobs that the RAF has the beep test–a test known for its beep, difficulty and sometimes impossible achievement levels to which only RAF personnel can match. Regimental Orderly Sgt, now that is an interesting duty. My first obstacle to overcome was the parading and inspection of the guard force, a duty not normally associated with a RAF Orderly Sergeant. My limited drill skills had finally been put to use and as a good RAF Sergeant I gave it my all. You name it I did it. There were no complaints from the troops, in fact I think they liked me because they keep asking me back to do some more!

And there is more. I have now been appointed as the unpopular RHQ Sgt, known as 'Tp Sgt'. I have to allocate additional duties within the Troop and prepare nominal rolls for the SSM. The job is time consuming, requests are always last minute ones and you can become very unpopular. Give me more–'I'll clean your weapon, I'll run a BFT'–I think I am turning Army barmy–NOT!! Fooled you.

To be serious for a minute do not judge a book by its cover. The Army life has given me a chance to use skills I otherwise would not have used in the RAF. I have been made to feel welcome at 9 Sig Regt. The job is excellent and I am living on a Paradise Island–what more can a man 'crab' ask for–more LOA, a pay rise and a free flight home for the family for starters. Do not be narrow-minded. Be a convert like me and join the Army now–well that might be going a bit too far! Watch this space.

14 Sig Regt (EW)

RACE THE SUN

14 Sig Regt (EW) entered a team into Race The Sun, a charity event organised by 2 Sig Regt. The night before the event we looked at a map in the coach and devised a logistic plan. Then the team sat on floor mats in the gym and received infantry style orders detailing who was driving what, when, where, how and with whom. When asked to confirm his part, **Cpl** 'Pat' **Patrick** replied 'On the bus, off the bus, on the bus, off the bus, Sir!' The plan was risky but despite traffic jams and changes in start timings we adapted and overcame. The team started the second leg fourth out of 30 thanks to **SSgt Wright**'s canoeing effort. **Sgt Phil Stroudley** flew on the cycle part of the biathlon; even a puncture only delayed him for two minutes due to his hi-tech miniature gas canisters to re-inflate the tyre. **Sig Lisa Ruck** ran well on the half marathon; **Sig Spry** gained numerous places on the cross-country mountain bike leg; and **LCpl Tim Harrison** got slightly geographically embarrassed in a 'thick Christmas tree forest on a 45 degree incline'.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS SAAM 1997

It was a wet April morning as the 14 Sig Regt (EW) shooting team clambered aboard its battered blue minibus, destination ATR Pirbright. This was the elite, the 'creme de la creme' of the Regiment's sharpshooters . . . or so we had been telling anyone who would listen for the last two weeks. Now was the time to 'put up or shut up'.

At the forefront of our expedition was **Capt Harvey** 'Can't I have just five more minutes in bed' **Woods**, helped along very nicely thank you by **SSgt Richie** 'Didn't you get the admin instruction?' **Plummer**. Next up in the Rogues' Gallery were **Sgt Mick** 'Make mine a Dog Bolter' **Pryce** and **Cpl Chris** 'Disco Queen' **Dunn**. Bringing up the rear (!) were **LCpl Al** 'Lurve machine' **Doyle**, **Sig Nick** 'New boy' **Clift** and **Sig Steve** 'Deadly with the LSW' **Riste**.

Despite the almost complete lack of competition shooting experience, the team shot extremely well, achieving particularly creditable results in matches that they'd never fired even in practice. Morale remained high throughout the week, thanks to the exceptional weather (the ice cream van did a roaring trade) and the comic efforts of those 'set room warriors' at our sister unit, 399 SU. Final scores left the Regiment in seventh place out of 18 Regular Royal Signals teams.

160 (WALES) BDE SAAM (WALSAAM 97)

Barely had CORPS SAAM finished than it was off with the iron sights, on with the SUSATs and back to the ranges. Needless to say, the good weather failed to last, but despite the wind, rain and fog, yet another crack team was assembled to take on the challenge of WALSAAM 97. As well as the CORPS SAAM 'Regulars', the team was joined by several new faces, including **Sgt Mick** 'I love Rad Ops' **Heslop**, **Cpl Cam** 'Good Lad' **Logan**, **LCpl Andy Preen**, **LCpl Laura Shaw** and **Sig** 'Annie Oakley' **Ney**.

Anyone who has ever visited Sennybridge will be able to visualise exactly what the weather was like for the 10 days that the team spent on the ranges there. Needless to say, for those that had remembered to pack it, the Gortex went on and pretty much never came off . . . Despite this, the team put in a good solid few days shooting, culminating in the meeting itself. Apart from the many TA teams present, there was only one other Regular team competing, which would have been good news had they not been ITC Wales, an all Gurkha team of budding snipers. Whilst the 14 Sig Regt (EW) team had the odd disappointing shoot on the day, the same sadly could not be said for our opposition, who virtually swept the board. Almost, but not quite, thanks to some excellent shooting by **Cpl Dunn**, **LCpl Preen** and **Sig Ney**, who between them came away with the Pistol Team trophy. Other good results were achieved by **Sig Riste** in the LSW Match, **LCpl Doyle** in the physically demanding March and Shoot, and **Sig Ney** and **LCpl Preen** in the Moving Target Match. The less said about **LCpl Doyle**'s and **Sig Riste**'s results in downtown Brecon, the better.

REGIMENTAL SQUASH

Flush with two attached personnel with considerable experience, the Regiment confidently entered the Army Major Units Squash Rackets championships held over the period January to April 1997. **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Whiteman** AGC (SPS), an Army player and **Lt Colin Jackson** AGC (SPS), a Corps player, added strength to an already strong R Signals squad. **WO2** 'Stitch' **Woollard**, **LCpl Dean Stewart** and **LCpl Paul Todd** were the most talented Signals players, but the CO, **Lt Col Ian Mackenzie** and **WO1 Mick Keech** also showed great promise.

The first round was an away match against an equally strong 22 Regt RLC side. The first string match saw **Sgt Whiteman** up against the Army under 25 Champion **Pte McQuilkin**. After a determined effort over the first four games the stamina of the youngster faded and **Sgt Whiteman** took the match 3-2. **Jackson** and **Woollard** failed at second and third string but **LCpl Stewart** stepped in at four to tie the match 2-2. **WO1 Keech** fought hard to take his match to eight all in the fifth and the match was on a knife-edge. However, with a fine display of nerve he took the match and the long journey home was all the more bearable. The Regiment went on to reach the finals at Deepcut on 10-11 April, and were matched against 1 Cheshire, the N. Ireland Champions, in the second semi-final. The Cheshires proved to be a one-speed side with most of their players being of similar standard. The top two fixtures were easy wins for 14 Sigs, but the Cheshires proved too strong at four and five. On this occasion therefore it was all down to 'Stitch' **Woollard** at number three to produce the goods. 'Stitch' overcame his opponent 3-1 and a place in the final was secured.

Our opponents in the final were SEAS, Arborfield, who turned out 5 REME Corps players and were clearly favourites. Despite gallant fights from **Jackson**, **Woollard**, **Stewart** and the CO the REME proved too strong. **Sgt Whiteman** won well in the top match avoiding the whitewash but the Regiment had to settle for the Runners Up slot.

(*L –R*): Lt Jackson, WO2 Woollard, CO, Sgt Whiteman, LCpl Stewart

14 SIGNAL TROOP (EW)

OC/SO3 EW — **Capt M. Smith**
Ops WO — **SSgt R. Angove**

14 Sig Tp (EW) is the operational element of 14 Sig Regt (EW), and works in direct support of MND SW, the British AO, on OP Lodestar. The Troop is concerned with Forward EW and is responsible for conducting Close and Depth EW operations. The Troop was officially formed in October last year, and under the guidance of **Capt Mark Smith** and **SSgt Dave Bousfield** were trained and prepared prior to their deployment to Bosnia in December.

Working from Banja Luka, the Troop cover the whole MND using Armoured EW platforms and Land Rover borne Mobile EW teams. The working (!) format basically follows a set routine. Initially **Capt Smith** has a brain-storm (very dangerous), then **SSgt Richie Angove** rationalises the plan and gets extremely excited, and claims EW is better than sex. **Sgt Bob Ackland-Snow** then fiddles with his genetically attached computer and comes up with target information. **SSgt Jude** then claims to have a comms plan, although to date comms never have worked as planned. Orders are then passed to the dets, usually a MEWT manned by **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Brown** and **LCpl** 'Kit Monster' **Potton**. They in turn get bombed up and pass admin requests to the TCP. It is at this point that **SSgt** 'Mad Jock Cockney' **McMalt**, on his first operational deployment, re-announces his belief that drill is far more beneficial than offensive EW, and that a right turn on the march will benefit the G2 cell more than real time intelligence. The MEWT then deploy, working in conjunction with an Armoured Barracuda det–headed by either **Sgt Mick Black** or **Sgt Andy Davies**. After an irregular period in the field, the teams report their findings to the DEWCC, and report to **Sgt** 'Chippy' **Pomfret** with a broken vehicle.

Various interested individuals regularly visit the Troop, the most memorable being the recent visit by the CO, Adjt and RSM. The week long event consisted of a round robin visit of all dets and a visit to Sarajevo.

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj P. Whitehead**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) M. Rouse**

The last six weeks have been fairly hectic, with the Squadron emphasis moving from the CO's cup competition to the preparations for the visit of Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, and the Regiment Fete (Cawdor Fayre).

TM TROOP

TOT — **Capt T. Prince**
FofS — **WO1 (FofS) G. Blondel**

The sun is out and the boys are smiling, what more can you ask for? **'SSgt Aimer** here's your posting order to Cyprus,' said the TOT. Life can be cruel sometimes! The workshops are filling up with new faces on a steady basis, but now **Cpl** 'Bullets' **Brundle** is off on his T1 there's a chance of someone else getting on the pool table! **SSgt Stevie Hughes** is back looking after the families, so no doubt the families office will now be having doughnuts with their coffee mornings.

Hello and welcome to **SSgt (FofS) Dean Briers** in to replace **SSgt (FofS)** 'ZOO' **Williams**. He's been warned to lay off the doughnuts while he's here or he too will leave looking like a L.A. **Sgt** 'Rocky' **Rock** since arriving has already shown what an asset he is to the Troop. He's already fixed the candy floss machine for the cooks and has an ice cream van coming in for first line inspection this afternoon. **LCpl** 'Wally' **Waldron** straight in from training hit it straight off with **Sgt Bob Pace** when he turned up for PT in his Celtic away strip. Another new arrival **LCpl** 'Tina' **Turner** is quietly sitting in the corner wondering what have I got myself into after four years of university. The Regiment says a sad farewell to one of its legendary boxers, **Cpl** 'Dave Boy' **Owen** and the Troops' main function organiser **Cpl Matt Galley**.

MT

MTWO — **WO2 (SSM) T. Gaston**

In the last six months, the Regiment has channeled a lot of its resources into driver training. With 70 passes of one class or another, this has been a good success rate, mainly down to hard work by **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Sinclair**, ably aided and abetted by **LCpls Lee Lester** and 'Matty' **Mathews**. The MT has had to open a new section within its walls known as 'K' or 'Kindergarten' Section. This is due to an influx of raw but keen recruits, straight from the farm. A big 'MT Welcome' to **Sigs Bingham**, **Brown**, **Dempster**, **Gregory**, **Hall**, **Hawks**, **Lovell**, **Oldfield** and **Taylor** (Phew!).

The MTWO **WO2 (SSM) Tony Gaston** (Wallace) continues to restore classic bikes and cars, aided in his task by a couple of new boys **Sig Paul** 'snap on' **Oldfield** and **Sig Andy** 'wet & dry' **Hall**. A fond farewell is extended to **LCpl James** who moves 400m away to 226 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Lee Lester** (some people will do anything to get out of the Dvr Trg Wing) who is off to 238 Sig Sqn (London). Finally to **Sig Dave Agnew**, the Tp Romeo, who has left behind a distraught WO1's daughter for pastures new in Bulford.

QM DEPARTMENT

QM(G) — **Maj F. Bancroft**
QM(T) — **Capt R. Young**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It was a sad day in the dept when we had to say farewell to **Maj Fred Bancroft**, who has decided to hang up his boots and move on to civvy street. Everyone who knows him will echo our sentiments that he is still too young and too fit to leave so soon. Our best wishes are extended to both **Fred** and **Chris** for the future. **Capt** 'Rab' **Young** has also joined the escape committee and is off to Brunei for two years. We wish 'Rab' and **Kim** all the best, watch out for the snakes! We hope our new Quartermasters, **Maj Tim Craven** and **Capt Tom Dean**, enjoy their stay in Wales. We also welcome both our RQMS's, as well as **Sgt Paul Houghton**, **Cpl** 'Jacko' **Jackson** and **LCpl Michael Rees** and their families.

Sig Joe Day has been off hang-gliding (again!!) and **SSgt Shane Wright** never seems to be out of his canoe. **Sgt Ben Batley** has now replaced **LCpl** 'Alf' **Garnett** in Bosnia and will, himself, be replaced by **Sgt Paul Houghton** in July. As the Welsh 1000 competition nears, **Sgt** 'Daz' **Mumford** has been beasting all of the department, up and down the hills in the area.

LAD

OC — **Capt D. Richards REME**
ASM — **WO1 P. Marsh REME**

The LAD took part in 'Ex Western Approaches' over the weekend of 10-11 May. The exercise is the annual test exercise for TA and Regular LAD units within 5 Div. The exercise is mainly aimed at testing the TA in their operational 'Wheeled Fitter Section' role. Stands included 'Battle Damage Repair', 'Recovery', 'Local Manufacture', First Aid and Night Navigation.

A team was put together from the LAD, and spent two months training with the Regt Trg Wing, whilst still maintaining Regt Op's. After an exhausting weekend the team achieved seventh place, just behind 30 Sig Regt (LAD). Everyone seemed to enjoy the exercise, and they all concluded that it had been an enjoyable weekend. They had learned new methods in adapting their trade skills in a testing environment.

TRAINING WNG

Trg Offr — **Capt B. Brennan**

From as early as mid '96 plans were afoot to create the most gruelling and arduous competition since the formation of the Regiment. Yes! You have it the 'CO's Cup Competition'. Months of planning and graft went into setting up the competition. For 14 miles, each Squadron team, especially handpicked (yeah!) were briefed on the fun to come. All the Gucci military training items such as 'running with full kit', 'crossing obstacles', 'first aid stands and river crossings'. It was enough to make men cringe, and training wing staff the world over, rub their hands with glee.

The day of the competition went very well, with many forms of dress adopted for the particularly deep river crossing. 237 Sig Sqn 'B' team opted to strip down to underwear, trainers and berets. However, whilst all their kit remained dry, they lost loads of time dressing and undressing, while the stalwarts from HQ Sqn 'A' ploughed on through and on, on on!! **SSgt Steve Roberts** who could not but stifle a laugh at some of the antics at the wet crossing ably supervised both wet and dry crossings. 'Why did **Lt Neil Stokoe** put his beret on for the wet crossing and not wear it for the remainder of the day? Who knows!' Five miles down the road from the wet crossing, saw **Sgt** 'Scouse' **Peters** and **Cpl Paul Postance** managing the First Aid stand, with injuries ranging from a cut finger, to severe abdominal wounds. Many a casualty was saved, but we also lost one or two.

WO2 (SSM) Rouse (Jumping for joy) accompanied in the HQ Sqn team by Sgt Peters, Maj P Whitehead, Cpl Postance, LCpl Blowes, Cpl Davidson and a U/I REME Fitter.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd — **Maj R. Clapp**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) M .Couston**

SQUADRON PAINTBALLING

The Sqn Comd said 'Do something different with the lads', so **Sgt Al** 'Baldy Man' **Elderbrant** arranged a paintball day. This was held out in the deepest, darkest, wilderness they call Pembrokeshire. Some 20 or so brave lads took on the challenge including such characters as **Cpl Rick** 'dead eye' **Wolley**, **LCpl Nick** 'sniper' **Berry** and **Cpl** 'fuggy' **Forshaw**. The day was a roaring success with plenty of bruised bodies and prides . . . just ask the Sqn Comd, isn't that right **Sgt Elderbrant**!

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd — **2Lt Roberts**

With the start of the good weather the number of Troop days out has increased starting with deep-sea fishing organised by **Cpl** 'Tes' **Blakeley**. The day was a great success with most of the participants catching at least one fish. **Sig Gibson** and **Sig** 'Das' **Kitching** discovered life isn't all plain sailing when they went for one weeks Adv Trg in the Channel. The course was a Yachtmaster assessment so they were made to work hard by the potential skippers. The Squadron deployed to Penally Training Camp late in April where **Sig Ruck** found that not only could she hit the target, but also quite well. **LCpl Cavell** has gone to the dogs, literally, now that she has started working for the MGS Dog team on camp.

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Brown**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Dagnall**

The Troop are looking forward to the return of personnel on class 1 upgrading and operational tours, so that we may be somewhere near to the manning we should have, also the Adv Trg that will be happening in the near future. Also congratulations go to **LCpl Carl Watson** on promotion, obviously his numbers were up (it's you), and to **LCpl Graham Honeywood** on his engagement to **Elizabeth**.

640 SIGNAL TROOP (EW)

Tp Comd — **Lt Stokoe**
Tp OpsWO — **WO2 (Supvr R) Watton**

Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Spud' **Fawcett** having successfully completed P Company, almost an airborne warrior (just a lobotomy to go now)! Congratulations also to **Cpl Steve Bottomley** having passed his EFP with flying colours.

With the HRH visit looming 640 Sig Tp (EW) are not an exception and have spent most of their time setting up and tearing down tents. Some members of the Troop have managed to get away from the Regimental responsibilities–**LCpl Laura Shaw** has been away with the Regiment shooting team. **Cpl Pat Patrick**, **LCpl Jay Aldred** and **Sig Paul Pettman** took part in the annual 'Race the Sun' event held in York and helped raise a Regiment donation of over £250 for the York children's charities. **LCpl Dean** 'Student Grant' **Stewart** has been away playing Army Squash in Aldershot and **Cpls Simon Green**, **Aidan Patrick** and **LCpl Jay Aldred** have been hard at training in the Brecon Beacons. To enable them to compete in the Lanyard Trophy next month–what lengths will people go to, to escape painting Rovers!

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO1 Dave Stapleton**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave Fuller**

On the sporting front **LCpl Ronnie Fardell**, **Sgt Mark Harbin** and **Sgt** 'Loz' **Hill** continue to grace the Squadron football team, though how a Sunderland and a Watford supporter can play football remains to be seen. **Sgt Steve** 'Geordie' **West** and **Sgt** 'Loz' **Hill** have represented the Corps at rugby league. Although **Sgt West** hasn't spent as much time on the rugby field as he would have liked after having a mild case of nearly having his head removed whilst in the scrum (anything to get out of the Lanyard Trophy team). With the cricket season just starting, **Cpl Vinny** 'MT' **Shepard**, **LCpl** 'Buster' **Keeton** and yes you guessed it, **Sgt** 'Loz' 'can anyone direct me to the 226 hangar' **Hill**, can be seen rubbing their balls and oiling their bats regularly on a Wednesday afternoon.

The Troop has been busy preparing for exercise (what's one of those) under the friendly guidance of **WO1 Dave** 'there aren't enough hours in

the day' **Stapleton** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave** 'a few admin points' **Fuller**. Finally two members who like to pop in on the odd occasion are **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave** 'let's tab it out' **Fuller** and **Sgt Mark** 'pathfinder' **Harbin** who are currently training for the Lanyard Trophy in Brecon and who wish they had never started it. Needless to say, they are now currently fighting it out as to who should man the admin tent on the day.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Firstly Goodbye to **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Parry** who's off to JCUNI and **Cpl** 'Daz' **Collins** off on promotion. **Cpl Jim** 'I'm gorgeous' **Reeves** is off on a six month tour of Bosnia and he has still not done a days work since he got here. **Cpl** 'Pepsi' **Mattacola** is reluctantly off to NI. **LCpl Paul Hynard** is off on promotion, and **WO2 Clive** 'Oil Of Ulay' **Ward** is off to EOD. Sad farewells with departure of **LCpl** 'old git' **McCarthy**, **LCpl Steve Quinn** to civvy street and **LCpl Flanagan**, **Sigs Kelly O'Neil** and **Emma Dobbs** off to Bosnia–Enjoy! Hellos also go to **Sig Jo Gallagher** from Cyprus and to **Sig Gavin Robinson** who are fresh from the factory. We welcome to the Troop **Sig** 'Gaz' **Roscoe**, also to **LCpls** 'Jez' **Holdridge** and **Johnson**–hope you enjoy your stay. We welcome **Sgt Mark** 'Sparky' **Harbin**, wife **Linda** and family who have been suffering in Cyprus these last two years. We also welcome **LCpl** 'Buster' **Keeton**, wife **Zeena** and family. We also welcome **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Littler**, his wife **Babs** and family from 7 Sig Regt.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Com	**Maj A. G. Hill**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) J. Cox**

EXERCISE DEEP BATTLE

The LEWT has recently taken part in the Household Cavalry Regiment's Ex Deep Battle on Salisbury Plain in April. The Exercise was a Tactical Effects Simulation Exercise, where lasers add realism to free play events as they unfold. In the first phase two LEWT teams deployed into the Deep Battle Area by helicopter in support of each of the Sabre Sqns. The power of EW was demonstrated when **Cpl Bradbury** intercepted a friendly fire mission containing his own grid reference! During the second phase the LEWT command post deployed with the Sabre Sqn commander. This proved highly effective as almost real time EW identified the OPFOR command net and locations of command callsign locations. **LCpl Gillett** discovered that jungle boots are good in the jungle but bad on Salisbury Plain. Overall the exercise proved the concept of EW in the Deep Battle and we look forward to the forthcoming exercise with the HCR in Egypt.

SQUADRON DRIVING SKILLS COMPETITION

On 9 April the Sqn MT organised an Inter Tp driving skills competition to be run on Cawdor airfield. The various stands included parallel parking, reversing with a trailer and driving blindfolded.

Sgt Sid Yule and 'The Beetles Bonnets' looked to get off to a flying start, much to the surprise of the MT, them only being pen ops after all. 'Hills Angels' were using the stand back and discuss everything method, they were relying on experience to get them through. However, it wasn't enough to get them past 'The Ballantyne Bashers' with **Lt Ballantyne** up front doing all the shouting, they picked-up first place much to the upset of 'Hills Angels', namely the OC and SSM, 10 points isn't much, maybe next year Sir!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

A very turbulent time for the Squadron of late which has seen the departure of the infamous **Capt King** on JCSC. Accompanying out of Cawdor Bks were **SSgt Drew**, **Sgt Winfield** and **LCpl Collinson**, all of who can now enjoy the delights of the English weather. New to the Squadron are the following; **Capt** 'Taff' **Edwards**, **SSgt Ramsay**, **SSgt** 'Ollie' **Cambell**, **LCpl James**, **LCpl Dimmack**, **LCpl McDiarmid**, **Sig Lee**, **Sig Cox-Davies**, **Sig Whytes** and **Sig Veall**.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Davis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M. Fisher**

EXERCISE DRAGON'S DAWN

The latest of the Squadrons' exercises was carefully timed to coincide with yet more unsociable Welsh weather, and the first week of shirt sleeve order. **Cpl** 'Rab' **Grice** and his crew of **Sig** 'Scouse' **Bacon** and **Sig** 'Tom' **Hanks** were particularly impressed with the snow that fell whilst they deployed their detachment. **LCpl** 'baldy' **Upcraft** certainly surprised the Squadron with his new image; hair by stag night. Following the OC Whiskey Tps' early departure from the exercise, to do his ironing, **SSgt** 'I'm stuffed' **Poulton** rescued Troop morale by either placing assets close to chip shops or by deploying them to desolate, wind swept lay-bys. Yankee Tp were particularly excited during the exercise as they were able to take out Barracuda, their 'new toy', which even enticed OC Yankee Tp into the field. Finally a mention must go to Juliet Tp who had a very intense exercise, they certainly seemed to have mastered the operational pause.

INTER-SQUADRON SWIMMING

With only a couple of sessions of training/beastings led by **Cpl** 'Jeff' **Hirst**, the 245 Sig Sqn swimming team was transformed into dolphin like pool demons. From the start of the competition **Cpl Hirst** set the standard with outstanding performances in the individual and relay events. Another notable performance was by **Sig Chapman**, who gave strong performances in the relays, despite spending half his time waving to the (female) members of the crowd. As the competition drew to a close with the Chain of command race, the Sqn Comd gave an inspirational demolition of the other Squadron commanders. Obviously spurred on by his commander **LCpl Burns** gave the performance of his life that allowed the remainder of the team to storm home. With all the excellent efforts produced during the competition, the Squadron came away convincing winners, increasing further the Squadron's lead in the Russ Cup.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Squadron has yet again gone through its steady change of personnel. A welcome to the Squadron goes to **WO Hancock**, **SSgt (FofS) Groves**, **Sgt** 'Jez' **Clarke**, **Sgt** 'Daz' **Middleton**, **Sgt Dave Oliver**, **Sgt Trev Foster**, **Sgt Bev Parry**, **LCpl Edge** and to **JT Andy Dove**. Welcome back to the members of the Squadron returning from Op Lodestar, and good luck to those from the Squadron heading out to Bosnia. Fond farewells have also been said to **Cpls** 'Muz' **Murray**, 'Wez' **Simpsom**, **LCpls** 'Dom' **Reagan**, 'John' **Parker**, **Lyon** and **Ibbetson** and to **J. T.** 'Coopes' **Cooper**.

16 Sig Regt
BFPO 40

The Royal Corps Orienteering Championships took place at Blandford over the weekend 10-11 May. Although conditions were far from ideal with wind and rain lashing across the New Forest the ladies team from 16 Sig Regt were in fine spirits. A very good run from **2Lt Kate Simmonds** on the C course provided an excellent start for the team and with **Cpl Donna Nevens** also running well the team was looking hopeful. **Cpl Donna Scaife** was first off on course D and had a solid run that spurred on **Capt Mel Rayner** who finished in the fastest time on that course. Thus with day one complete the 16 Sig Regt team were in first place. Day two took the team to a different area with even bigger hills. **2Lt Kate Simmonds** was the first to finish with **Capt Mel Rayner** a few minutes behind her, but where was **Cpl Nevens**? After a few nail-biting moments **Cpl Donna Nevens** was seen sprinting over the horizon. The team managed to return to JHQ having beaten HQNI/15 Sig Regt by only 4mins 30secs.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Ross**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Oakley**

The last few months have seen 255 Sig Sqn engaging in a multitude of activities. Having just recovered from the Squadron Temporary Disbandment Dinner to mark the Squadron going into suspended animation we went through the trauma of a Post Bosnia Board of Officers, (where had all that kit gone?) The 'luxury' of being placed out of use didn't last very long at all as we deployed on Ex U-turn without a single tech in the Squadron. As we limped back into JHQ there were days (few) to prepare for the Regiment work up exercise prior to Ex Able Condor (a 1 Sig Bde Ex.) The Squadron would like to extend a very special thank you to Regt Ops for moving the MAIN every night for a week! Who needs sleep anyway. Amidst all this exercise activity the Squadron has been able to squeeze in some extra curricular training.

255 GO BOWLING

Although there were no world beaters strutting their stuff at the Rheindahlen Bowl, the Squadron Ten Pin Bowling afternoon was a great success. Congratulations go to **Sig** 'Buzz Lightyear' **Worrall** for scoring the highest total of the afternoon and commiserations to **Cpl Andy Paul** for winning the Wooden Spoon: more practice required there I think, or alternatively stick to repairing genes. A few well earned refreshments in the Regiment Bar and a sausage and chip supper followed the high jinx at the Bowl. 255 do it in style again!!

BA(CJ) JUDO CHAMPIONSHIPS

The championships took place in Gutersloh on 2 May with the Regiment team comprised almost entirely of 255 personnel. Under the guidance of **Cpl** 'Tel' **Rogers** the team managed some training sessions before setting off for the competition. Although most were novices all gave gutsy performances to achieve commendable results. **Sig Cooper** from Kowloon Tp only just made his weight, having to weigh in wearing only a thong! **Sig** 'junior liney' **Jenkins** achieved a third place in his novice category. The glory for the day went to **Cpl Rogers** who won all of his seven fights and emerged as BA(G) Champion. The two remaining members of the team were **LCpl** 'Duncs' **Marsh** and **Sgt Mickey Harman** who came third and fourth respectively in the over 78kg category. With skills courses and more competitions on the horizon the Judo Club appears to have a promising future.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

The Squadron has a few new arrivals, so welcome to **Sgts Bell** and **Hudson**, **LCpls Seville**, **Clark** and **Tipping**, **Sigs Gontier**, **Speakman** and **Perry**. Goodbye and good luck to **Cpls Pat Howie**, 'Albert' **Tatlock**, 'Scouse' **Reeves**, **John Kelly**, **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Watson**, **Sigs A. Mackay** (posted on promotion–congratulations) and **Andy Nunns**. Good luck in your new postings.

(*L-R*): Sig Cooper, Sgt Harman, Cpl Rogers, Sig Jenkins, LCpl Marsh

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K. Sykes**

SHQ TROOP (REVISITED)
by SSgt Ian Davies

Those brave and hardy souls who took the time to read my last offering will have noticed one great difference, the Squadron now has a 16 Sig Regt brand on its backside! The move to JHQ was a resounding success (but we would say that, wouldn't we), despite the best efforts of nearly everyone we came up against. The Sqn HQ has been lodged in the Regiment FIBUA training building, the vehicles housed in a set of nearly secure garages and altogether we have been issued with the not to be sniffed at sum of three telephones. Having moved only recently, it was thought that another move to yet another location would be beneficial to all concerned, and so the Squadron is set to move again to a new suite of offices, and very salubrious they are too. This accommodation boasts such features as closing doors, running water (not down the walls) and drinking water that you can see through, rather than the colour of tea!

Personalities within SHQ have remained remarkably stable with only **SSgt (FofS) Rickardo Griffiths** departing. We ask ourselves, are 280 Sig Sqn really ready for him? His replacement is **SSgt (FofS) Jimmy Harper**, fresh from his indoctrination on the Foremans Course; we wish him well and look forward in eager anticipation to see him getting a quart from a pint pot! The only other movement is the 2IC. **Capt L. V. Tomkins**, who has recently leapt at the chance of another all expenses paid trip to Sarajevo for a few months. Keep smiling, at least the accommodation can't be as bad as here.

TN 014

Tp Comd	**2Lt T. Grey**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt K. Curiett**

by Sig D. Hague

As 230 Sig Sqn say goodbye to 7 Sig Regt and hello to 16 Sig Regt a hectic couple of weeks begin. When the move began, Trunk Node 014 lost most of its' hierarchy (**2Lt Grey**, **Sgt Wood**, and **Sgt Thompson**) to 7 Sig Regt Board of Officers. This was good news for the Troop because it meant fewer seniors watching over us! Most of the single blokes were quite upset because they suddenly have to share four man rooms between four people. **Sig** 'Lucky I'm Gorgeous' **Lockwood** had only one concern, whether his new waterbed would fit into his new room! Once the move was finished, the Squadron wasted no time in sending us on exercise. Yet again we went to some of our favorite locations like Arsbeck, Lueth, and Ayreshire Barracks.

At least on this exercise TN 014 was very lucky with the food, thanks to **Cpl Theresa Hynds** none of us suffered with dickey tummies for a change! Comms between the three Nodes were up to the Squadrons usual 'high' standards. After five days of camming up and tearing down we arrived safely back in JHQ to turn around the vehicles. When this was completed we all went to the Tp offices to be told that on our next exercise, earth spikes should be covered with an old boot before hammering them into the ground to cut out the noise. Can't wait to see the new noise free generators!

TN 015

Tp OC	**2Lt J. Balfour**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt N. Bell**

by LCpl J. Ward

Since returning from Bosnia the Squadron and TN 015 have been preparing for the move to 16 Sig Regt. The wagons were sent off to Ayreshire Barracks to be sprayed and serviced. This gave us time to prepare the block, offices and work area ready for the hand over to 7 Sig Regt. Once the Squadron moved to JHQ and settled in some particular advantages arose–the improved social life for the single soldiers and **SSgt** 'Fingers' **Bell** in particular.

During this time the Troop personnel changed dramatically. Leaving us was **Lt** 'Daz' **Saul** and coming in to replace him is **2Lt Jamie Balfour**, straight from the factory! **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Williams** and **Cpl Pete Levick** have left. Troop technicians are seriously on the sproggy side with **Sgt** 'Pukka' **Jeanes**, **Cpl** 'Si' **Piercey** and **LCpl Nick Sutton** coming in to join **Cpl** 'Jase' **Crossley** who is leaving to join Mike Tp. On the Relay side of life **LCpl** 'Jack' **Hawkins** and **Graham Parkhill** have both left to join 3 (UK) Div (to be joined by me in October). Coming in to the troop is **LCpl** 'Hardly' **Hare** and numerous sproggs, **Sigs** 'Gypsy' **Jepps**, 'Big Feet' **MacFarlane**, 'Wan' **King**, **Si** 'Er, Sir I'm married' **Ross**, 'Bruce' **Lee**, 'Marty' **Marsden**, and finally 'Virginia' **Wade** who has now left to join TN 014. Two more new welcomes to the Troop are **Sgt Richie Morgan** and **Sgt** 'Sarge' **White**–a thoroughly nasty piece of work. Also congratulations to **LCpl Tony Orange** with the birth of his son.

Recently the Troop took part in Ex Instant Whip which was our first exercise in nearly two years proving many people to be rather rustier than they thought. On the funny side, the sproggs proved to be as gullible as expected with **Sig** 'Yogi' **Jepps** still not knowing 'whata matta booboo' is for! **Sig** 'Harry Enfields' 'Kevin' **MacFarlane** successfully managed to confuse the CO with his amazingly complex and complicated explanation of just what wagon he is actually crewing on.

With the exercise safely out of the way, the Squadron took part in the Regiment Athletics day and swept the board with an impressive display winning most events and the competition by a clear mile, which goes to show enthusiasm can beat talent. **Sig Nicky Ward** received the trophy on behalf of the Squadron from the CO, **Lt Col James**. Looking forward briefly to a summer DTI'S, Exercises, and eventually the RSIT, or more realistically, barbecues, Sports afternoons, Summer Camps, and hot weather. Last and by no means least, I would like to thank **Cpl** 'Krusty' **Wilson** for dropping out of doing these *Wire* Notes at the last minute and jiffing me to do them in his place. Cheers mate.

TNO16

Tp Comd	**Lt K. McAnuity**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Fisher**

by LCpl D. Collins

On return to the Squadron after a long and arduous Class One course at Blandford, **LCpl** 'Fizz' **Thisby** and myself **LCpl** 'Daz' **Collins** arrived amongst masses of change. Unfortunately, for us, we missed the move from Krefeld to JHQ and all the hard work it involved, we returned to find the Squadron settled into it's new environment. Not only have surroundings changed, but the amount of new faces around and about make us feel like strangers.

As if times have not been busy enough, recently the Squadron were deployed on Ex Instant Whip. This was a lot along the lines of a shake out and a very steep learning curve for most of the newer members recently arrived from Blandford. It was nice to see that **LCpl Thisby** remembered to Earth his vehicle this time–it's a pity he didn't on Sys Ex! On a Troop level the exercise was as ever a success, **Sig Andy Adams** breaking many records in time to re-engineer links. It was for many, their first exercise with the troop, this included our new Tp Comd **Lt** 'Mac' **McAnulty**.

Unfortunately we are to lose some members of the Troop to HQ Sqn, so it's a brief hello and goodbye to **LCpl Nielson**, and also to **Sgt** 'Roy-Ston' **Parr**. On a brighter note hello to **Sigs** 'Mitch' **Mitchel**, **A. Cowen**, **Rob Varley**, and **Welch**, **LCpls David Hodgkinson** and **Ray Holdsworth**, **Cpl** 'Kitchy' **Kitchen** and finally **Sgt Dave Kemley**.

252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Thomas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) McKenna (SSM)**

SYSTEMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (TOT) Dave Boxhall**
FofS	**WO2 (FofS) John Dennis**

Systems Tp is still languishing in the cellars of the big house in Rheindahlen with no sign of daylight breaking through. The Troop is busier than ever with the addition of an SCC to complete the suite of Ptarmigan processors. The installation of IARRCIS Ver 3.1 gives us the HQ ARRC LAN and WAN management functions on top of everything else. Rumour has it that on a recent local exercise we were so short of bodies that the Boss was manning the radio relay shack while the Foreman held the front desk. Impossible I hear you cry but they both like to get hands-on now and then and believe it or not the links worked.

Recent departures from the Troop include unexpected holidays in FRY for **Sgt Dave** 'Bonehead' **Cox**, **Cpl Vicky** 'Ski-bob' **Hardisty**, **Cpl** 'Gaz' 'Civvy' **Ford** and lastly **LCpl Graham** 'Shot-shoulder' **Hennessey**. How could we forget the newly promoted jailbird. **LCpl Kev** 'Motormouth' **Young** also posted to 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. **Cpl Stu McNeil** took a sideways step into RSSST(G) and **Cpl Claire Leeds** joined her hubby in Blandford. New arrivals include four brand new Sgts straight from Blandford on completion of their TI. Thank you I hear the Boss cry. Welcome to **Mick** and **Donna Knowles**, **Andy** and **Sarah Lloyd**, 'Gaz' and **Jan Dunstone** and **Paul** and **Cher Henderson**. We mustn't forget **Sgt Tony** and **Allison Law** who have been posted in from NI.

Congratulations to newly promoted **Cpl Dale Armitage** and the two new baby techs **LCpls Toby Brooksbank** and **Paul Harrison**. At last **Sgt Adie Butcher** has someone to give all the niff naff and trivia to. The new Tp Sgt, **Stu Hulse** is making a name for himself with the 'numero uno' haircuts and his fondness for windsurfing and ski-biking, maybe his reddish complexion was due to the beer after all. Well done to **Mick** and 'Gaz' for organising a fun night out in one of the local Chinese Restaurants, a special mention must go to **Sgt Frank Nevens** the 'Chop Stick Kid' who had a close run in with Hong Kong Fuey.

Just to prove its not all work and no play, **Sgt Tony Law** recently spent three days at the Rhein Army Summer Show promoting the Army Bob Sleigh and Skeleton teams, apparently he is an international referee. We look forward to seeing him on Sky Sports next winter.

At long last the Remote NMI has arrived and been installed and the Operators can now sit in comfort rather than up at the shack in sub zero temperatures as was known in the winter. **Cpl Stu McNeil** and **LCpl Mick Kenning** are still practising for the BA(G) fishing team but now they can

do it indoors. Finally welcome back into the fold for **Sgt Ray King** after some time spent on the Khazi and **Sgt** 'I'm the oldest swinger in town' **Roelf Bruinsma** after a serious back operation.

BERLIN 25KM OTHERWISE KNOWN AS '12 GO MAD IN BERLIN'
by Cpl Donna Nevens

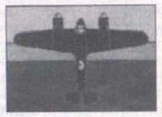
The time 0925hrs, the place Krefeld Lines guardroom, the reason 12 willing volunteers in a fit of madness agreed to participate in a little jaunt round the city of Berlin. **WO2 (SSM) Mick McKenna, WO1 (FofS) Nige Cullen, Sgt Frank Nevens, Sgt Daisy Mundy, Sgt Chris Nelson, Sgt** 'Doc' **Docherty, Cpl Si Nicholson, LCpl** 'Hobbo' **Hobson, LCpl** 'Daz' **Cartwright, Sig Nathan Acott, Sig Dave Storey** and myself. Once everyone made sure they had passports and tickets we all set off to the airport, (yes we were travelling in style no minibus treks for us finely tuned athletes).

On our arrival in Berlin all the team got settled into the hotel, then off we all went to the Olympic stadium to collect our numbers for the big race the next day, then everyone went off to do some sightseeing. Some people enjoyed the trams so much they kept going up and down the same route a few times. After a good nights sleep it was time to set off to the Olympic Stadium for the main event. At least the weather was reasonable and after a few last minute dashes to the loo everyone was lined up ready to go. I think the thought, 'Why did I volunteer to do this' entered a few of our heads as the thought of running 15 miles round Berlin was actually about to happen. Off we all went. As I set off the words 'Don't worry **Donna** I'll catch you up' were ringing in my ears from my better half **Sgt Frank Nevens**. The race was on and I had to get in before **Frank**. All in all, the course was quite good we ran past our hotel with at least 6km to go but didn't manage to stop.

Finely tuned athletes?!

The worst point was when we approached the stadium: it never seemed to get any nearer. Then all of a sudden there you were entering the tunnel to the last 100m in the stadium. What an amazing feeling, everyone did really well, we all finished the course, whether we all enjoyed it is debatable! but we all enjoyed the after-run refreshments in the bar later. **Sgt Docherty** had an excellent run, he was 144 overall, **FofS Cullen** and **Sig Acott** both did the run in under two hours, I did just over and the race between the **Nevens** was won by myself

21 Sig Regt (AS) Colerne



244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Frank Roberts**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Whitaker**

ALPHA (AMFL) TROOP ON EXERCISE ARDENT GROUND 97
by LCpl Lutkin

Ex Ardent Ground 97 took place in Northwest Turkey and comprised of elements from eight nations. These included seven Gun Batteries, six Mortar Platoons, 11 Support Helicopters and three Fast Jet Squadrons. In total, 2,500 troops took part in what was to become the biggest Ex Ardent Ground yet. Our advance party deployed to Turkey on 27 April 1997.

Our Troop supplied communications for both the Support Helicopter Force and the Offensive Air Support Cell. The offensive air support side of the exercise became the busiest for several exercises, and as a result the Troop Forward Air Control (FAC) detachments soon disproved their reputation as the '20-minuters'.

As the exercise progressed, **LCpl** 'Squirrel' **Lutkin** and **Sig** 'Au Natural' **Cogram** were soon having to cope with up to 20 sorties a day from three nations' Air Forces and spent a considerable amount of time deployed as a direct link between the multinational FAC teams and the aircraft. On the whole, the exercise was a valuable boost to Troop training, whilst also providing the opportunity for some interesting cultural visits.

EXERCISE IRON GAMBIT
by WO2 (SSM) Whitaker

The Red Hand Gang (244 Sig Sqn) conducted Ex Iron Gambit from 7-11 April 1997 at Tregantle Fort in Cornwall. Planned and organised by **WO2 (SSM) Dave Whitaker**, the exercise was designed to complete Army Training Directive (ATD) mandatory training for all available personnel of the Squadron. The fort was built in the 19th century as one of a series of fortifications to protect Plymouth, although it was never used in anger. Recently fully refurbished and with ranges directly outside, it was the ideal location for the training camp. As luck would have it, the SSM had previously spoken to the RSM and arranged some glorious weather for the week; and thus training commenced!

The range team, led by **SSgt Jack** 'Bullhorn' **Payne**, so called for his attachment to his loudhailer, did a sterling job. As the 12-lane gallery range was built on a hill, after three days of walking up and down it, the team had calf muscles like Garth's. The aforementioned loudhailer did come in handy later in the week, when some civilians wandering along the beach strayed into the danger area obviously halting firing and causing the following rebuke to be issued from 'Bullhorn'–'YOU, civilians, get out of my danger area!' It was amusing to watch the oblivious tourists looking around and wondering who was shouting at them. Special mention must go to **WO2 (YofS)** 'Butts' **Herbert** who, together with his team, worked hard at ensuring the targets went UP and DOWN at the correct times. The Squadron Top Shot has yet to be decided by a shoot-out between **WO2 (SSM) Dave Whitaker** and **Sgt Shaun Gibson**. Despite **Sgt Tony** 'Deadeye' **Mann**, who although not scoring enough to pass at his first attempt, appeared to have assisted **LCpl** 'One Shot, Two Kills' **Payton** to score three points over the Highest Possible Score (HPS).

Other activities during the week included Fieldcraft revision, in which **Sig** 'Pointy' **Ryan** delighted his section with his Fire Control Orders delivered in his West Country burr, and AFV Recognition, in which **Sig** 'Spotter' **Johnson** decided that a T72 tank was in fact a B52 (aircraft)–close, but no cigar! **LCpl** 'Rear Drive Sprocket' **Clancy** then took this particular recognition feature to be applicable to all AFVS! **Cpl Harry Harrop** who conducted First Aid 2 training planned a particularly realistic Battle Exercise with some 'props' obtained from the local butcher's. **SSgt Tim** 'Champion of the Universe' **Abbott** and **Cpl Mick** 'Gas Guru' **Rutherford** kept all entertained with their CS gas. The latter also demonstrated that he was a bit of a guru on Powerpoint (NOT!). The PT Staff planned the CFT route so well along the Cornish coast that the OC, **Maj Frank Roberts** did both the CFTs, clearly enjoying the views and particularly the hills!

The aim of the exercise was achieved as all personnel had passed their ATDs whilst having had an enjoyable time away from the routine of barracks. The week was rounded off with a barbecue and a few drinks, everyone having recovered in one way or another back to Colerne ready and waiting for the Squadron Adventure Training Camp in June at, yes, you guessed it, Tregantle Fort!

EXERCISE IRON SPRINGS 97
by WO2 (YofS) Herbert

Ex Iron Springs 97 was a 21 Sig Regt (AS) expedition that took place in the Colorado Rockies from 1-15 May 1997. The expedition, led by **WO2 (YofS)** 'Herbie' **Herbert** and his 2IC, **SSgt Phil** 'Stores-R-Us' **Fluck**, took 24 members of the Regiment to the US Army base of Fort Carson, from where they conducted a host of adventurous training pursuits. Fort Carson accommodates 22,000 soldiers, so, as one can imagine, the infrastructure easily coped with its new occupants. The base also boasts the usual PX and fast food outlets, all of which were quickly recce'd by the party.

The busy training programme included trekking, horse riding, white water rafting and much more. The students were asked to remain enthusiastic, committed and make the most of the opportunity. This they did admirably. Even the white water rafting guides commented on how enthusiastically the teams boarded each others' rafts and threw one another into the cold mountain water! Working at altitude was made easier with the help of two weeks of good weather (it had been booked 6 weeks in advance!). This must have helped **LCpl Kim Leonard** and **Sigs Mandy Smith** and **Caria Halsey**, who returned so tanned they immediately auditioned for Baywatch.

There were some incidents of special note. **Cpl** 'Tommy Hellfighter' **Robinson** managed to cycle his mountain bike through mud above his crossbar! **Sig** 'Cliffhanger' **Prothero** scaled rocks that scared the local mountain goats. **Sig** 'Charming Boy' **Coates** showed the US Army how to Karaoke, and **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Pearson** proved to the expedition's hosts that he could still be understood with a Yorkshire accent! In conclusion, the Expedition leaders will be forever indebted to Fort Carson, and in particular, **SSgt Steve Desourdy** US Army, for making this deployment such a big success.

Continued on p.295

HRH shares a joke with Cpl Camp whilst the CO and OC look on

The Royal Visit to 14 Signal Regiment (EW)

After a wet and windy CO's rehearsal on May 20th and a hot and dry Master of Signals' rehearsal on May 29th, there was a bomb scare on the evening of June 2nd and a broken down AFV432 at 0900hrs on June 3rd. 1000hrs June 3rd finally arrived and, as ever spot on time, **HRH, The Princess Royal** arrived by Royal Helicopter and was met by **Maj Gen Archie Birtwistle** (the outgoing Master), **Col Andrew Carter** (the Regt Sec) and the CO, **Lt Col Ian McKenzie**. **Lt Ian Ballantyne** had the honour of being her ADC for the day.

245 Sig Sqn (EW) were responsible for organising and running both a mobile and static display for the Colonel in Chief's visit. The bulk of this fell upon the shoulders of **SSgt Peter Kennedy**, who spent two weeks prior to the visit ensuring everything would run like clockwork on the day. The equipment demonstration got underway with a dramatic entrance from the Light EW Team (LEWT). They abseiled from a Lynx and then patrolled into a hide. 640 Sig Trp then drove onto the display area accompanied by a running commentary from **Capt Andy Lucas**, explaining how 14 Sig Regt (EW) monitors the 'electronic' spectrum. 245 Sig Sqn (EW)'s armour then rolled into the arena with **Cpl Peter Zambuni** driving the OC, **Maj Mark Davis**. Everyone breathed a huge sigh of relief, as they had last been seen heading off looking for a spare Panzer and helmet for the OC. The accompanying vehicles were driven by **LCpl Si Upcraft** and **SSgt Andy Evans**. They were commanded by **Cpls McCallion** and **Miller. Sgt McGuinness, Cpls Page** and **Logan** and **LCpl Rigg** drove on with two Bromure Jammers and demonstrated the 'Jam and Scram' tactics used by J Trp, followed by the TAR det driven by **Cpl Pounder** and **LCpl Gray**. Finally the RAF Air Intercept det closed the Armoured Sqn's part of the show, driven by **Cpl Tubbs**, commanded by **JT John Winwood** and crewed by **WO Hancock** and **Sgts Foster** and **Barry**. Elements of 226 Sig Sqn (EW) then completed the mobile part of the display. Once the mobile display had finished **Princess Anne** toured the static display of the Regt's equipment. **Cpl Arundel** briefed **HRH** on the Kipling system and the PRC 320 HF Radio at the LEWT stand. A special mention must also be made of **LCpl Leishman** who coped admirably with a dead generator and a computer breakdown on his Barracuda stand. The depth assets of 226 Sig Sqn (EW) were represented by Beady Eye and Kingfisher detachments headed up by **WOI Stapleton** and **Lt Jim Brown** Int Corps respectively. **Cpl Dunn** obviously made an impression on **HRH** as she spent some time listening to him enthuse about all matters HF!

Having finished her review of the static display **HRH** moved on to Hanger 3 to see HQ Sqn. They had been tasked with assembling a number of stands to reflect the role and work of the supporting elements of the Regt.

Operations: This stand displayed a pictorial record of all the Ops the Regt has been involved in, from the Falklands conflict to our most recent deployment, which was to Zaire.

Catering Department: This department was tasked with setting up a Field Catering Equipment Display, for the visit. The chefs present were **WO2 (SQMS) Brain** who as the units' catering manager, co-ordinated the entire display. **Sgt Jimmy Kirkpatrick, Cpl Donee, Cpl Cornwell** and **LCpl Monley** ably assisted him.

Training Wing: Of all the displays Trg Wing's was definitely the most colourful. Rather than give **HRH** the usual military hardware display, it was decided to show her the delights of Pembrokeshire through the Wing's Adventurous Training pursuits. **SSgt Robert** assembled a cornucopia of delights under the watchful eyes of OC, **Capt Bill Brennan**.

Medical & Dental: The Medical and Dental Centre assets were outlined and **HRH** was briefed on our basic capability and peacetime role. **Capt Edmondson** RADC explained that the main focus of the display was a casualty simulation at a Regt Aid Post, with one of the unit technicians **Cpl Jeanette Price** giving suitably timed moans and groans on the stretcher.

LAD: This stand was built to show the contrast between the two mission essential tasks of providing equipment availability and training the LAD for war. A Land Rover was split down the middle. One side representing the workshop, with the clean working environment and latest tools. The other side depicted repair in the field complete with mud and cam. Having delivered **HRH** back to the awaiting helicopter and said our farewells, **Maj Robin Clapp**, as visit coordinator, breathed a final sigh of relief that the day had gone so smoothly He then joined the rest of the Regt in Brawdy Lanes for a post visit barbecue, to celebrate the conclusion of a very successful day.

HRH unveils a plaque to open the new RHQ building

The picture shows: HRH meeting members of the Saturday Children's Bowling League. She accepted the posy from Miss Charlotte Harris.

A Memorable Occasion

The Master of Signals, **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle CB, CBE, DL**, relinquished his appointment on 29 June 1997. A farewell Dinner Night was held in Headquarters Mess on 27 June. The occasion was graced by the presence of Her Royal Highness, **The Princess Royal**, accompanied by her husband, **Captain Timothy Lawrence, MVO, RN**, and 150 past and present officers of the Corps.

The Master with Lt Col Bruce Beattie and Maj Pat Lafferty.

The Master's wife Sylvia enjoying the occasion with Col Mike Galloway and Brig 'Paddy' Evans.

The Princess Royal supervises the transfer of the Sword of Office

Three Masters –The Master Designate, Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling, Past Master, Maj Gen J. M. W. Badcock and the Master in animated discussion after dinner.

The Master leaves the Mess through the line of torch bearers.

THE ASSOCIATION REUNION 28/29 JUNE 1997

The Master receives a bronze of the Double Jimmy from 'Hec' Bennett of the Magnificent Men on their Ancient Machines. The Captain of the Display Team, Lisa Giles in attendance.

The Master, complete with White Helmet, shares a happy moment with Lisa who is unreservedly forgiven her errant pip having just completed yet another splendid White Helmet's Team Display.

The 50 year Pennant is awarded to the Cardiff Branch.

The Master is awarded his 50 year badge by Brig Conrad Garton.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

The Royal Visit 4th June 1997

The single most important event during this year has been the very welcome visit of **HRH The Princess Royal** to Azimghur Barracks, Colerne on Wednesday June 4th 1997. The Colonel in Chief arrived on a warm sunny day and was met by a Reception Party which included the Master, the SOinC and the CO. After the reception, the visit was based largely around a display of the Regiment's operational role. This took place on the airfield. The principal aim of the display was to show the unique operational capability of the Regt, in it's post Options structure after the draw down from Germany. Many of the stands were manned by a combination of both regular and volunteer soldiers based both in this country and Germany. Moreover the display illustrated the close relationship that exists between 21 Sig Regt and the RAF.

After an initial briefing on the role of the unit by **Capt MacTaggart** and the outline format of the display by **Maj Roberts**, the demonstration commenced. **2Lt Finnie** briefed **HRH** while the Mobile Air Operations Team (MAOT) marshalled a Chinook helicopter, which had completed a tactical insertion of a Forward Air Controller (FAC) Team, part of HQ Tp (V). Once the team had taken their position in the trench, they laser illuminated a simulated target (ZSU 23/4) which was then subsequently attacked by a low flying RAF Fighter/Bomber flown from RAF Boscombe Down. In between the helicopter display and the fast jet bombing run, **HRH** was shown the communications support elements for the RAF Support Helicopter Force (SHF, Field HQ. The introductionary brief was conducted by **Capt (GCO) Krishna Gurung** thereafter **HRH** toured the HQ and received detailed briefings on the role of RADCON by **Sgt Payne**, SYSCON by WO2 (YofS) Herbert and the Ptarmigan Secondary Access Node by **Sgt Weeks**.. After a brief discussion with the FAC Team consisting of **Capt Bird** (Para), **Sgt Sheerin** and **Sig Singer**, **HRH** was escorted to the Airfield Damage Repair stand. This stand demonstrated within an NBC environment, the unique skills in both 81 Sig Sqn (V) based in Colerne and 220 Sig Sqn stationed in Germany. **HRH** was then driven to the Arctic Stand where **Capt Lovett** and members of A Tp gave a demonstration of the AMF(L) capability.

HRH accompanied by The Master, CO and Mrs Diane Steele leave the Community Centre through the massed ranks of the local primary school.

The final element of the military display was concentrated on the support function delivered by Echelon. **HRH** was met by **Maj Connors**, who then presented the various elements of Echelon including the MT commanded by **Capt Richards**, the LAD commanded by **Capt Warner** and the Technical Workshops commanded by **W01 (FofS) O'Brien**.

SYSCON - WO2 Herbert presents SSgt Solomons.
Meanwhile LCpl Weaver is ear-wigging in the corner and wondering if he'll get to meet HRH

Families Presentation

After lunch, which was wonderfully prepared hy **WO2 (RCWO) Baker** RLC and his excellent team of chefs, The Colonel in Chief was escorted to the Gymnasium to watch a musical presentation of "Alice Through the Looking Glass" performed by children from the local primary school. Almost 60% of the school children are dependents of members of the Azimghur Barracks community. Finally, **HRH** had the opportunity to meet a number of the Regt's wives and their families for coffee. On departure from the Community Centre the Colonel in Chief was presented with a posy by **Miss Phillipa Wallis** (5), after which **HRH** walked to her car through a cheering, flag waving crowd of school children.

"You put your left leg in....."Capt Richards showing how to really impress HRH. Clearly the members of MT Tp can see the funny side of it.

The TA Recruiting Team being introduced by OC 43(Wx) Sig Sqn Maj Craig Treeby

'Looking good at 14,110ft'
LCpl Nat Turney, Sig Vic Szolin, WO2 'Herbie' Herbert, Sgt Jane Marsden and Cpl 'Speedie' Speed

EXERCISE SUSSEX SAIL IRON 23 MAY-3 JUNE 1997
by Sgt Mann

Mitra, a yacht chartered from JSASTC at Gosport was used to introduce 16 members of the Squadron to sailing. The skipper and his mate for the 10-day sailing exercise were **Sgt Tony Mann** and **Sig Matt Jobson** respectively. Four crews of four members each had two to three days of fine sailing. For once, the weather was excellent–warm, sunny and lots of wind. However, for the last crew, there was too much of the last, gale force winds forcing them to shelter in Yarmouth. There were only two cases of seasickness, **LCpl Nat Turney** proving to have the strongest stomach, judging by distance covered. The award for the best meal on board goes to **Cpl Kev Wyatt** for his 'Baby's Head' **Roast** with Tomatoes. A special mention must go to **WO2 (SSM) Dave Whitaker** for his 'Chicken Curry with and wallpaper paste'. **Cpl Kev Wyatt** and **Sigs John White**, **Jeff** 'Best Yet' **Ford** and **Al Taylor** all showed good skills for first time sailors.

'Sailing Signallers!'
(*L-R*): Sigs Matt Jobson and Rob Mason, Sgt Tony Mann, Cpl Kev Wyatt and Sig Brian Milne with the needles in the background

30 Sig Regt Bramcote

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Pete Doherty MBE**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Ellis**

A degree of calm has persisted over the last couple of months that has enabled the command team to draw breath and consolidate. That said, all three of the hierarchy has been warned about postings over the next couple of months. The OC is off to Krefeld, the SQMS to Corsham and the SSM all the way upstairs to 258 Sqn. Was it something we said??

The Champion Squadron competition got off to a flying start with Phase 1 of the CO's Challenge. It was perhaps the worst kept secret in the world that each of the Squadrons would have to field two teams, in the Race the Sun Competition run by 2 Regt in York. In brief the competition starts at dawn, from Imphal Barracks, with teams racing over 16 different legs, ranging from a half marathon to a 1km swim with all sorts of nasties in between, to the finish. The rules governing the competition are somewhat complex but from the Regiment perspective each Squadron had to field two teams with two different competitors in each leg. In addition, and part of the test, we had to raise sponsorship money.

With the limited time frame much of the difficulty experienced was in finding enough able bodied and willing participants, but after much cajoling and encouragement sufficient volunteers were dragged kicking and screaming from their far flung corners. **RQMS Keilty** performed outstandingly on the bike ride, as did the Adjt, **Capt Pete Drew** on the March and Assault course phase. The RSM's Forest Run effort was widely applauded and the CO made his contribution by competing on the Fell Run section (well the whole thing was his idea!) Unfortunately we lacked the youth and exuberance of the other Squadrons and our sponsorship effort resulted in us dropping from second place to third overall, in the Regiment Competition, which on the face of it we were delighted with.

HMS *ALDERNEY*

Through the Regiment's affiliation with the island of Alderney, we have managed to build up a relationship with HMS *Alderney*, one of the Royal Navy's fishery protection vessels. Due to the nature of HMS *Alderney*'s role she quite often has at least one watch away on leave at any one time, leaving at least six spaces in her normal complement of 36. During the month of May 1997 she was to be involved in a Fisheries protection Squadron exercise to Iceland, something which was new to them, so they offered the Regiment the chance of sending six soldiers on the trip. As Sp Sqn is the lead Squadron where *Alderney* is concerned the OC very kindly offered me the chance to take up their invitation. 'The Sergeant Major never gets out of camp normally, so why don't you go?' Never being one to look a gift horse in the mouth I duly applied my name to the list, and having pointed out to the dets that it was over the period of CO's Challenge, I soon had more than enough volunteers.

We departed Bramcote at 0630 hrs on Saturday 10 May to join the ship in Portsmouth. After all the safety briefs and a quick run down on routine we found our cabins to sort ourselves out. This was to be the last time that we would see **Sgt** 'Des' **Brown** until reaching Iceland. No amount of 'Quells' seemed to do the trick. The remainder of the party then settled into the Navy routine. **Sig Andy Middle** being a driver by trade painted the ship's gear-box, **Sig** 'Cush' **Cushing** and 'Baz' **Still** took a turn at the helm. **Pte** 'Stan' **Standen** showed the Navy chefs how to turn rations into edible food as opposed to something you just put straight into the swill. This was borne out by the Coxswain trying to produce a draft order to get him onto the ship's complement. The remainder of the trip was spent trying to get used to the Navy customs and technology.

The Regimental Contingent at the start of the journey

On arrival in Reykjavik the Senior Rates Mess was introduced to **Sgt** 'Des' **Brown** who endeavoured to cram 11 days of his life into five. Many of the trips that had been organised prior to departure had been cancelled due to public holidays in Iceland, so it was down to the US Naval base to produce the majority of the entertainment. That is if you were allowed to get away from the ship, some more quaint Naval customs. 'Moose Milk', not for the faint hearted, or weak of stomach. No wonder they save that until they're alongside. With all the Pubs and Clubs of Reykjavik visited we left Iceland for our return trip that was a little less lumpy on the way back, so everyone got a breath of fresh air whilst homeward bound.

There are some things that are obviously Tri-Service, as Thursday night we anchored just off the Scottish coast for a barbecue, although I must say the fire fighting equipment was more evident than we're used to. The final couple of days were set aside for man overboard drills with both myself and **Sgt Brown** taking charge of the ship to recover the notional body and the remainder of the lads getting soaked in the sea raiders. We eventually pulled alongside in Liverpool docks. With all future meetings and social functions provisionally organised we bade a fond farewell to HMS *Alderney*. We then got our heads together as to what we were going to say about how bad it was for the next time they asked for volunteers, so our names could go straight to the top of the list.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTWO — **WO2 Riddell**

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

We say a 'Big Welcome' to **LCpl Tom Fife**, posted in from 258 Sqn to replace **Sig Ian Slocombe**. We also welcome **Sig** 'Worthy' **Worthington**, fresh from the factory (but with a suspect warranty). A huge farewell goes to **Sig Ian Slocombe**, who's been relegated to 258 Sqn to try and get a few more tours of Bos under his line belt.

ROUTINE

As usual Sp Sqn MT are overworked and underpaid. A busy period from collecting our new fleet of WOLF (Wheel On Left Front) Land Rovers one day, to running in the CO's Challenge the next. We now have a well-deserved rest period in the form of Battle Camp. **Sgt Ginge** 'swivel hips' **McNeilly** in the meantime has managed to miss all the excitement with a 3 month tour of Bos.

REGIMENTAL ORIENTEERING

The Regiment Orienteering team capped an excellent season by winning the Royal Signals Championships in May. Again, with all the external commitments, it proved difficult to keep the impetus going throughout the season. With no league in 5 Div the Regiment competed in the 2 Div South League which gave additional problems particularly in terms of distance to some of the venues with a 5-hour round trip being the norm. Nonetheless the quality of event compensated for the effort.

The first success of the season came in the 5 Division Championships where both the male and female teams picked up the honours. The girls team in particular acquitted themselves well with **Capt Debs Sunderland** retaining her ladies title and **Sig Claire Allsop** winning the D Course. After the 5 Div Champs all indications were that perhaps, after the disappointments of the last couple of years, we may do something at the Corps. Clouds started gathering over our aspirations when on the preceding Wednesday **Capt Chris Wood** turned his ankle and was ruled out. As **Chris** was running well on the B team this was extremely disappointing. However, strength in depth and the absence of any bush wars resulted in a strong team going to Blandford and becoming Male Champions. The girls team unfortunately found that the 16 and 2 Regt teams were too strong and had to settle for a creditable third place. However, newcomers **Sigs Claire Burrows** and **Nannie Sturdy** are far better for the experience and will be back to fight another day.

Corps Orienteering Champions
Front (*L-R*): Capt Allen, Cpl Goodman, WO1 Benson, Sgt Pellett, Sgt Dixon, Sig Govinda
Rear (*L-R*): Lt Collyer, Cpl Brewin, Capt Sharkey, Lt Col Odlfield, SSgt Higgins, Capt Owen, Maj Doherty

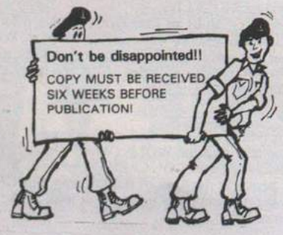
250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON THE ROYAL SIGNALS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 1997 OR 'TRAIN HARD–FIGHT EASY'

by LCpl Som Bahadur Chochangi

The R Signals Skill at Arms Meeting (RSSAAM) 1997 took place over the period 7-11 April 1997 at Ash Ranges. Unlike previous years, 30 Sig Regt entered three teams and two individual firers to compete in the championship. Each team consisted of one young officer, one Class B shot, one young soldier and the other two of any class. Although we had limited time for practice sessions, we were determined to retain the title again this year and not let our standard slip. The main reason for entering three teams was primarily to try and encourage younger shooters in the Regiment to take an interest in shooting and maintain a steady stream of expertise within the Regiment.

Our limited days of hard and rigorous training and the determination to do well paid off in the end as we managed to win all the team events and also increase the tally by winning some individual trophies. **Sgt Yam Kuniar Gurung** won the overall Rifle Championship Trophy and in the process pushed me to second place! **Sigs Lilasing Gurung** and **Dev Gurung** won the Best Class B and Best Young Soldier trophies respectively. It was a tremendous achievement especially for **Sgt Yam**; and for those who don't know, it was his second win in succession. We were particularly proud of his unique achievement as he had been the main source of inspiration to us all over the last few years and indeed for his expert coaching techniques when he took us for training whether in sunshine or rain.

It goes without saying that the reason for our success this year like the previous years, was in no small way due to the amount of support we received from the Regiment, and for that we are all very grateful. We have had a very successful shoot this year and will be going for more gold next year



The victorious 30 Sig Regt Team with 2 Signal (NC) Bde, the CO and the Gurkha Major with the trophies

Sgt Yam is carried away by his team as the Champion Rifle Shot of the competition

FAREWELL TO MAJ R. G. C. SPARSHATT FROM 250 GSS

by LCpl Surendra Gurung

Members of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn gathered together at the Ram Jham Kotha on Saturday 19 April 1997 to bid farewell to **Maj R. G. C. Sparshatt** (the outgoing OC) and his family. **Sparshatt Sahib** had been with the Squadron for almost two and a half years in his capacity as the OC and leaves for the USA on posting. The usual farewell speech from the Sqn **2IC Sahib**, **Capt C. M. Wood**, not only highlighted the success of his tour but much to the amusement of others, also included the many hilarious moments that the OC Saheb had endured whilst with the Regiment. The garlanding ceremony and a presentation of a memento by the SQGO, **Capt (QGO) Shiva Kumar Rai**, on behalf of the Squadron followed this.

Maj and Mrs Sparshatt with the farewell present along with the Squadron hierarchy

The occasion was naturally tinged with sadness at having to say goodbye to **Sparshatt Sahib** and his family and to see them leave after a long association with the QG Signals but we hope they have an equally successful tour in the States and wish them all the very best. We welcome **Maj G. R. Grant Sahib** and his family in his place as the new OC 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn and look forward to an equally successful tour with the Squadron.

EXERCISE CHITTO NISKUNU

by Sig Jalaj Thapa

The phrase 'Chitto Niskunu' in Nepali literally means to scurry out, and so it was with this theme in mind that the Squadron deployed over the period 7-11 April 1997. The Exercise was aimed at achieving two distinct purposes; to evaluate Squadron comms and administration procedures. The deployment consisted of the full Squadron SCARAB assets and included the 501 (Nectarine) det, two EUROMUX dets, two Radio Relay dets, one Radio Relay det and a CNR det. The five phases of the exercise included the initial deployment to the field, the recce and siting of the Euromux Access Nodes (EAN's) the exercise itself, the termination of the EAN connectivity and lastly, the return back to the Port of Disembarkation (POD).

We left camp in packets in the early hours of Monday 7 April 1997 and reached Nesscliff Training Camp near Shrewsbury well in time to set up dets within the predetermined locations. Apart from the communications the exercise also served to give us the opportunity to cross train on various different equipment. The Senior NCOs were also given the opportunity to sharpen their CPX skills during the 24-hour exercise that ran concurrently. The final day of the exercise consisted of the closure of all comms, a short debrief and a round of orienteering to finish off a most successful bout of Squadron training. One of the highlights of the entire exercise was the fantastic food the chefs fed us and it would not be proper not to thank them for the hard work that they put in.

EXERCISE UGLY DUCKLING

by 2Lt Jeeves

The Regiment leadership exercise is aptly named. It is designed to develop leadership skills in junior commanders and potential commanders, helping them to metamorphose from ugly ducklings into gleaming swans. Victims (I mean participants) in the exercise ranged from Sigs to Lts. As two of us had only recently come from Sandhurst we were pleased as punch to be back at Sennybridge taking part in a leadership exercise. Controlling the ugly ducklings took the formidable combination of **Maj Grant** (OC 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn) and **WO1 (YofS) Benson**, who tried their very hardest to obtain transport and accommodation. Unfortunately their efforts were in vain and we were forced to tab everywhere. Still, thanks for trying. The exercise began with written work as an ever more anxious **SSgt Dhan** (250 Sqn) began to realise that Ugly Duckling 1997 was going to be vastly different to its predecessors. His fears were confirmed as **WO2 (QMSI) Morton** pitched us headlong into an exhausting session of battle PT. An hour and a half later we were on our way to Sennybridge. Well, nearly to Sennybridge as the bus couldn't make it up the hill onto the training area.

Day one involved a lot of walking and navigation with the aim of improving the latter and destroying the former. However, to the credit of all, everyone survived with the strength of mind left to tackle the mental tasks that lay ahead, including the combat estimate. As you may know this is the process whereby one conducts a logical thought process and then comes up with a plea that bears no resemblance to it at all.

Day two began with the fearful Sennybridge assault course on which one of the obstacles was a dead sheep. Approximately 13 minutes later we were struggling for air and soaked from head to toe. The day ahead became one of mental effort with a tired mind. However, at least we had dinner to look forward to. Although having been instructed in how to cook a rabbit I found that there was still a surprisingly large number of boil-in-the-bag wrappers to clear up. When we left Sennybridge that evening we were confident that the exercise was not yet over. The final aspect of the exercise was to present a communications estimate to the CO and other senior officers of the Regt early the following morning. This effectively denied us sleep for the second night in a row. After a few gentle questions from the CO, Endex was called and a champagne breakfast followed, accompanied by some fine impressions of a nodding dog. We all learnt something from the exercise. **SSgt Dhan** learnt that exercises change from year to year, the rest of us learnt only to eat rabbit as a last resort, and I learnt that Sennybridge will haunt me for the rest of my career.

SSgt Dhan tends to an injured victim of a traffic accident with his buddy

RACE THE SUN–CO'S CHALLENGE 97

by LCpl Crouchman

The CO's Challenge forms part of the Inter Sqn Competition which runs annually in 30 Sig Regt. This year it took the form of the Race the Sun competition that was held in York on 4 May. After several weeks of training and preparation, everything finally fell into place with the arrival of the Squadron at Strensall Camp, York, ready to take part in the Race the Sun competition. The admin team ably led by **Sgts Ranta** and **Buddhi** met us and then briefed us as to where and at what time people had to be the following day. The competition itself started at 0500 hrs the next day for those who were taking part in the first of the 16 events taking place that day. A lot of effort was put into the competition by all members of the Squadron with a few people putting in some very respectable times. Those who deserve a mention are **Sig Manbahádur Thapa** on the river run who managed to put in the quickest time in the Regiment and **SSgt Dhanbahadur Gurung** who on the 10km final run was the first person from the Regiment to cross the finish line.

Part of the CO's Challenge was also to raise money for charity, a task which was taken on by **2Lt Jeeves**, **Cpl Anirit**, **Sigs Anil** and **Jayaprakash** who spent the day in Harrogate town centre dressed in their No 2 Dress collecting money for children's charities in the York area. The amount raised was far more than what was expected and this sum, added to what had already been raised within the Squadron came to a total of just over £1,200.

The presentation of the results followed with 3 Div HQ and Sig Regt being declared the overall winners of Race the Sun and 2 Div Sig Regt in second place followed by 258 Sig Sqn, 30 Sig Regt in a respectable third place. Later that evening was the presentation of the results for the CO's Challenge. It was quite close until the amount of charity money raised was added to the scoreboard and the times adjusted it was clear to see that 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron were the winners of the CO's Challenge 1997. The prizes were then awarded–a few well deserved beers.

GOLA PLEJESVICA DET–VISIT BY COMD 11 SIG BDE

by LCpl Tilakbahadur Rai and **Sig Rudra Kumst Limbu**

The Commander 11 Sig Bde, **Brig D. J. Wills**, paid an official visit to the Gola Peak (Radio Relay) Det, 30 Sig Regt on 29 April. The CO 30 Sig Regt, **Lt Col P. J. Oldfield**, accompanied him. Also the OC Theatre Sig Sqn, **Maj Metcalfe**, the outgoing OC Theatre Tp North, Lt Jeffries and the new OC, Lt (QGO) Santa Pun. **LCpl Tilakbahadur Rai** with **Sig Rudra Subba** as the crew commands the detachment.

The Gola Peak Det is situated on the border of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. At the moment there are three different dets who are co-located sharing the tunnel and living quarters. The dets are Radio Relay of 30 Sig Regt, the Rebro manned by 207 Sig Sqn and a Rebro manned by the Canadians. As it is the second highest peak in this country, our Radio Relay links are working very well. We have got four different short links such as the Super High Frequency 481 shot to Coralici–a Canadian base. Then there are three Radio Relay links to Lisina unmanned Radio Relay, Ljubja, the Czech base and the longest distance for a link of some 130km to Vitorog which houses the 2nd Bn REME and 32 Sup Regt UK. The visitors landed safely (even though the weather was not very good) much to their and our relief! They were surprised to see the geographical and natural condition of this place. The most amazing and interesting thing is the accommodation, radio room, kitchen and Ops room which are down 180 steps, 200ft under the mountain tunnel system. This tunnel was built during the Second World War by the Yugoslavians and used by the Serbian Army as the main Communications Operations Centre during the Bosnian war.

At first we took them to the Radio Relay Det where **LCpl Tilak** gave a det brief inside the ISO container. Then we stepped down to the radio room where we manned all four links programmed into the Euromux. We then had a quick brew and escorted the visitors around the location. The day finally came to a close with the formal handover/takeover between the new and outgoing OCs. We look forward to anyone wishing to visit us with a large re-supply.

(L-R): LCpl Tilak, Lt Santa, Maj Metcalfe (front), Lt Jeffries (rear), Brig Wills and Lt Col Oldfield

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Cond	**Maj N. P. Metcalfe**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Lockwood**

ARRIVALS

Hello to **Capt Nick Poet** taking over as 2IC Sqn. **Cpl Booth** and his wife **Rachel**, **Sigs Dev**, **Jiwan** (just promoted), **Dilip** and **McAllister**. Other new arrivals include **SSgt Thorburn** (B Tp), **Cpl Lloyd**, **LCpl Rom**, **LCpl Holden** and **Sig Taylor**.

DEPARTURES

Farewell to **SSgt Buxton** who has gone 'Gurkha', **Cpl Taylor** to 11 Sig Regt, **LCpl Cooney** to 251 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Dummett** who has gone to University, and **LCpl Kev Brown** and **Sig Tubb** to NI. **Cpl Harrison** and **LCpl McMillan** have now both served their last days in the Army. Good luck to all in the future. **Sig Hem** and **LCpl Tej** have also left the Squadron to go on long leave in Nepal.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE

As part of the annual University OTC competition, 256 Sig Sqn were tasked with providing 30 Sig Regt's stand. The team deployed to the delights of Knook Camp under the command of **Capt Alan Owen** (on loan from 258 Sig Sqn) and **Sgt Andy Winckle**. A few hasty rehearsals and an early morning set up saw the stand ready for the first teams to arrive. The teams had to clear a safe route into a minefield to rescue a stranded driver in a Land Rover. **Sig** (now LCpl) **Tej** was a willing casualty after the girls in the first team thoroughly cuddled him to make him feel better, and all this TLC more than made up for the hectic evacuation on an improvised stretcher! The challenge of making a stretcher for a 5ft tall Gurkha was slightly easier than making one for **Sig Harris** who is much longer. Meanwhile **LCpl** 'Sonic' **Harding** was on hand to offer advice on VP and PRC320s to the challenged OTC signallers. Quotes of the day included 'Don't worry if you get blown up there are another nine in the team to take your place'. Once the task was finished there was a quick opportunity for the students to chat to the troops and see the FFR and 501 dets. Overall it was a fun weekend which was a good experience for both the OTC and 30 Sigs personnel.

'If you don't tell us where the mines are we will tickle you some more Tej'

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Gary Smith**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gordon Hitchen**

This has been an extremely 'productive' period for the Squadron. Congratulations go to the following members on the birth of their children **SSgt Ian Carter** and his wife **Rachel**, **LCpl Ian Waterworth** and his wife **Bev**, **Sig** 'Daz' **Wilkes** and his wife **Gail**. Also, farewell and good luck to **Cpl Jenny Scott** who leaves the Squadron on maternity leave.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Ian Hargreaves**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kev Belam**

Welcome back to **Capt Ian Hargreaves**, recently returned from Bosnia. Coming back to the Regiment must have given you something 'extra' to look forward to!

RACE THE SUN

by LCpl Lucy Mason and **Sig Mark Palmer**

As part of the CO's Challenge we 'volunteered' to represent the Squadron on the 13th leg of Race the Sun which was a 900m lake swim followed by a 200m run. After travelling over most of Yorkshire under the expert driving and navigation skills of **LCpl** 'Beaker' **Phillips** and **Sig** 'Batman' **Bateman** we finally arrived at Great Lake, only to be told that there was a two hour delay. Being keen (well, kinky really), we had been dressed in wet suits and vaseline since 0900hrs and some parts of our bodies were starting to lack circulation. At 1400hrs we were eventually told to get into the water, or should we say 'break the ice'! It was freezing! After we had forcibly relocated certain parts of our anatomies we started to swim. What looked to the spectators like front crawl was actually us waving our arms about trying to get warm.

The swim itself seemed to go on forever through dead fish, strange floating things and bizarre plants. Occasionally when we were able to breathe we could hear shouts of support from the bank, only to receive mouthfuls of muddy water on returning our heads into the lake. We eventually emerged from the water to be confronted by the deepest mud known to man. Thinking it was all over, we were urged to carry on running down a little track that was supposedly 200m long, (felt more like a mile!) We eventually fell into the finishing box with what seemed like a mixture of hypothermia and drunkenness, to the point that we were even slurring our speech. It was over!

LCpl Lucy 'I've got gills' **Mason** came fifth overall and **Sig Mark** 'who said it was warm' **Palmer** came tenth. We were placed first and third respectively in the Regiment. We were extremely glad when it was all over and are obviously looking forward to next year's event. NOT!!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt John Collyer**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Ian Carter/SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**

Welcome to **SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**, **Cpl** 'sounds suspiciously French' **Gregoire**, **Cpl** 'Scouse' **Johnstone** and **Sigs Wood** and **Leyland**. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Nigel Mansell' **Waterworth** on his promotion.

This has been another busy period for the Troop that has seen members deploying to a total of 10 different countries. (Who said it was boring here!)

EXERCISE CYGNET GOOSE

As the UK ambles into the warm summer months, the military and civilian inhabitants of the Falkland Islands are battening down for another Antarctic Winter. A team of 20 penguin hunters from 258 Sig Sqn set out for the Falklands cleverly disguised as a strategic comms troop. After a close shave at RAF Brize Norton involving **Sig Dave Simms** and the ladies toilet, the Troop arrived at RAF Mount Pleasant in good order with vetting largely intact!

After a 30 second tour of Port Stanley in the rain, the business of communicating to nearby ships, South Georgia and the UK began. Thanks must go to JCUFI, in particular the crews of Radcon, for putting up with the invasion of 258 Sig Sqn personnel and the mysterious disappearance of numerous teabags. The activities out of hours included such delights as horse riding, penguin hunting, helicopter flights and planning to drown the boss, **Lt John Collyer**, in lager on his birthday. (Two cans of course!)

The Falkands was a fascinating place and the whole Troop gained a great deal of experience. Congratulations go to **Sig** 'Able' **Mayhead** for 'chirping' over HF all the way back to Lancashire and to **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Hobson** for actually getting his toolkit out and fixing something.

Members of 258 Sig Sqn double the population of Port Stanley

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from £2 per day
Contact SSgt Steve Bungay
737 2409
01258 482409

31 Sig Regt (V)
Southfields

RHQ

CO	**Lt Col R. T. Weston**
RSM	**WOI (RSM) D. E. Hall**

MAYOR MAKING DINNER 1997

This year's Mayor Making Dinner took place at Southfields TAC on Thursday 22 May 97. The Field Officers of the Regiment hosted invited guests that included the Mayors and Deputy Lieutenants of the four boroughs containing Squadrons of the Regiment. Other welcome guests were the Secretary of GL TAVRA and the Master of the Innholders, our affiliated Livery Company. Credit for a successful evening must be given to the 21C, **Maj Bob Davis TD** who was ably supported by numerous assistants especially **Capt Chris Mahony** and **WO2** 'Radar' **Keefe**. The ever-willing assistance of the PSI's from RHQ that helped move everything to and from Southfields was particularly appreciated. The evening was all the more notable for the fact that the RMO, **Maj Chris Kelsey RAMC**, managed to beat others on arrival perhaps it had something to do with the fact that he had been told that the function was scheduled for one hour earlier than everybody else!

The CO and OC 83 together with the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Sir Michael Craig-Cooper (DL of the Royal Borough).

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Jackson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) J. J. McMahon**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP COMPETITION 97

The annual gathering of the Regiment for the CO's Cup this year took place at Stoney Castle near ATR Pirbright. The event was headed up by HQ Sqn in the form of the OC, **Maj Mike Jackson** assisted by **WO2 (SSM)** (RJFM/Ex PSI) **Jim McMahon** and the current PSI **SSgt Craig Bruce**. The teams arrived on the Friday evening to find that the location had been superbly set up by the ever-eager QM's Dept (all three of them) with a little assistance from a handful of PSIs. The team captains were briefed and the Troops arranged their sleeping/admin areas in preparation for the demanding day ahead.

Early in the morning a kit check was followed by the troops deploying out onto the training area to put their expert skills to the test on the various stands. These included advanced driving skills with **SSgt Roy Smith**, fieldcraft with **SSgt Craig Bruce**, NBC and First Aid with **SSgt Nick** 'Disco dancer' **Wood**, Comms with **SSgt** 'Willie' 'Best RTG in Wales' **Loch**, an introduction to shotguns by **Maj Mike Jackson**, an introduction to pistol shooting with **Sgt** 'Cod' **Travis**, vehicle recovery with **SSgt** 'Art Veh' **Pete Jones**, and command tasks with **Maj Steve Baker** (41 Sqn).

SSgt Craig Bruce in charge of the Fieldcraft stand at the CO's Cup.

The stands were a huge success, being enjoyed by all the teams, with **SSgt** 'Tiffy Spice' **Jones** and his gang being voted the best stand of the day (the other PSI's being adamant that it was only because they had the fancy vehicles). After a lot of hard work and tabbing in the hot sun, the teams finished the day by competing in **Sgt Neil** 'I fancy the PTI' **Fisher**'s orienteering competition. The second day commenced with a forced march down one of the many ranges in the Pirbright area and culminated in a falling plate competition co-ordinated by the Sqn Comb, **SSgt Bruce** and **Sgt Richard Travis**. Spectators for the day included **Maj Gen (Retd) I.O.J. Sprackling OBE** our current Honorary Colonel who was also kind enough to start the final stage of the shoot and present prizes at the post competition ceremony. Winners during the competition were:

Overall competition:	41 Sig Sqn
Falling plate competition:	83 Sig Sqn
Orienteering competition:	41 Sig Sqn

The Winning Section at the CO's Cup
Back Row (*L-R*): LCpl North, 2Lt Whitworth,SSgt McAuliffe, Sig Starbrook
Front Row (*L-R*): Sig Hunter, Sig Hensen, LCpl Davis and Sig O'Driscoll

The Permanent Staff orienteering team wish it to be noted that they performed much better than their counterparts in the Regt v TA shooting competition. There again perhaps it would help the shooters if **SSgt Nick Wood** actually loaded rounds into his magazine before next year's challenge.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj S. Baker**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paine**

EXERCISE PYRENEES CHALLENGE

On 26 April 97 members of 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn plus a few thrown in from 56 and 83 Sig Sqns departed from Portsmouth for an adventure of a lifetime. The intrepid party moved from Coulsdon TAC to Portsmouth where they joined the *Pride of Bilbao* for a 30hr sea crossing to Spain. The sea crossing went pretty smoothly until the second day when the party was hit by seasickness (TA we may be, Royal Navy definitely not). There is no truth in the rumour that this was caused by the ship's bar being open until 2am (apparently).

We eventually docked at Bilbao at 0730hrs on Monday and gradually faces turned from a pale shade of green to a whiter shade of pale. Approximately 4hrs later the party hit base camp, and began to squelch around in the mist and rain in order to set it up. A local hostelry was the perfect place to find a medicinal drink and meal. Tuesday morning dawned and with trepidation we looked towards the heavens, the mist hung low and the rain drizzled, but we began our ascent ever onward and ever upward to meet the rain halfway. The party split into two teams with the first team comprising the old (and bold) led by **Maj Bob Davis TD** and the second team consisting of the mountain goats led by **Sgt Neil Fisher**. As the sun and blistering heat developed, an extremely arduous climb was undertaken. The bergen's were heavy when we set off, but the combination of heat and sweat ensured that the intake of fluids reduced the weight rather quickly. With lighter loads we were able to lift our heads and take in the breathtaking scenery around us. As usual the descent proved to be far more rapid, with knees cracking and hot spots getting hotter.

Wednesday and Thursday consisted of a two-day trek with a night spent on the mountain. Again the weather was in our favour and to top it all **Sgt Neil Fisher**'s team of mountain goats celebrated **SSgt Potter**'s '21st' birthday (well almost) amid a splendid sunset around a campfire. The final descent was greeted with loads of relief, with hot spots getting even hotter and the shoulders becoming sore. These pains were tempered by the sense of achievement and furthermore by a quick refreshing shower and a huge barbecue.

Capt George Devine tests the strength of his walking stick. SSgt Pete Lovett stands by in case help is required

An alternative return journey saw us take a 13hr drive to Normandy with **Warren** 'Mansell' **O'Driscoll** proving that you can change gear from fifth to second whilst going at a speed of 70mph. **SSgt Pete Lovett** was not particularly impressed as he almost ended up sitting behind Warren which was a bit worrying as he was driving the 2nd minibus! Meanwhile **LCpl Ogle** decided that she would always drive on the left no matter what country she was in. Fortunately we managed to arrive in Normandy in one piece (save for the loss of weight). A moving end to the trip came on the Saturday morning when we visited the local war cemeteries that contain graves of PLK soldiers. The return sailing was a mere 5hr crossing but it looks as though **Capt Steven Ong** will never be able to get his sea legs! There were some slightly green faces when **Sgt Traynor** purchased a Spice Girls tape–it was for his daughter (honest)! Finally there must be a big thank you given to all those who toiled to make the trip possible. All those who went have many unforgettable memories.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON(V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ian Walker**

DEPARTURES

As we approach what is laughingly called a 'summer' here in Aberdeen we have to say farewell to our PSI **SSgt Ray Ramsay**. He has been posted to 14 Sig Regt to serve in a country where the local accent is almost as unintelligible. Thank you **Ray** for all the hard work you have put in for the Squadron–we did appreciate it.

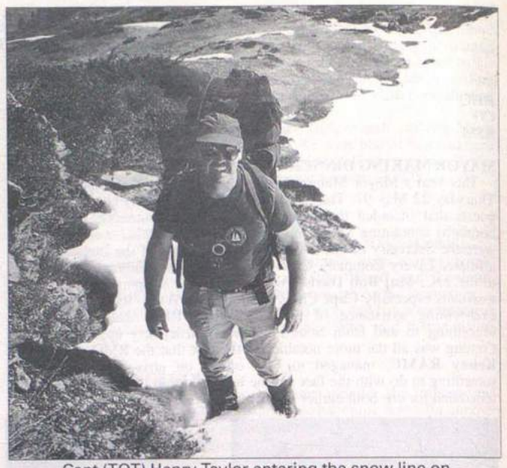
ARRIVALS

We have just said welcome to our new PSI **SSgt Tim Abbot** with his wife **Judith** and the boys–on his introduction to the Squadron. **Staff Abbot** casually mentioned his involvement with mountains–wrong thing to do up here–we have an embarrassment of the things on our doorstep. One hour after his bold statement the OC had **Staff Abbot** planning to take the Squadron up some God forsaken rock in the wilds somewhere.

The Squadron had a big recruiting drive in February and we are reaping the benefit now with some very good quality recruits entering the system.

TRAINING

Squadron training goes on apace in preparation for our big exercise in September and, on Ex Apollo Sword we had detachments in the field. As our photograph shows we have **Sig** 'Rosie' **Reid** without headress–as explained to the 2IC 'A rabbit ran off with it', so if you see a bunny in a beret, ask it to return it to this location.



Capt (TOT) Henry Taylor entering the snow line on Ex Pyrenees Challenge

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON
CONGRATULATIONS

Our warmest congratulations go to **LCpl Amanda Blackiston** on being announced as the winner of the Soldier of the Year Award. Well done to her, a very well deserved award for a JNCO who has worked very hard and been an important asset to both the Squadron and the Regiment.

32 Sig Regt (V)
Glasgow

P.S. **LCpl Dale Urwin** interrogated several suspects but they 'fell down some steps' and sustained severe injuries–most of them fatal.

SOCIAL SCENE

The social scene is still to the fore here in Aberdeen and a number of events are planned for the summer. The main function is the Summer Ball in late June–the first in our new location, so we are all looking forward to it very much.

FINALLY

A function just held was a pyjama party in the JRC and as you can see from the assorted dress the company is sporting–the PV people may wish to reconsider previous categorisation–especially RRTT **Sgt Nigel Allan** in the bunny suit (without beret).

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Andrews**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) McVey**

First thing on the agenda is to extend a warm welcome to **WO2(SSM) McVey** and bid a fond farewell to **WO2 MacKay** we hope that they both enjoy their new posts. **Cpl Boslem** took time off over the May Bank Holiday to get some extra TA time by organising a walking expedition to the Isle of Skye for four days. Typical to TA tradition the mist stopped play on the first day, so many happy hours were spent in the local–for four days! **Cpl Bowden** has done one better than **Cpl Boslem** and is jetting off to Lanzarote for seven days. However, she has no pretence about going on exercise and will also head for the pub on the first day.

Sgt Fraser is now more approachable having suffered the end of the financial year troubles with pay and bounty but through her stamina and determination everyone is now happy–almost.

Summer Training in the heart of Scotland

61 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Fiona Farquharson**
PSI	**SSgt John Leach**

EXERCISE APOLLO SWORD

A 'testing weekend' (it was official) was had for the Squadron as part of the Bde Ex Apollo Sword, with our antennae blending nicely into the landscape of the rather dangerously low pylons at Dreghorn Training Area. Hats off to **YofS Jeff Jephcote** for defying the laws of physics with the constraints of Edinburgh's power supply running in such close proximity. **LCpl Raymond Park** produced a stroke of wizardry–nothing technical, but in providing a copy of FHM magazine the troops were kept amused at the Ops Officer (**Maj Jan McLean**) fighting to the bitter end for the pin up of David Duchovny.

EXERCISE LAPSLEY'S LEAP

The Scots Yeomanry Ex Yeoman Wadi got off to a good start when the Squadron decided to close the Forth Road Bridge by tactically camouflaging the bottom of a Land Rover half way through the contraflow system. Nice one, **Sig Alan Drugan** ('Nothing to do with me'–Det Comd **LCpl Park**). Due to a lack of traffic–Ex Traffic, that is–the detachments were left to rely upon their powers of creativity, limited only by the conservative issue of the Batco sheets in supply (this is of course a political reference...). **Sig Glen Davidson** took first prize in the 'No use of Spelling Box' competition.

EXERCISE LOWLAND HIKE

Day one of Ex Lowland Hike, providing comms for the Boys' Brigade annual Adventure Training weekend, saw the walkers ground to a halt as their Marshalls were unable to locate checkpoint two. **Cpl** 'We-are-in-the-right-place-and-we-are-not-moving' **Paula McLean** finally persuaded the race organisers to move the Marshalls who had set up camp a kilometre away from where they should have been. Just for a change, **Cpl Jane Chisholm** found herself in a compromising situation when the local police took an interest in her Gucci sleeping system: she still claims that the inflatable double airbed sticking out of the back of her Rover was on a 10/33. It turned out that the boys in blue were ex-TA and had just stopped for a chat with the girls in green.

SPORTS AND SOCIAL

Congratulations to **Sigs Suzanne Malloch, Susan** 'Shoe' **Traynor, John Robertson, Pearl Sethna** and **Sgt Lyndon** 'Ree' **Box** who braved the thunder and lightning to complete the Five Mile Civvy Road Race at Silverknowes. New subby **2Lt Julie Knight** hasn't quite forgiven **Sgt Box** for beating her time and has stepped up her training accordingly.

PROMOTIONS

Lts Jackie Lockhart and **Stuart Middleton** are Captains (at last); **Scott Fair** was the only LCpl for a long while to be doubled into the OC's office minus belt and beret only to emerge as a very relieved full Corporal. Apologies for last month's welcome to **Cpl Box**–the 2IC has been suitably replaced as the *Wire* Notes Officer for not realising that three stripes means a Sergeant.

33 Sig Regt (V)
Liverpool

42 (MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Brian Kennedy TD**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Paul Williams**

VISIT OF COMD 11 (ARRC) SIG BDE BRIG D. WILLS

The highlight of this reporting period was the visit to the Squadron of the Comd 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde, **Brig D. J. Wills.** He was met and escorted throughout his visit by the Sqn Comd **Maj Brian Kennedy**. The Comd toured the TA Centre and viewed the soldiers tackling a number of command task scenarios while the recruits were put through their paces by our effervescent PTI **Sig** (soon to be LCpl) **Jackie Coker**.

Finally the Comd presented the Territorial Army Efficiency Medal to **SSgt J. McDermott** and joined all ranks in the Sgts Mess bar for the medal wetting ceremony.

SSgt McDermott receives his TA Efficiency Medal from Brig D.J. Wills

FOCUS ON SHOOTING

The Squadron is very much to the forefront when it comes to shooting and the SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams,** is the main mover and shaker behind the success of the Regiment Team. At the recent 42 NW Bde SAAM, held at Altcar Ranges, the Regiment practically swept the board winning the Champion Rifle Team series B match 2 and 6, Champion Team series B, Unit Championship series B, Match 34/SAT team combat snap and Match 31B Section in Defence. Incidentally, the SSM took first place in the Champion Shot series B Match 2 and 6, that is no small achievement. Other noteable shots from the Squadron also in the Regt Team are **Capt Bill Wyper** (Master Coach) the Sqn 2IC, **Lt Bill Dixon** 2IC Trunk Node Troop, **Sgt Paul Corrie, Sgt Ian Coburn** and **Cpl Paul Duffin**. Never one to rest on his laurels, **SSM Williams** is now gearing up for the TA SAAM at Bisley in July for which the Regiment Team has qualified. Other notable events on his shooting calendar are:

June 97 international shooting competition in Michelgrombach near Fulda in Germany, Germany Reserve Forces event.

August 97 Reserve Forces Association International Shooting

Competition held at Bisley. September 97 International competition to be held in Eide in Holland.

WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams competing in the 42 (NW) Bde SAAM May 97

EXERCISE UNITY CHALLENGE II–33 SIG REGT (V) DELIVER AID TO UKRAINE

The Team:

Maj Tom Ponton	**Maj Stan Quayle**
WO2 Bob Paterson	**WO2 Rick Gooley**
SSgt Mick Davies	**SSgt Dags Dagnall**
Sgt Ron Stowers	**Sgt Mo Aarons**
Sgt Tony Wylie	**Cpl Gary Critchley**
Cpl Dave Kerr	**LCpl Stu Green**

with:

Lord Mayor of Liverpool, **Councillor Frank Doran**
Operations Manager for Falcon Distribution, **Mr Dexter Loftus**

Ex Unity Challenge II, saw a return visit to the Ukrainian port of Odessa, delivering much needed medical aid to a children's hospital and orphanage, of which a similar exercise took place two years ago. Liverpool and Odessa became sister cities in the 1950's, but in the 70's Liverpool City Council as a protest against human rights violations severed links. After the break up of the Soviet Union, new British Embassies were established in some of the new Republics including the Ukrainian capital Kiev. Links were re-established when **SSgt Ron Russell** AGC (SPS), a native Liverpudlian who was serving in the British Embassy in Kiev at the time, was posted back to Liverpool.

This years visit took place in March. After long deliberation a team consisting of the Regt QM, **Maj Tom Ponton**, team leader, nine TA soldiers from the Regiment, two interpreters from 14 Sig Regt, a civilian driver and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, **Councillor Frank Doran** made the long arduous trip across Europe to Odessa. Each member was tasked to seek £100 sponsorship towards the costs of fuel for the journey. This was amazingly achieved in a very short time, with some of the members exceeding well over £300, including, several items of medical aid and medicines provided by local businesses. During this time knowing money was tight, the QM was saving the Ukrainian Embassy postage on the visa applications by travelling to London and collecting them in person.

Transport for the journey was arranged with the assistance of **Maj Fidler**, OC 80 Sqn (Runcom). His contacts at Fords and Falcon Distribution Group, provided us with 2 x Ford Galaxys and a 40ft arctic which came with it's very own civilian driver, honorary Signalman now honorary **A/LCpl Dexter Loftus** which included the use of Falcons very own ferry service from Felixstowe to Boulogne. The fourth vehicle was generously donated by the Merseyside Regional Ambulance Service, a gift to the people of Odessa. Before the team departed a photo session was called with the local press and regional news broadcasters who insisted on taking dozens of photos of which only two made the media coverage. After three or four retakes **LCpl Stu Green**, 42 Sqn (Manchester) finally briefed us on the route which would take us through France, Belgium, Germany, Poland and into the Ukraine to Odessa.

In the early hours of Friday 14 March 97, our journey began, picking up **Dex** and his artic on route, transferring **WO2 (SSM) Bob Paterson**, HQ Sqn over to co-drive with him. The SSM was heard to say, 'Don't worry trust me I'm a policeman!' a likely story, our journey was well under way. On arrival at Folkestone we were met by a reception committee, the Chairman of Falcon Distribution, and the Mayoress of Folkestone who gave us an excellent send off at the port. We arrived in Boulogne a little after 4pm, and set off across France and Belgium arriving in Herford at 0100hrs on the Sunday. This was our last opportunity to have a good night's sleep, a hot shower and decent food. We set off around mid morning and made good time considering being slowed down by the road works on the former Berlin Corridor, eventually arriving at the German/Polish border.

Up until this point things were going well. The Polish authorities insisted that all paperwork be translated checked and double-checked and re-checked again. Not forgetting to open the trailer several times by a similar amount of customs officers before they decided to seal the trailer with all our food and personal kit inside. However, not before a bit of tactful thinking from our very own customs officer, **Maj Stan Quayle**, 2IC of the Regiment, who managed to leave enough slack cable in order to get in and out of the trailer. After making a nominal payment the first of many we were allowed to proceed into Poland and after some light refreshment we bedded down for the night. **WO2 Rick Gooley**, our master chef ensured that everyone started the day right with a good old boil in the bag, and so our journey across Poland began but not without event. Firstly we had a few scary moments negotiating a series of very low bridges, which slowed us down considerably. By mid-afternoon things appeared to brighten up as we traveled through Krakow taking in the fantastic scenery, but the weather began to fade rapidly and within a couple of hours we found ourselves in a snow storm and the road conditions became treacherous. We finally reached the Polish/Ukrainian border and stopped overnight ready for the long drive through the Ukraine. Once again our master chef burst into action and conjured up a meal that had us bursting at the seams. This was just as well, because as the two cars and the ambulance passed through customs with both our interpreters, the arctic with **Dex** and the Sergeant Major were held for over 12 hours. After a series of official stamps and payments we were allowed through the border, where we were met by **Yuri** who was to become a good friend to the team over the next four days. Precious time was lost at the border that set us the task of covering as many miles as possible before dark. With the aid of our armed guard we began to make good time again, only to be hampered by another snow blizzard, icy roads and not forgetting the so called bandits who apparently placed a dead body on the road in an attempt to stop us.

We finally arrived in Odessa on the morning of the 18th and were met by members of the Odessa council who were to accompany us through the next four days. No time was wasted from the moment we parked up we were off on our tour, starting with a visit to a new hospital for children with special needs. This was followed by lunch and then we returned to unload the arctic with the help of some local students. The next few days were taken up on guided tours of the city, visits to the maritime museum, art gallery, the famous opera house and the champagne factory. This was followed by a visit to one of the five orphanages on the outskirts of town and that's when we saw the real reason for our journey.

The orphanage holds some 350 children of which 300 have behavioural problems. We went from class to class to see them at work and at play. Then we were taken to the main hall where we were greeted by the whole school waving Ukrainian and British flags. Afterwards the children, with traditional singing and dancing, entertained us. We all agreed, by the time we left the orphanage, that we would like to adopt it on behalf of the Regt. It was also decided on route back to the hotel that the boxes of medicines which were donated by the community where the Sergeant Major works as a local bobby, should be given directly to the orphanage, so a detour was made to pick them up and take them back surprising them with a second visit. The Director of the School was overwhelmed with the various medicines and stated that a simple box of aspirin cost a month's wages. The last day saw the hand over of the ambulance to the Deputy Mayor of Odessa on behalf of the people of Odessa, by the Lord Mayor **Councillor Frank Doran** and **Maj Ponton**, and a dinner night was held with many speeches from both parties. At the end of the evening it was time to say our farewells to the people who became our friends and showed their kindness and generosity throughout our stay and the team would be going home with fond memories of Odessa. Some of which could not be repeated nor believed.

Next morning we had an early start, our armed escort met us and the long drive home had begun. The weather was a bit kinder this time, but on arrival at the border the guards were not. The cars again passed through without any trouble, but **Dex** and the SSM who were old sweats at being held up were delayed for 6 hours. Fortunately they had got wise to the situation and took along **SSgt Dagnall** leaving **SSgt Mick Davies** to interpret for the others and without them who knows what problems we may have encountered. **Dags** managed to get us through the border, however, it appeared to be customary to make donations in the way of a fine for carrying nothing. As the others made their way to the Polish/German border the lads in the arctic were busy again parting with their money to the Polish police along the route, only to be fined again at the Polish/German border and to top that, a German customs officer was heard to say in perfect English 'You are now entering Germany the home of the European Champions have a nice day'. We then made our way across Germany finally meeting up with the rest of the team at St.Tonis in Krefeld some 10 hours late but safe nevertheless. The rest of the journey was completed together and we all arrived back in Liverpool safely having covered a mere 5000Kms round trip and very tired, but work did not stop there. The lads then set about preparing the vehicles for handing back to their respective companies.

All the lads had worked incredibly hard in the past 12 days, with job satisfaction knowing that the medical aid taken to Odessa will be saving many hundreds of children. These lads can be proud of their achievement as not only ambassadors for the Regiment, but for their country.

34 Sig Regt (V)
Middlesbrough

49 (WR) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj Alan Grindrod**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) John Buckler**

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE

Three members of the Squadron were rewarded for their excellent service recently when they were presented with the prestigious Lord Lieutenant's Certificate. The presentations were in recognition of the hard work of **WO2 Allan James, SSgt Mick Pollard** and **Sgt Dawn Malloy.** In total these three people have put in over 50 years service with the TA. Well done, the certificates are thoroughly well deserved.

(*L-R*): Maj Alan Grindrod, Sgt Dawn Malloy, SSgt Mick Pollard and Lt Col Paddy Crowley

PROMOTIONS & CONGRATULATIONS

The Squadron is pleased to announce promotions for the following people **Sgt Stuart Key, Cpl Debbie Openshaw** and **Cpl Kerry Webb.** Our warm congratulations go to **LCpl Ian** 'Clint' **Eastwood** and **Sara** who recently tied the knot and added to the short list of married personnel in the Squadron. A good night was had by all at the function afterwards, especially as people from the Squadron rarely get to go to a party. Talking of parties, the Squadron celebrated **Sgt Judy Adcock's** 30th birthday and her 5th wedding anniversary to **Steve** at a very small party which included only a few hundred family and friends, but I do think the 56-seater coach load from Nottingham was going a little over the top. Some people will do anything for a party.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

We welcome two new SPSIs and their wives–**SSgt Baz Raine** and **Claire,** and **SSgt Nick Ginty** and **Tracey.** We hope you will be very happy in 49 Sig Sqn and we look forward to teaching you some of our TA ways.

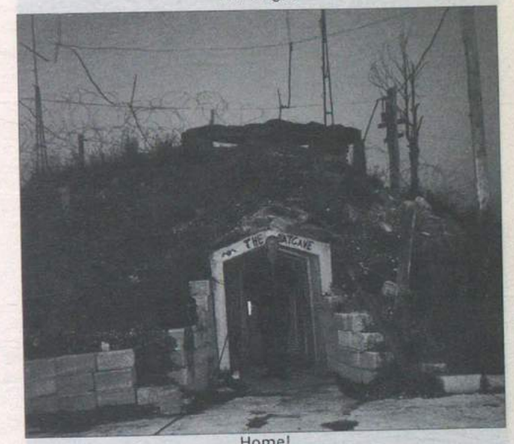
Sadly we are saying farewell to **Cpl Al Barker** and **Sam** as **Al** has decided to try his hand at being a 'civvy'. However this is not the end of the **Barker** dynasty because **Al**'s younger brother **Anthony Barker** has recently joined us. We managed to squeeze a farewell party into our hardworking schedule.

BOSNIA UPDATE

Having had three people serve in Bosnia from 49, we have recently had an update of their performance out there, in particular Special Agent **Dick Barton.** Secret photographs smuggled out of the country show exactly what our intrepid agent has been up to. As you can tell from the before and after shots, 'Dead-eye Dick' has conquered the skills of ambushing ambulances and then in his spare time he lives in the 'Bat cave'!

Cpl Barton sights onto the target

The Target



Home!

On a more serious note we wish **Cpl Kerry Webb** happy days as she starts her tour in Bosnia.

50 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

There's been mixed news on the Permanent Staff front. We have wished farewell to **FofS** 'Tez' **Brown** and his family who have moved to 30 Sig Regt. Since they are a recent signing to 11 Sig Bde there's a good chance that our paths will cross again which would be fine with us. **Cpl John Morley** has left to join 7 Sig Regt. Both will be greatly missed. **Sig** 'Dutch' **Holland** has now left the Regulars to join Comcast in Middlesbrough but, whisper it softly, there are strong rumours that he plans to don uniform from time to time in order to do a little freelance consultancy work for us. We'll keep you informed. To partially redress the balance we have recently welcomed **FofS Frank Potts** from 3 Div Sig Regt. The sooner Glasgow blesses his workshops with some new Techs the happier we'll all be.

FofS Brown (right) wishes FofS Potts well with the challenges ahead

On the Volunteer front, **Lt Steve Coates** has joined the Squadron as 2IC of Trunk Node Tp and is rapidly discovering the differences between Ptarmigan and the kit he used with the RAF's Tactical Communications Wing. Learning curves don't come much steeper than that. **Cpl Steve Brack** finally found his passport so has been able to return from Bosnia having spent a full year with IFOR. Continuing the Bosnia-style theme of recent exercises we joined the rest of the Regiment at Catterick's FIBUA complex over the 4-6 April to practice our urban fighting skills on Ex Lyke Wake 1. We stormed buildings, clambered down tunnels, yomped for miles and lobbed Molotov cocktails at a conveniently stationary target. **LCpl Tony Hotchen** escaped serious burns when the range officer stopped him just in time from trying to drink his device instead of throwing it: that's students for you, mention cocktails and instinct takes over.

The tired but relieved survivors
(*L-R*): LCpl Mel Nelson, Cpl Alison Lewis, Sig Ashley Williams, Sig Lee Mallinson, Cpl Karen Jemmett, Sig 'Iggy' Patterson and the aforesaid LCpl Tony Hotchen.

Most of our Nijmegen Squad managed to complete the RAF Benson qualifying march in April. 13 of us earned the right to suffer in July, and there was absolutely no extra charge for the blisters and sun-tans. **Sig Karl Harding** and **Tpr Alec Braithwaite** (late of the Squadron but he just can't keep away) completed the Wendell Marches at Northampton in May.

The RAF Benson Survivors
L-R (Front): LCpl Mel Nelson, LCpl 'Cmon!!' Baker, Sig 'Daggers' Davies, LCpl Neil Walker, Cpl Alison Lewis. (Middle): Sig Craig Horsley, Cpl Mick Jemmett, Sig Ian Patterson. (Back): Sig Sean Byrne, Sig Ashley Williams, Maj Mike Holman, LCpl Tony Hotchen (him again) and WO2 Steve Tinkler

NIJMEGAN–HERE WE COME

Yes, you must have heard about the Nijmegen March . . . not quite a Sunday outing as some might think. 'Nijmegen', Where is it held, what significance is it to me? The march is located in Holland. 'A bridge too Far', springs to mind or perhaps operation 'Market Garden'. Either way I refer of course to the Airborne operation to seize the bridges at Nijmegen and Arnhem in September 1944. This was a costly operation with the allies losing some17,000 men. Of the 10,000 who parachuted into Arnhem only 2,000 returned home.

The Dutch nation has never forgotten the sacrifice made by Allied Soldiers. Even today some 53 years later, British soldiers are made very welcome. Not long after the Second World War the Dutch nation began to host an international marching event in Nijmegen with the aim to bring people of all nationalities of the world together in a spirit of peace and understanding. The event spans five days, four of which consists of marching over a distance of 100 miles carrying a minimum of 251bs. The event requires good feet, grit and determination. The recent team trials at RAF Benson, held on 12/13 April saw teams from every branch of the services competing. Two teams were entered by 34th (N) Sig Regt (V) one from 50 Sig Sqn and one from 90 Sig Sqn. Both successfully completed the selection test of 50 miles in good style and look forward to competing in this year's 'Nijmegen'.

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON
IT'S GOOD TO TALK

Members of 34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V), a TA unit based at Brambles Farm, Middlesbrough regularly arranges military displays in the local area. Recently it orchestrated a demonstration at the Training Advice and Development Centre in North Ormesby. Some of the Regiment's comms equipment was on show along with an array of respirators (gas masks), webbing and cooking equipment. The demonstration was very popular with local children, who particularly enjoyed wearing the military respirators and helmets, much to the amusement of the team. **Lt Simon Smith**, shown here demonstrating part of the telephone system display explained 'We use respirators for training with CS gas and after prolonged wear they become very uncomfortable, clearly the children find it more of a novelty than our soldiers'!

The demonstration is part on an ongoing recruiting effort from the Regiment who are located on the Trunk Road at Brambles Farm. The unit is manned by local volunteers who are always pleased to welcome new recruits. The Regiment offer a wide range of training facilities from cooking or driving to typing as well as technical training, This together with conventional military skills are all available free of charge to any potential recruits. Anyone requiring any further information on joining the Regiment can ring 0174 8-87403 6

TA SEES SERVICE IN BOSNIA

2Lt Bill Holbrook, a member of 34th (N) Sig Regt (V) was accepted for a short service voluntary commission and service in Bosnia. He was selected to serve with 200 Sig Sqn who were undertaking their second six-month tour of Bosnia inside 18 months. The Squadron have been out setting-up Tactical Headquarters at several locations close to Banja Luka ready to receive key staff officers. He is currently due to return to Germany before being granted some well deserved leave in UK.

LEAVING THE ARMY OR ALREADY IN THE TA?

Looking for a new cha[illegible]e ...

R (Shropshire Yeomanry) Signal Troop (V)

[illegible] the regular Squad[illegible]

264 (SAS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

PHONE (747) 2381

XXXV

35 Sig Regt (V)
Sutton Coldfield

NONE BUT THE BRAVE

On route to Germany back in November 1995 the last thing **SSgt Phil Weaver** and **Cpl Richard Jones** of 95 Sig Sqn expected was to be confronted with a life and death situation. As they travelled along the A14 near Tywell Northamptonshire, their Landrover was struck from behind by a seven-ton goods vehicle. Chaos ensued as their vehicle was violently pushed into the vehicle in front and then burst into flames. **SSgt Weaver** and **Cpl Jones**, miraculously unscathed, escaped from the vehicle but **Sig Jamie Walker**, in the rear was engulfed in flames! Disregarding their own safety they reached into the now fiercely burning vehicle and dragged **Sig Walker** clear sustaining burns in doing so. It later emerged in hospital that **Sig Walker** sustained quite serious injuries and was found to have multiple fractures of both arms and legs and severe burns to his upper face. It became abundantly clear that their prompt and extremely brave action saved **Sig Walker's** life who was in no position to help himself. Their fearless and courageous conduct was formally and finally recognised at a special ceremony conducted at Sundorne House Shrewsbury on Tuesday 3 June. Here they were presented with Certificates of Distinguished Conduct from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire by **Richard Elliott**, Deputy Chief Fire Officer of the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

SSgt Phil Weaver, Cpl Richard Jones with PC Brown and Richard Elliott

They were also presented with GOC's Commendations by **Maj Gen Robin Shearby**, General officer Commanding 5th Division who paid special tribute to their bravery and professionalism. This tribute was also echoed by the Police Officer who took control of the incident PC 89 Brown who travelled especially from Northampton to be present at the ceremony.

SWAGATAM

In May the Regiment was delighted to greet the first ever Queens Gurkha Signals soldiers to serve with any TA unit. This rather unique occasion was marked by a special ceremony at Cateswell House on Friday 9 May. The CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston** officially welcomed five Gurkha Technicians who were piped in by **Pipe Major Mangalsing Tamang** courtesy of 30 Sig Regt. Following the ceremony they quickly joined their allotted Squadrons and are now actively engaged in ensuring the Regt's technical equipment is maintained at the highest operational standard. **Sgts Lal Bahadur Gaha** and **Sanukaji Pant** join 89 Sqn based in Rugby. They recently prepared a genuine Gurkha Curry at a surprise pre-camp function much to the delight of all members of the Squadron. The remainder of the group, **Sgt Surendra Kumar, Cpl Bal Bahadur Pun** and **Cpl Shree Bahadur Gurung** join 48 Sqn based in Birmingham. Other Permanent Staff changes have also taken place recently and we have welcomed **WO2 Steve Davison**, AGC our new Chief Clerk who joins us from the Int Centre and also to **SSgt (FofS) Al Holyoake** and family who joins 58 Sqn newly graduated from his FofS Course. We wish all our new arrivals a happy and rewarding tour of duty.

The Gurkhas arrive

FAREWELL TO ALMS

The Regiment has bade a sad farewell to **WO1 (RSM) Phil Clifford** who, in addition to his many other duties, made quite a name for himself as the Regiment's front man for the Birmingham Children's Hospital Appeal.

Giddy-Up WO1 Phil Clifford prepares to ride into the sunset

Phil leaves the Regiment on commissioning and joins 7 Sig Regt as their families officer. Like all RSM's he had a timeless charm and tireless energy and will be sadly missed by all ranks and indeed the local population in Sutton and Birmingham. **Phil** handed over to his replacement, **WO1 (RSM) Paul Horton** who beamed in from 30 Sig Regt, on Thursday 22nd May. Following the hand-over a special departure ceremony was mounted by **WO2 (RQMS) Clive Sear**. He was aware of **Phil's** fondness for horses and after a quick gallop poll amongst the Permanent Staff the form of departure was agreed. **Mr Clifford's** nightmare unfolded as he was escorted from RHQ only to be confronted by a panto horse–as they say the photo finish tells the story! The fun however wasn't over and continued after he was dined out by the Sergeants' Mess on Saturday 31 May. The now **Lt Clifford** after leaving his farewell function was promptly arrested by the MOD Police, placed in hi-ho silver handcuffs and escorted to the Officers' Mess. Here he was welcomed by the CO and fortunately stood a round before he was released. He was last seen riding off into the sunset! We wish him and his family all the very best for the future and warmly welcome his replacement.

FUND RACING

The Regiment's efforts to raise cash for the Birmingham Children's Hospital Appeal continued unabated during May and June. First off the starting block was our sponsored team entered into a number of events in Race The Sun–an intensive and exhaustive sixteen leg competition organised by 2 Sig Regt and held in North Yorkshire. Our contribution to this event, as part of the 11 Bde team, was well organised by **Sgt Den Nicol.** He was ably supported by **Lt Anna Cliff, SSgt Dave Arnot**, **Sgts Phil Joyce, Dean Nichols, Steve Pickering** and **Rob Thomas, Cpl Taff Yelland**, who performed magnificently during the final legs, and finally **Sig** 'Screw' **Driver.** A substantial sum of money was raised by the Bde team. Some of which will go directly to the BCH Appeal. A joint HQ Sqn and LAD team was next off the block as they entered the Sutton Coldfield Fun Run on Sunday 1 June 97. The team put up a spirited performance and have collected over £500 in sponsorship donations.

The joint team from HQ Sqn and the LAD

Teams from the Regiment relaxing at Cannock Chase after the event

30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

This year the Regiment celebrates its 30th Anniversary and many events have been organised throughout the year to mark this occasion. The celebrations were started with a bang on Saturday 10 May at a Beating Retreat Ceremony at Packington Hall. Before the ceremony Regt guests, who included **Lord** and **Lady Guernsey**, **The Earl of Aylesford**, **Councillor David Roy** the Deputy Lord Mayor of Birmingham and **Maj Gen R. Searby**, GOC 5 Div, were treated to a thrilling display by the White Helmets Motor Cycle Display team. The Corps Band played at the ceremony and they were explosively supported during the 1812 overture by 16 Bty (Sandham's Coy) RA from 26 Fd Regt RA who travelled from Gutersloh to participate. Many other members of the Regt also attended this hugely enjoyable event. Looking ahead other celebratory functions have been planned by each Squadron and these should culminate with the Freedom Parade in September.

ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

April and May saw the Regiment add many more triumphs to its orienteering roll of honour. In April teams from the Regiment mounted a valiant assault on the 5 Div Orienteering Championships, which took place at Cannock Chase on Sunday 20 April, achieving mixed results. Despite a brave effort the Regiment permanent staff team, because of an individual error, was unfortunately disqualified. However, as expected 89 Sig Sqn put on a tremendous performance and achieved TA runners up position with **SSgt Dave Arnot** becoming 5 Div TA Champion. The orienteering assault continued with the Corps Championships that took place at Blandford over the weekend 10/11 May. The Permanent Staff team achieved a very creditable sixth position in the minor units category and the 89 Sig Sqn female team achieved ninth overall position out of 13. The honours once again are reserved for the 89 Sig Sqn male team who for the third time in a row carried off the TA Trophy. To all team members very well done!

The Corps TA Champions

37 Sig Regt (V)
Redditch

CO **Lt Col Alan Whittle**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Paul Edwards**

ORIENTEERING SUCCESS

67 (QOWWY) Sig Sqn's female orienteering team, led by **SSgt** 'Fred' **Hughes**, were delighted to follow last year's success in the Royal Signals championships by this year winning the 5 Div competition at Cannock. Meanwhile, 67 Sqn's male orienteering team achieved second place in this year's Royal Signals TA competition. **SSgt (FofS) Mick Cowie** from RHQ made it a weekend to remember by becoming the Corps Orienteering Champion for 1997 in the event, held in the New Forest. He has now been posted to 1 (LTK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, Germany. Our best wishes go with him and we welcome **SSgt (FofS) Andy Burns** from 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt and family in his stead.

ANNUAL CAMP 1997

Regular readers will know that **WO2 (YofS) Steve Townsend** rewrote the plan for Week 2, the Regiment phase, in the lull between Training Majors. **Maj Stewart McConnell** confirmed the plan and the main parties set off on the last day of May. 96 Sig Sqn (V) deployed for the fortnight on Ex Marble Tor in Gibraltar and *The Wire* deadline precludes detailed notes of their activities in this issue. We understand, however, that they are enjoying the change of air and Mediterranean sunshine. 10-15 personnel from each of the other Squadrons have joined them so the experience is shared around the Regiment. Tales of their activities should follow next time but in the meantime an account of a recent 96 Sqn range weekend follows the annual camp news.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON (V)
REDDITCH

Sqn Comd **Maj Les Porter**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian**

HQ Sqn took over for Week 1 the whole Regiment's base for Week 2, at Kimnel Park near Rhyl in North Wales. After settling-in, recces, military skills training and basic tests, they deployed on a two-day adventure-

SSgt (FofS) Mick Cowie displays his haul of trophies

training programme, camping overnight in Snowdonia. Planned by the OC, the instructors were:-

Canoeing	**Cpl John McCarthy**
Top Roping and Abseiling	**Cpl Steve Bowman**
Trekking	**Capt Dave Cooper**
Mountain Biking	**SSgt Pete Dawson**
	WO1 (MTWO) Jim Smiley

Most enjoyed the activities and one or two incidents caused a bit of mirth. **Sgt Dennis** 'Hotpoint' **Wood** was always on the spin-cycle in his canoe, **WO2 Eddie** 'Pocahontas' **O'Connor** paddled off on his own and **SSgt Paul Skelton** attempted submarining. After a night in Kinmel Park it was off to Sealand Ranges near Chester. **SSgt Paul Skelton** devised new drill movements for the formation marching team to add variety to all the walking. Shooting was good but some injuries happened in a game or two of softball. And so back to Kinmel Park for a novelty assault course competition and potted sports, run by **Cpls John McCarthy** and 'Bel' **Bellamy**, with the rules made up as they went along. The ranges had been run by the SSM and **WO2 Barry Weaver** and both ended up at a table for two at an excellent smoker at the end of the week.

A novelty assault course team.
What is Cpl Bellamy pointing at?

53 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
CARDIFF

Sqn Comd **Maj John Duggan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Carl Walker**

Firstly the Squadron welcomed back (for the first week of camp) **Lt Fiona Middleton** after starting her family. Secondly **WO2 Tony Giles** found himself in the Officers' Mess a little earlier than he was expecting, on commissioning as a Captain. Congratulations go to both **Fiona** and **Tony**. 53 Sqn spent the first week based at Cwrt-y-Gollen, near Crickhowell, but soon got away for a vehicle mounted radio exercise. Back in Cwrt-y-Gollen to prepare for foot patrols, the Squadron was visited by Comd 160 (Wales) Bde, **Brig D. J. Ross** CBE.

Brig Ross, Maj Duggan and Lt Middleton share a lighter moment

Four evening recce patrols were then mounted at Sennybridge, followed by two dawn attacks after a cool night out. Image intensifying equipment enhanced the recce patrols' capabilities. Fortunately the rain held off and after a full day on the ranges everyone was tired on return to Crickhowell. Thursday saw the start of the move to Kinmel Park with another vehicle-borne exercise, ending for the first night near Capel Curig. And so into Kinmel Park in good heart.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Sqn Comd **Maj Roy Naylor**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) John Downie**

67 Sqn were based for the first week of Camp at Tidworth on Salisbury Plain. **Sgt Ian Sewell** collected US National Guard visitor **SSG Kevin Conti** from Heathrow, while most of the seniors and officers moved down directly to Tidworth. **Capt Malcolm Cooper** and **SSgt** 'Monty' **Walker** brought the rest of the Squadron down to Tidworth on Sunday and all enjoyed fitness training in the gym. On Monday the Royal School of Signals kindly hosted a visit in the morning and the new Corps Museum provided a fascinating insight into our history in the afternoon. On Tuesday, back at Tidworth, HF voice communications were established with 96 Sqn in Gibraltar while the other available personnel enjoyed driving FV 432s with 16 Armd Field Ambulance. On Wednesday 1 RHA came up trumps by letting the Sqn onto their gun line. This was a new experience for all but the OC, whose Gunner past came vividly back to him. Thursday saw the Squadron visit the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton and there was simply too much to see in the time available before the RN's Sea Kings provided a taste of flying for the Squadron. The road-move up to Kinmel Park took most of Friday.

Sgt Ian Sewell and SSgt Kevin Conti
stand by the Warwickshire Bear and Ragged Staff

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
BLACKBURN

Sqn Comd **Maj Ross Parsell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Walshe**

93 Sqn's Annual Camp began with the moves from Blackburn and Manchester TA Centres to Capel Curig Camp in Snowdonia that was their home for the first week. Meanwhile **Sgt Jim Holmes** had set off to Heathrow to collect visitor **Sgt Jackie Shepherd** from 28 Sig Battalion of the US National Guard.

Sgt Jackie Shepherd and Sgt Jim Holmes take a break from abseiling

93 Sqn's programme for the first week was devised by **Capt Jeff Dolan** and was based on the theme of search and rescue. On Sunday, the first full day in Capel Curig, **SSgt Dawson** from the QARANC trained the Squadron on Second Aid. The three main activities over the following days were Top Roping and Abseiling, Canoeing and an Expedition. Divided into three groups, all of the Squadron took part. The cunning plan was that the third group would become casualties and have to be evacuated by helicopter. So at 0330 on Thursday, the two groups in Capel Curig were roused to search for the group who had not returned to the pick-up point. At 0500 the two groups launched the search and rescue mission and the 'missing' group was found at 0800. Casualties were treated and several climbers were rescued from a quarry. The CASSIM kit and extra rations were delivered by the OC and **Jeff** denies all responsibility for him being left on the side of the road! RAF Valley flew off the 'casualties' in three lifts back to Capel Curig and all returned there by the end of the day. On Friday the Squadron assisted the National Park authority by laying stone on the path on the north face of Tryfan and drainage piping on the Pyg Track up Snowdon. After moving to Kinmel Park, the Squadron enjoyed a visit to the RNLI offshore lifeboat station in Rhyl.

ANNUAL CAMP–WEEK TWO

After 36 hours R&R, the second phase swung into action. Cross training and adventure training were the themes. The cross training had the more military emphasis and took place on the training area next to Kinmel Park Camp. It provided an excellent opportunity to remind each other what all parts of the Regiment do and look at additional equipment borrowed from other units. Visitors Day on the Wednesday was enjoyed by the new Mayors of Stratford and Warwick; DComd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col S. Foakes TD** and the President of Wales TAVRA, **Col George Gooderson TD**. Comd 143 (West Midland) Brigade, **Brig J. P. Weller MBE** visited on Thursday. The Officers' Mess dined out the CO, **Lt Col Stamford Cartwright TD** on Tuesday night, with Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig S. M. A. Lee** also present to wish him well. Finally, the RSM and MTWO organised the COs' hand-over parade and motorcycle escort on Friday

morning before the Regt left for home TACS. In all, it was another busy Annual Camp but one that most seemed to enjoy. We are sorry to see **Lt Col Cartwright** go but wish him and **Kate** all future success and happiness. We welcome back **Lt Col Alan Whittle** and **Pam** and hope that his time in command will be successful and enjoyable.

Lt Col Cartwright (right) congratulates Lt Col Whittle on taking command

Lt Col Cartwright is cheered out of camp at the end of an era

CO **Lt Col I. W. Griffiths**
RSM **WO1 (RMSM) M. P. Boyle**

RACE THE SUN–14 MAY 1997

The permanent staff entered a team into ' Race the Sun', a 2 Sig Regt multi-event relay in North Yorkshire. With the NRPS providing support, the team was selected from the Regiment's cadre of Regular Army personnel. There were, in fact, eleven members of the Regular Army staff fit and available for selection. All eleven were fortunate enough to be selected. It is unlikely that any other team in the competition had such high average age (35 years, with a maximum of 48 years), nor had been selected from so few. Nevertheless, the team completed the event and had a thoroughly good day in the process. Those personnel who had conveniently arranged courses encompassing the day of the event, precluding their participation, are already pencilled-in for next year - as is a TA team.

Sgt Mick King wondering how he got talked into this.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON
COVENTRY
EXERCISE RIFLE WARRIOR

On a bright and cheerful day our illustrious heroes went racing off to the ranges. Their first day was one of mixed fortunes, for some the happiness of victory, like the amazing **Lt** 'Lethal' **Lysak**, the handsome **Sig** 'Floggum' **Flynn**, and the great **Sig** 'Killer' **Kellard,** who achieved top score. Unfortunately for others the depression of defeat. But all was not lost for our wonderful heroes, good old **Cpl** 'Blindeye' **Brookes** was not going to be defeated and with a hopeful heart she and the others waited for the second day.

The second day was overcast with an evil wind in the trees and many of the Squadron had heavy hearts with the thoughts of the day's events to come. But a hero in our midst rose forth, the dashing **Capt** 'Bazooka' **Bowden** was there to save the day and coach us all towards the sometimes elusive APWT. On that now fair and joyous afternoon all passed with stupendous scores. The young **Sig** 'Could not hit a barn door' **King** passed along with **Cpl** 'Blindeye' **Brookes.**

PUBLISH IT IN *THE WIRE*

THE EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO RECEIVE INTERESTING ARTICLES

38 Sig Regt (V) Sheffield

Back Row (*L–R*): Maj David Larkam (fell run and mountain bike orienteering), WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle (biathlon, orienteering and final road race), WO1 Ben Bentley (in charge of support team), Sgt George Pendrich (canoe with run), Maj Steve May (half-marathon), LCpl Andy Wilkinson (forced march with assault course), SSgt Keith Dunk (moor run), Sgt Mick King (forced march), SSgt Martin Hoolachan (mountain bike), Lt Col Ian Griffiths (moral support)
Front Row (*L–R*): WO1 (RQMS) Bob Ingham (support team), SSgt Steve Erskine (cycle orienteering), Capt Neil Makepeace (hill run and lake swim), WO2 Dave Paterson (river run) SSgt Dave Burton (support team chef)

REGIMENTAL SKILL AT ARMS MEETING–12-13 APRIL 1997

Yet again, the Regiment's Skill at Arms meeting was a huge success. This year the event was held at Warcop, a suite of ranges in Northumberland which, as well as including an ETR Range, provides lots of opportunity for Stage 4-5 Firing. Following a zeroing range and the APWT, those firers who passed went on to a FIBUA shoot and a Section in Defence shoot. Finally, the usual falling plate competition was held. Once again, the best team was HQ Sqn, who also won the falling plate competition, and went on to defeat the CO's challenge team. (If the accounts of CO, Trg Maj, RSM and CO's driver are all to be believed, they each accounted for most of their team's plates–somebody is exaggerating!) Best Overall Shot was **Capt Neil Makepeace**, the Adjt, and Best Overall Female Shot was **Sgt Michelle Marsden**, of 64 Sqn. Best Female Young Soldier was **Sig Louise Russell**, also of 64 Sqn and Best Male Young Soldier was **LCpl Steve Furniss** again of 64 Sqn.

The CO, assisted by RSM, present prizes to HQ Sqn's winning team
(*L-R*): Capt Simon Kirkham, WO2 Andy Medley, Lt Col Ian Griffiths (back to camera), Cpl Wayne Thorp, SSgt Kev Clark (partly obscured), WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle, Capt Neil Makepeace and Sgt 'Johno' Johnson

The CO, Lt Col Ian Griffiths, presents the prize for The Best Female Soldier to Sgt Michelle Marsden

2 DIV SAAM–17-18 MAY 1997

Having originally been 2nd Reserve, the Shooting Officer was somewhat surprised to be invited to attend the 2 Div SAAM precisely one week prior to the event. Unlike the 1st Reserve unit, which felt that one-week's notice was not adequate, we jumped at the chance to attend when a team dropped out. The Shooting Team, selected at the Regiment Skill At Arms Meeting, held in mid-April, leapt into gear. Through a combination of bore sighting, firing on indoor .22 ranges and a hastily arranged range day in the week prior to the event, the Team eventually managed to turn up at the competition with zeroed weapons and an outside chance of some degree of success. The meeting was much like any other, and it would not be accurate to say that the Team fired to their potential. However, **Capt Neil Makepeace**, **OCdt Dan Milnor**, **WO2 Andy Medley**, **SSgt Kev Clarke**, **Sgt Paul Parker**, **Sgts Michelle** and **John Marsden**, **Cpl Wayne Thorp**, **Cpl Drew Hall** and **Sig Paul Hartley**, supported by **SSgt Malcolm Rooney**, achieved the success they'd been looking for. The Regiment was placed 'Best TA Major Unit (Non-Infantry)', and therefore qualified to attend the TA Skill At Arms Meeting at Bisley, to be held early July. This is a considerable achievement and all of the Team are looking forward tremendously to the experience of attending Bisley.

KIDDERMINSTER RAFT RACE–17 MAY 97

The annual Stourport-on-Severn Raft Race, in support of the charity PACT (Parents Association for Children with Tumours), was held during May near Kidderminster. HQ Squadron, always to the fore in supporting good causes, entered two teams to take on the best of the local population. The LAD, with their Big Yellow Helicopter Raft constructed by **Sgt Sean** 'Johno' **Johnson**, were confident and eager for success. Attired in skin-tight wet suits, they cut a professional though a somewhat exhibitionist image. A heated competition with the local fire brigade ensued, which included several clashes throughout the first half of the race. This culminated at the half way tea stop with the firefighters boarding our helicopter. In true Fire Brigade fashion, they proceeded to douse the LAD with gallons of water. Wet, but undeterred, the LAD baled the water out of the raft and continued with the race, eventually finishing a creditable second and taking a £100 prize.

The Big Yellow Helicopter Raft

The other HQ team did not fare so well. A not-so-well constructed raft disintegrated in the back of the '4 tonner' during the journey to the start. With much hard work and initiative, the craft was re-assembled in time for the race. Unfortunately the dynamics and stability of the craft did not make it a competitive entrant. Still, it did provide plenty of entertainment value. In particular, a useful ejector seat somersaulted **WO2 (SSM) Gary Cundy** into the river, much to everyone's amusement. As with all charity events, it is the taking part that counts. Between the two teams, a total of £400 was raised.

COAST-TO-COAST CYCLE RIDE

Cyclists: **Maj Stan Fitzgerald, Capt Jayne Hindle, Lt Maria Hawksworth, WO2 Jimmy Mees, SSgt Phil Horton, SSgt Vicki Hardy** (87 Sig Sqn), **Cpl Andy Hall, LCpl Alan Hunter, LCpl Fraser Newton, LCpl Vinnie Shay, Cpl Andrea Bilton.**
Admin: **SSgt Dave Burton, Sgt Ann Simmons, Mrs Lisa Hunter.**

On the Bank Holiday weekend of 24-28 May 1997, 13 members of 64 Sig Sqn and one from 46 Sig Sqn set off to cycle the Workington-to-Sunderland Coast-to-Coast route, a distance of some 140 miles, to raise money for the Talbot School for Children with Severe Learning Difficulties.

After the customary 'dip your bike in the sea' ritual on the Cumbria coast we left behind the industrial landscape of Workington and set out into the countryside, following the River Derwent through the market town of Cockermouth. From then on, everything else can be described as 'upwards'. Upwards past Bassenthwaite Lake, upwards again past Bassenthwaite, since a certain officer with a map took us unnecessarily down a very long, severe hill which we then had to go up again. After a lunch stop in Kewside, the afternoon ride was steady and took us through open countryside and Troutbeck where we met up with the admin staff who had tents up and kettles on. The first day's ride had been excellent, the weather very hot and everyone was in good spirits. It also turned out to be **Capt Jayne Hindle**'s birthday and she was most impressed when we produced a cake and a song.

Day two started with pain. Everyone was saddle sore and the first couple of miles saw everyone peddling in the standing position. Day two incorporated the worst terrain, with four major hills within 20 miles. The first and the steepest of these was Hartside, which is also the watershed between the Irish and North seas. Following Hartside, the route passes close to Alston before reaching Garrigill and the old lead mining towns of Nenthead and Allenhead. The highest point on the Coast-to-Coast is Blackhill, at 609 metres. This section of the route is where **WO2 Jimmy** 'Fastest to the Back' **Mees** got his name. The going was extremely tough, but the views of the landscape were spectacular and the excellent weather conditions meant we could see for miles. Everyone, that is, except for **LCpls Alan Hunter** and **Fraser Newton**. They had stopped so that **LCpl Alan Hunter** could grab a spanner in order to fiddle with some part of his bike that didn't need fiddling with. This had become an hourly ritual. On this occasion, they had become separated from the pack but, having spotted a group of cyclists in the distance, they set off in pursuit. Unfortunately, the said cyclists were riding from Sunderland to Workington. The admin vehicle eventually picked up a rather embarrassed couple of riders. They were given a lift to rejoin the remainder of the team. We continued the journey, complete again. Having ridden over Allenhead

to Rookhope, we were at the end of the rough hill terrain of the Northern Pennines and the start of the industrial lands of the Northeast.

On the final evening, we camped alongside the Castleside Inn, where the landlord made us very welcome. Before departing for the final leg, he very kindly presented **Maj Stan Fitzgerald** with a cheque for £103 that had been donated by the staff and regulars of his pub.

There was a choice of two routes for the final leg, and we selected the main road through Stanley to connect us with Sunderland and eventually the North Sea. This was the easiest section of the whole Coast-to-Coast route, being either downhill or flat. We made good time and arrived on the beach in Sunderland at 1300 hours. We dipped the bikes in the North Sea, had our photographs taken and set off for Sheffield–just in time for Drill Night. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience and in excess of £1000 was raised for our very deserving charity.

On the Beach at Sunderland

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION–15 APRIL 97

The Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, **Sir Andrew Buchanan**, visited 87 Sig Sqn on 15 April. After inspecting the Honour Guard, the Lord Lieutenant attended a briefing given by the Sqn Comd, **Maj Tom McCappin**, before going on to watch various activities. The evening culminated in a special parade at which **SSgt Peter Cooper** was presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate in recognition of the hard work and dedication he has displayed for a number of years.

The Lord Lieutenant speaks with LCpl Dawn Miller

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS–10-11 MAY 97

Four teams from the Regiment competed in the Royal Signals Orienteering Championships 10-11 May 97. As always, the weekend was successful and hugely enjoyable–as well as hugely exhausting. The HQ Sqn male team of **Maj David Larkam**, **Capt Neil Makepeace**, **2Lt Andrew Whalen**, **WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle** and **Sig Dean Oxley** was placed third in the TA Competition. The female team of **OCdt Helen Smail**, **Cpls Andrea Bilton**, **Sue Wright** and **Sig Jackie Spong** was ninth overall (since there was no TA competition). 87 Sig Sqn also entered. Their male team of **Capt Andy Smith**, **Cpl Stuart Nesbitt**, **LCpl** 'Baby' **Paton** and **Sig Andy Doran** were fourth, one place behind the HQ Sqn team. The female team of **Sgt Carol Lee**, **LCpl Heather Blair** and **Sig** 'Ibby' **Neville** were 12th overall. Particular praise goes to **Cpl Stuart Nesbitt** who was awarded a Cup as TA Corps Champion. Well done to all.

39th (Skinners) Sig Regt

CO **Lt Col H. A. R. Hancock**

This has been a hectic period for the Regiment including visits, the culmination of this year's trade training, comms exercises and mil skills training. In addition the Regiment has said goodbye to the now **Capt Pete McElwee** and **Mel** has he leaves on commissioning to command 30 CTT in Wrexham. We wish them all the best. In return we welcome **WO1 (RSM) Mick Williams** and his wife **Denise** as they arrive 'hot foot' (Ha Ha) from Kuwait.

On Saturday 10 May the Regiment was visited by the Master and Wardens of the Worshipful Company of Skinners along with our Honorary Colonel, **Lt Gen Sir John Foley.** The Regiment has been affiliated with this great livery company since 1954 and amongst other work they present prizes to the best male and female soldier from the Regiment each year. This year the Master, **Mr Andrew Crawshaw,** presented the prizes to **Cpl Andy Cunningham** and **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Paula Goddard.** The day was a great success with all the visitors seeing the huge range of training undertaken on Regiment Training Weekends.

Now the interesting bit, news from the Squadrons:

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj P. D. Wenlock**

VISIT OF COMMANDER 2ND (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIG BDE

Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE visited the Squadron on Tuesday 6 May 1997 whilst the Squadron was holding a training evening. After an initial briefing on the Squadron and Banbury by **Maj Paul Wenlock** the Commander visited training and saw a mock comms ex and visited the latest intake of new recruits going through their final preparations prior to attending the final recruit training weekend.

Brig Lee spoke at length with **Cpl Paul Milner** about his exploits during his six months tour of duty with IFOR. **Cpl Milner** thoroughly enjoyed the tour and thought it worthwhile and if his wife would let him, he would have no hesitation in doing it all over again. The Commander then met **Capt Alan** 'Bodie' **O'Coy** and **Lt Ruth Empson** in their shared troop office. **Capt O'Coy** explained the set-up!!

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

Capt Alan O'Coy 'There's no sleight of hand Brig, I just did it!!'

SIX MONTHS IN BOSNIA . . . AN EXPERIENCE?
by LCpl Carl Bowdidge, 5 Sig Sqn

Serving six months in Bosnia was the best move I ever made as far as my military career is concerned. The experience I have gained was of a level that would take me years to get from the TA–that is not a critical view of the TA but one of important value for being a TA soldier. I served in a place called Banja Luka in northern Bosnia where temperatures can reach arctic conditions and the landscape resembles something out of the film Dr Zhivago. Being posted to 20 Armd Bde, into 200 Sig Sqn, as a driver/storeman saw the beginning of a great new venture for me. A chance to learn a trade that I was interested in with lots of other experiences.

After a lengthy and boring mobilisation process at Sandhurst I was keen to get stuck in and learn. Some of my early days were spent being shown how to first works a 436 Panzer, which 20 Bde used in theatre, this took a lot of time which was one thing I had a lot of. As well as this I did manage to get out with the Infantry and go on patrols to other regions of the country. The Devon and Dorset Regt are also part of 20 Bde and they also fed me lots of great experience. Bosnia is such a beautiful country and to see every house burnt and bombed on such a large scale brings a tear to every soldier's eye and words cannot easily describe those sights. As I served under both IFOR and SFOR the development of the country could

be seen all over such as the Engineers rebuilding bridges and schools ecetera. The local population now has a good chance of getting back to normality and hopefully leading normal lives and being part of that peace process is something to be proud of. When I was given my dates to mobilise in October 1996 I really did not know what to expect but one of the members in our Squadron had just returned from Bosnia and he told me not to go with any ideas. Just go and take things as they come. He was right, and that was good advice that can be passed to all other TA soldiers who want to volunteer in the future.

But one point is clear. I now feel that I can be a better asset to my Squadron with the experience I have gained and knowledge of what I have seen and done.

LCpl Carl Bowdidge in his accommodation in Bosnia.

SQUADRON POSTSCRIPT

LCpl Bowdidge was given an excellent end of tour report by the Quartermaster of 200 Sig Sqn–Well Done!!

BANBURY 15 MILE RUN

On 30 March 1997, six members of 5 (QOOH) Sqn (plus one other half) took part in the Banbury run. There was a range of experience between the competitors, but there was always going to be an internal race between our two chefs, **Sgt Les Kavanagh** and **Cpl** 'JC' **Jarvis-Cleaver,** on whom there were a number of side bets. **SSgt Andy Baird** (PSI ops) ran around the route with his wife, **Dawn,** who generally beats him running, and **SSgt (YofS) Debbie Frankham** ran with **LCpl Tina Strachan. WO2 (SSM)** 'No Mates' **George Simpson,** our resident PTI, ran on his own, hoping that he might manage to keep up with the younger, fitter chefs.

WO2 (SSM) George Simpson, SSgt (YofS) Debbie Frankham, Sgt Les Kavanagh, LCpl Tina Strachan, Cpl Davy Jarvis-Cleaver, Mrs Dawn Baird, SSgt Andy Baird

The weather was fairly kind to the runners, being mild with a fairly strong breeze, but the course turned out to be a lot hillier than the participants expected! Nonetheless all the runners put in a valiant effort and completed the course. **Sgt Les Kavanagh** and **Cpl** 'JC' **Jarvis-Cleaver** were together for most of the race, but **Sgt K** just piped **Cpl JC** at the post, both coming in the first 100 finishers, and to give him his due, **SSM George Simpson** was not far behind. For their first long run, **SSgt Debbie Frankham** and **LCpl Tina Strachan** did exceptionally well but were suffering afterwards. True to form, all the runners managed to make it to a local pub with **SSgt Ray** and **Sgt Judith Phillips** (non-running supporters) for some food and a few beers. Well done!

RECRUITING

Recruiting in the Squadron has improved dramatically with the arrival of **2Lt Sarah Hunter.** This has nothing to do with the fact that she is 6'1" and blonde! The PSAO **Capt Bob Sheldon** thinks it is entirely due to the design of his new poster showing members of the Squadron looking warlike–we know different! The Squadron is now at 105%.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj P. N. Willmott TD**

This year sees the 200th Anniversary of the formation of the Middlesex Yeomanry Cavalry, which was formed in Uxbridge, in 1797. Needless to say celebrations of this event are well under way within the Squadron. They started with the officers of the Squadron having a celebration dinner, held in the Drill Hall, and attended by many of the past Regt Comds of the 47th Sig Regt and past OC's of 47 Sig Sqn. The principle guest was our Honorary Colonel, **Corps Commander A. Whitehead** of the WTS (FANY). Tribute must be paid to **SSgt Andy Cummings,** the NRPS SQSM and **LCpl** 'Baldrick' **Howe** for their efforts in decorating the Drill Hall and acquiring all the tables, chairs etc to make the event a memorable one. The celebrations will continue with an all Ranks Dinner on 5 July, planning for which is already well advanced by **SSgt Brent Copsey** and his committee. It is hoped that as many ex-Squadron members as possible will attend, what is expected to be, a fairly good thrash. Watch this space!

It has not been all celebration however, and April saw the Squadron heavily involved in Ex Apollo Sword, the 2 NC Sig Bde Exercise. As well as supplying dets to operate with 5 (QOOH) Sig Sqn at RAF Bicester, the remainder of the Squadron had to cope with the demands of the Bde Staff at the TA Centre in Uxbridge. Which for part of the exercise, was where Bde HQ was based. **Sgt Andy Hutchins** decided to stay awake for the duration of the Exercise and **Cpl** 'Fresh from Bosnia and everywhere else' **Cheshire** managed to control his temper! Overall the Exercise was very beneficial, particularly to the younger members of the Squadron, for whom this was the first opportunity to put into practice their newly awarded trade skills (and pay!).

The Regiment Training weekend at Longmoor in May was well attended by the Squadron. The **SSM Steve Prance** and **Sgt Jim Bole** attempted their BFT and managed to pass both the start and finish points with, by conservative estimates, some 40 minutes between points. The highlight of the weekend was the award to **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Paula Goddard,** of the coveted Annual Skinners award given to the best Female soldier in the Regiment. This was thoroughly well deserved and the whole Squadron congratulates her.

Mr Andrew Crawshaw, The Master of the Skinners, presents Best Female Soldier to LCpl Paula Goddard

The Squadron provided a strong contingent at the Annual Cavalry memorial Parade held in Hyde Park on Sunday 11 May in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. Unfortunately the weather was the wettest and the windiest in living memory, but this was not allowed to mar one of the most important Squadron parades of the year.

Cpl 'VE' **Vincent-Edwards** has recently completed his Unit Expedition Leaders course, and no doubt is already planning fairly sadistic ways in which he can inflict pain, portrayed as fun, on as many Squadron members as he can during the Squadron Adventure Training later in the year. Well-deserved recent promotions in the Squadron are **LCpl Paula Goddard** to Cpl and **Sigs Cathy Corcoran** and **Allison Ellis** to LCpl. Our new PSI Tech, **Sgt Ian Wheeler** has hit the Squadron like a bomb, a very, very big bomb. He has a passion for doing training in rivers and streams. His latest wheeze, a bayonet assault course along the riverbed in RAF Uxbridge, was very much enjoyed by all. In particular the bit where he fell flat on his face in the deepest part whilst giving a graphic demonstration of how underwater bayonet fighting is not a practical proposition.

Finally the Squadron looks forward to Ex Capital Pursuit at the end of June and the imminent departure, on a two week exchange, with the USNG, of **Sgts Dave Lambert** and **Andy Hutchins** in the middle of June. What did they do to deserve that?

57 (CITY AND COUNTY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj H. Aston**

TEN TORS 1997

For those amongst you who are not familiar with the Ten Tors annual event, allow me to elaborate a little. Ten Tors is a walking event for teams of 6 people aged up to 20, from various youth organisations including schools, cadet forces, Scouts, youth clubs etc. The teams walk routes of between 35 and 55 miles over two days, aiming to check in at Ten Tors to get a stamp on their route card. The overall organisation of the event is carried out by 43 (Wessex) Bde and as part of the task, co-ordination of the Control Centre comms falls to 57 Sig Sqn. The Squadron provides telephone and radio operators to take the team details down as they come in, data operators to enter it all onto the master computer system and supervisors to keep it all going.

The appalling weather in 1996–horizontal snowstorms and storm force winds out on the moor–led to the cutting short of the event on Sunday and made the communications more vital than ever, as large numbers of teams were going down with problems. The comms personnel did not leave Oakhampton until all the teams were accounted for, leading to a 3am Monday finish at Bristol! (Definitely my latest ever finish to a TA Weekend.) So it was with some trepidation that a group of 40 or so individuals from 57 and HQ Sqns (who says driver electricians can't type!)

made their way down the M5, with ever increasing fog as we got closer to Oakhampton.

Saturday morning brought a comms check at 0600hrs ready for the 0700 start and the A Shift led by **Capt Paul** 'Has anyone seen my sleeping bag' **Fowler-Smith, Sgt Jane Burn** and **Cpl Kim Williams** were on the case. The first couple of hours is always busy as the faster teams race through the tors and the data system struggled to cope with the speed of input. The sun came out and made a feeble attempt to burn off the fog. By lunchtime it had given up in disgust and the famous Dartmoor rolling mists had taken over. In fact while I was visiting one of our MIVs (Mould Insertion Vehicle) out on the moor, a Sea King almost landed on top of us in extremely poor visibility (well it seemed close to me). As usual **Sgt Mike White** and his MIV crews had all the comforts of home with them (real coffee and the FA Cup Final!) By 1130 on the Saturday (long after every bar on camp had closed) all data was finally in the system and we prepared to start again 6 hours later! Comms check at 0530, with the B shift **Lt Mark** 'Just one thing' **Carter** and **Cpl** 'Taff' **Davies** (now Sgt) on the case. The sun rose and burned off the fog, yes really! **WO2** 'Dickie' **Lee** has been coming to Dartmoor for more years than he cares to admit and even he had never seen the view from Oakhampton Camp this good. We made everyone look at it, in case it never happens again.

The good weather meant that most teams completed the course and by 1630 we were scaling down to minimum manpower. Finally at half past seven, in glorious sunshine the final COMMCEN personnel and MIVs pulled out, arriving back in Bristol just after 2115 hrs, which must be a record for Ten Tors. If only we could have such weather every year!

Since our last contribution to *The Wire* the Squadron has said farewell to PSI(Ops) **SSgt** 'Brad' **Bradley** who left us on posting and has welcomed as his successor **SSgt** 'Tony' **Bentley** who (lucky man) has served with the TA before. We hope he and his family will enjoy their time with us. We must also at this point congratulate **Cpl Andy Cunningham** who, following on from last years success for **Cpl** 'Mina' **Zamparelli** as best female soldier, has been awarded the Skinners Award as the best male soldier in the Regiment for this year.

71 Sig Regt (V)
Bexleyheath

CO — **Lt Col R. K. Wilkinson**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) A. S. 'Dos' Martyres**

265 (KCLY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj S. Malik**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Mustoe**

EXERCISE EASTER TROT 97

The Three Peaks of Yorkshire Challenge Walk was organised by **SSgt Lynch** (PSI 265 Sig Sqn) in sunny North Yorkshire. Eight keen volunteers took part in it. The Challenge was a 40km circuit of three of the highest peaks in Ribblesdale to be completed within a day, being clocked in and out at the local village cafe for official validation.

The aim of the walk was not only to practice map-reading skills but to take in the fantastic scenery of the rolling hills and surroundings. The group had an added bonus. **Sgt Wise** who is a bit of an expert on WW2 and world dictators gave continuous lectures throughout the day. So the intrepid group is now, not only better at navigating and traversing up hills but they can also; for example tell you that the Germans took only one day to gain control of Denmark. The group travelled up to Horton in Ribblesdale in Yorkshire on Good Friday, set up the tents at the camp site and prepared for the task ahead with the comet Hale Bop looking over them.

In the morning after a good breakfast the team under the guidance of **SSgt Lynch** embarked on the walk ahead. With techniques on pace counting, time/distance sums and bearings we made our way towards Peny-ghent a 694m peak. With the speed of the 'Last of the Summer Wine' spirit we gloriously moved towards the summit. Stopping frequently to admire the view. On arrival at the top a quick photo shoot by the Trig point and the group moved off but realised if they were to complete the course then the rest of the day would be spent heads down tabbing with few breaks. So a more leisurely approach was taken (which makes a nice change) and opted to climb the third peak. After about 10km's more the group stopped for lunch by a mobile tea wagon that boasted a great view of a 750ft viaduct.

In the afternoon the third peak Ingleborough was completed at 723m and the added achievement of Simon Fell 636m. All in all a great day was had by everyone in which the passion and spirit of Yorkshire's breathtaking hills were captured by all.

At the top of Ingleborough
Clockwise from top left; LCpl Keeler, Sig Risley, Sig Mckenzie, Sig Keeble, Sgt Orr, SSgt Lynch, Sgt Wise, Sig Dunsieth, LCpl Pryke.

TA CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The TA X-Country Championships were held at Vimy Bks, Catterick on 15 March 1997. The female and male teams were feeling confident of a good result, having already finished first and third respectively in the District Championships earlier in the year.

The girls team was the first to run and starting as London District TA Champions were looking to do well. The course was dry but considerably more hilly than anything that the teams were used to training on in their local areas, with tracks and countryside replacing buildings and pavements. Final team placings were 16, 13, 12 and 5 with **LCpl Donahue** coming in second and runner-up in the TA Competition. These excellent team placings ensured that the girls literally ran away from the opposition to be TA National Womens' Champions.

The lads put in a great effort but knew it would not be easy at this level of competition. With the added incentive of this being the last chance for a TA Soldier to beat **SSgt PSI** 'Q' **Rose** during his three year tour but failed too (hard luck lads!), the team came in a very creditable eighth place out of 24 teams. Congratulations to both teams and next year the male team will reflect the female team position by coming first too . . .

(*L-R*): Sigs Wheeler/Gomersall, SSgt Murphy, Lt Col Ingleby-MacKenzie, LCpl Donahue, Cpl Ireland.

EXERCISE SOUTHERN CRAFTSMAN 1997

Southern Craftsman is an annual competition between REME volunteer units within Southern Region, which is held on Longmoor training area. The aim of the competition being to test units on:

a. Movement and Deployment.
b. Military Skills.
c. Technical Skills.

The competition starts on the Friday night with teams arriving at Longmoor Camp, and then being deployed into a hide location. During Saturday the teams are directed by radio to carry out various technical and military tasks. At the same time, the team 'Metalsmith' is given a manufacturing task to complete. The task this year was to manufacture a copy of a 1923-motorcycle fuel-tank. On Sunday there was a march + shoot competition, part of which uses the tunnel complex under the FIBUA area.

The LAD team from 71st (Y) Sig Regt (V) enjoyed a hard weekend and won the award for 'Best Minor Unit' for it's efforts, beating one or two 'Major Units' in the process. The 71 (Y) Sig Regt, LAD REME (V) team was:

Sgt Kent (Team Capt)	**Cpl Steptoe**
Sgt Gosling	**Cpl Wheatley**
Cpl Shilling	**LCpl Hursey**
Cpl Aldridge	**LCpl Mountford**
Cpl Carpenter	**Cfn Peters**

The team would like to thank **Maj Fern** (Regt 2IC) for his support on the Saturday. Thanks also to **Cpl Smoker** (HQ Sqn) for her lessons on Signals procedures.

HQ SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Corfield**
SSM — **WO2 (RQMS) Taylor**

71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt Shooting Team are pictured right with the trophies they won at this years TA Corp SAAM held at Ash Ranges, Pirbright in April. There was some healthy competition between the A and B teams especially on the much practised APWT shoot. A special mention goes to **Cpl Smoker** who won the best female shot, **OCdt Downing** who won the best individual pistol shot and the Team manager, **Maj Barrie Corfield** who ensured the highest standards of fitness and marksmanship were maintained throughout the training year. Plans have already been laid to build upon this years' success to fill the gaps in the trophy cabinet; watch this space.

The team members and support staff.
(*L-R*): Sig Foxwell, Cpl Wood, Cpl Charter, OCdt Downing (B Team Captain) Sig Handley, Sgt Feather, Maj Corfield, (Team Manager) Cpl Smoker, Cpl Charter, LCpl Brace, Sgt Allen, Lt Walker (A Team Captain) Cpl Jules and Sig Henderson

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204)
BFPO 538

Sqn Comd — **Maj E A Davis**
SSM — **WO1 (RSM) Waters**

EXERCISE SHARP POINT 97–KENYA
by LCpl Sirignano

How would I fancy going from the cold, wet climate of Germany to the dry, hot climate of Africa, was an option given to me one day whilst I was 'stagging on' on exercise. It didn't take the brains of an archbishop to work out which one to choose. Thus I found myself deploying a few days later to Kenya on Ex Sharp Point, with 2 Armd Field Ambulance. An exercise designed to bring medical aid to the nomadic tribesmen of that country, who otherwise would not receive any medical assistance at all. My part in the exercise was to provide the VITAL power, both for lighting and for the dentist's drill!

The exercise started on 26 March 1997, with a not so comfortable 2-day flight in a C130 Hercules. The only plus point of the flight was the overnight stop in Egypt. On the second day we landed at Nairobi, whereupon I spent the next four days preparing the generators for the exercise. Not only was this the usual 4.5kW generators and the accompanying cabling, but also the dental equipment. The structure of the exercise was such that Kenya would be split into two sectors, with a Forward Operating Base in each sector, north and south. The Regt HQ and Sup Tp were to be located between the two at Nanyuki, a place straddling the equator.

At first I deployed to the southern sector in a village called Entasopia. It was here that I had my first taste of what Kenya had to offer. Mother Nature playing a full hand and testing our driving and recovery skills to the limit. On the second part of the exercise the dental section was deployed to the northern sector, which proved to be even busier than the south. The trip took three days to complete and took us through some of the most beautiful landscape I have ever seen. Something I will never forget. Unfortunately the exercise had to come to an end and consequently the flight back came all too quickly. Ex Sharp Point 97 was for me an experience of a lifetime that I am proud to have been a part of and would be keen to do again.

LCpl Sirignano–in the Northern Sector

WINNERS–MINOR UNITS SHOOTING COMPETITION
by Cpl Bell

Once again due to Squadron commitments, the shooting team had very little opportunity to train prior to the Corps Skill At Arms Meeting. Four days at Bulford ranges was all that could be arranged, however these were used to the maximum effect, and consequently set the team in good stead for the competition. The week of the Corps SAAM itself was an excellent experience, with the shoots coming hard and fast. All the team put in excellent performances, with **Cpl Bell** performing exceptionally well! Needless to say from the outset it became obvious to the team that we had a chance of winning something. Thus with a lot of encouragement and one or two 'flukes', we eventually ran out winners of the Minor Units' Cup.

The shooting team consisted of **2Lt Hopcraft** (spectator and cheerleader), **Sgt Brown**, **Cpl Bell**, **LCpl Bapty**, **Sig Dodgson** and **Sig Rhodes**. The team would like to thank the OC, **Maj Davis** and the rest of the Squadron for their support.

Front (*L-R*): LCpl Bapty, 2Lt Hopcraft, Sig Dodson
Back (*L-R*): Sgt Brown Cpl Bell, Sig Rhodes

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt A. N. Hopcraft**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt N. Finnigan**

The last couple of months, as usual, have been hectic both in terms of exercises and personnel moving. Not only have the Troop deployed on Prairie Eagle 1 to Poland, supported a ground to air exercise with the Danish Army, but they have also helped provide the Divisional Rear HQ (something about the Sig Regt unable to manage it!) and undertaken a signallers cadre. All this and it has also bid farewell to the Tp Comd, **Capt Anderton-Brown** and **LCpl Davies** and **Sig Knowles**. However, it seems there is no time to rest on our laurels, with a new Tp Comd, **2Lt** 'Loose Cannon' **Hopcraft** set on making his mark and the imminent approach of a low profile (ninety plus brigadiers!) Staff College visit, and the requirement to provide Divisional Main HQ (where is the Sig Regt?).

ROYAL SIGNALS WINDSURFING CHAMPIONSHIPS (GERMANY) 29/ 30 MAY 97

The Royal Signals Windsurfing Championships took place at the Dumersee Yacht Club on 29/30 May 1997. A total of 20 competitors entered the competition with teams from 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 280 Sig Sqn and 204 Sig Sqn and also a large number of guest entries from various cap badges. **SSgt Norman Finnigan** organised the event and with **YofS Steve Firth, SSgt Paul Saunders** (REME) and **Sig Gus Sygrove** formed the Squadron team.

Racing started on the first day with ideal conditions, however the new S type course proved to be very difficult to master, with a number of broad reaches and runs into gusts of Force 4. These conditions got the better of **Paul Saunders** and although he had completed a section of the course, he sustained an injury to his knee (Ahhh!). However, not before he had been awarded some much needed points. **Steve Firth** and **Gus Sygrove** faired better and towards the end of day one, their positions improved. However, it was **Norman Finnigan** (or should it be Mr Dead!) who stole the show, winning four races and coming second in the fifth. Final positions were:

Team	Individual
1. 16 Sig Regt	1. **SSgt Finnigan** (204 Sig Sqn)
2. 204 Sig Sqn	2. **SSgt Maw** (16 Sig Regt)
3. 280 Sig Sqn	

SSgt Norman Finnigan 'doing the wild thing'

204 SIGNAL SQUADRON–SIGNALS CADRE COURSE

The course was planned for a two-week period, but due to Squadron programming it had to be cut short to one week. My name is **Sig Mat Hughes**, as an eight-month signaller I was on the course for the experience only. I will be telling the story of the 16 Signallers chosen to participate.

The course dates were from the 11-16 May. At first nobody was at all keen about the idea of going on a cadre course, but all saw the necessity of doing the course. When they were told that the course dates had changed and it would be for one week only, they seemed to cheer up. There were a few misconceptions at first about what the course was aiming to achieve, but **Major Davis** the Sqn Comd soon cleared all of these up and we were ready to deploy. The course started immediately on arrival at Haltern Training Area with entrance tests having to be undertaken in NBC, First Aid and Fieldcraft. Once these were finished the rest of the evening was left to us to prepare for the following day.

On the Monday the day began with a BFT, conducted by **LCpl Launder.** This posed no problems, however this was only the beginning. Immediately after the physical strains of the morning **WO1 RSM Waters** took a No. 2 dress inspection. Again every little detail was commented upon and marks were awarded, or not as the case may be. When the parade was finally over, we then got down to the nitty gritty of the lessons, which were explained to us as being useful in becoming NCOs in the Corps. Many people found the most useful part of the training was the Method of Instruction taught by **Sgt** 'Lovegod' **Dyer**. Following this lesson we then had to produce our own 20-minute lesson, on subjects which were chosen for us by the Trg Wg and the Sqn Comd. The course found this quite difficult, however we all did our best and after a whole night's work most of the lessons were not too bad.

(*L-R*): Sig Grills, Sig Hughes, Sgt 'Lovegod' Dyer

At 7 o'clock on Wednesday morning we went into the field phase of the exercise. For this phase we were separated into two sections, surprisingly called Section 1 and Section 2. There were eight people in each section with a member of the Trg Wg as the safety and also as the assessor of the exercise. I was in section 1 and **Sgt Dyer,** who was in charge, lost his teddy a few times; once because he was not challenged when coming into location and another for some person sleeping on sentry. We were immediately bugged out, and then went for a short tab wearing full camo. (Hurrah! At least he had a reason to run us ragged). This annoyed everyone, and from that time onwards, we began to pull together as a team. On that first day we got into a routine sending out recce patrols and gathering data on the enemy force around us. My personal favourite was on the NBC recce, we were bugged out by an airburst and then had to tab to another location, carrying **Sig Cowie** who became a casualty due to blister agent poisoning. At our new location we had to decontaminate ourselves our equipment and our rifles (which made for interesting cleaning). We then treated the casualty and returned to our harbour location after completing the demasking drills. We got into our night routine by 0030 hrs, and were first attacked at around one a.m. by one of the OPFOR personnel. After this was successfully dealt with, we got back into our night routine and at around 0300 hrs we were again attacked by a force of two to three men, all carrying automatic weapons. Once again we were bugged out and made our way to the ERV location. From there we then tabbed to a pick up point, to be met by a waiting vehicle to take us to our new location. On arrival, we dug in and then began our routine again. At last light the good work and effort continued from everyone as we were now used to sleep deprivation. That night at approximately 2130 hrs, we went on a fighting patrol, led by **Sig Slater**, the whole section was deployed and we successfully took care of the enemy without a single casualty. We returned to our harbour location at around 0100 hrs from where we stood to for 30 minutes while the clearance patrol did their stuff. At 0300 hrs we were once again attacked by some more OPFOR (Who seemed to be multiplying at this point).

Sig Doran (The Radio Relay man) was screaming orders very effectively at the troops and we fought like madmen, and completely annihilated the enemy. **Sig Doran** shouting, 'You're dead sonny' stimulated this. We were then told to pack up our shell scrapes, and prepare for moving. We tabbed a short distance where we placed our equipment on the ground and were told to unload our weapons as this part of the exercise was over with. At this point **LCpl Sy** 'The Psycho' **Launder,** with the OPFOR team, came running around the corner screaming, 'Get on your faces now!' The escape and evasion phase of the exercise had begun, for the next hour or so we were tied up and put into different stress positions before we finally escaped. We then had to run to a final location for endex and a large breakfast, which we hadn't had for quite a while. After 54 hours of no sleep at all, combined with eating 24hr rat packs, the idea of a full English fried breakfast was welcomed by all. I was dropped off at around 0520 hrs, with **Sig Grills**. We formed a plan and set out on our intrepid adventure. We tabbed across hills and valleys looking for a dead letter post. But before that began **Sig Grills** needed a quick half an hour kip, until a large swarm of mosquitoes tried to eat him. We left in a big hurry. On route, we ran into a herd of large wild Boar, in a troop of around 20 (larger than the Troop back at camp). There were also Deer that were scared off by the sight of **Sig Grills**. We managed to get within 400m of our objective before being captured again by OPFOR. THIS WAS OUR ENDEX. Only four out of the 16 people made it to the dead letter post. These were **Sig Sayers, Sig Angus, Sig Cowie** and **Sig Slater**. We then returned to Haltern ATA, where we packed and cleaned the kit we had used. The most welcome part of returning home was the hot shower, which awaited all of us.

On the final debrief, the Sqn Comd told us that we had outlived all of his expectations and everyone had put in 100% and more. The final position did not matter either to him or the staff, as we had all tried very hard. The only things left for us to do was to present the top student with a prize. The top student was **Sig Cowie**. After the presentation, we settled down for a few beers in the bar. From all of the 16 Signallers on the course I would like to say a big thank you to the staff for a good week, had by all of us.

19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) Catterick

Sqn Comd	**Maj Nick Pope**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) John Howell-Walmsley**

MRS SYLVIA ROGERS

This month saw the departure of **Mrs Sylvia Rogers MBE** the Families 'Clerk' and assistant Welfare Officer to both the ITC and for many years before that 8 Sig Regt.

Sylvia has almost 42 years of unbroken service with the Ministry of Defence with the exception of four weeks maternity leave when she had her baby in 1964. She entered the Civil Service as an industrial worker in August 1955 working with 21 District Workshop. In April 1959 she was promoted to a non-industrial post as an administrative assistant with 8 Sig Regt where she remained until April when the Regiment moved to Blandford. She was promoted to Administrative Officer in 1976. In April 1995 she transferred to the Infantry Training Centre and it is from there that she has retired.

Throughout her service she has been totally devoted to the families of the units for whom she has worked and in recognition of this she was awarded the MBE in the 1994 New Year's honours list. Such is her love of her work that when she has finished her days work she does voluntary work as a SSAFA visitor. In recognition of her long and dedicated service a farewell party was held in the White Rose Community Centre where Sylvia was presented by the Royal Signals, with a framed copy of the well-known picture 'THROUGH' and, from her many friends throughout the Garrison, a diamond ring,

The photograph shows **Sylvia** being presented with a copy of 'Through' by **Lt Col (Retd) M. Deverill** on behalf of the Master of Signals. **Capt** 'Brandy' **Weatherburn**, the Families Officer of the ITC followed this by presenting her with a diamond ring on behalf of all her friends and colleagues in the Garrison.

CHANGEOVER OF RSMs

In May 1997 the Squadron saw a change in RSM. **WO1 (RSM) Dave Showell** is leaving to join 34 Sig Regt (V), the new incumbent is **WO1 (RSM) John Howell-Walmsley**. Thanks to **RSM Showell** for all his hard work during his tenure–We can still hear the sound of the pipes!!

A warm Catterick welcome to **John**, **Julie** and family to what, hopefully, will be a successful tour.

'Blow don't suck!'
Dave Showell getting another piece of good advice from the Squadron badge collector

VISIT OF THE CATTERICK BRANCH OF THE RSA

On 28 May 1997 members of the Catterick Branch of the RSA were invited to spend a morning with the Squadron in an informal exchange of views and experiences. The visit kicked off with a brief overview of the Squadron and Corps matters in general by the OC, followed by a tour of a modern armoured brigade headquarters. For some it was an eye opener, for others a distant memory, and for a few a recollection of recent nightmares. After coffee, and the opportunity for younger members of the Squadron to listen to Association members, the programme continued with a chance to drive cross country in the armoured vehicles across Catterick Training Area and look at the modern weapons that Royal Signals are trained on.

Drill Weapons
Sgts Enderby, Williams and RSM Howell-Walmsley with Association members at the, 'Correct position of At Ease' stand

'What happens if I pull this?'
Bill Barnes and Cpl Dave Leask–who's more nervous?

A thoroughly successful morning, we thank **Bill Barnes** and the Association for finding the time to visit our young Royal Signals soldiers.

EXERCISE SILVER SHOT–SQUADRON BATTLECAMP
by Cpl Ian Tait

An 'Oh my God it's early' 0500 hours breakfast parade was the prelim to the Sqn deploying on a week long field firing exercise on Warcop ranges. The ranks of Alpha and Bravo Tps were swelled by Support Tp and SHQ elements to form two 'Infantry' platoons. The concept of having enough men to fill requirements took some getting used to but as usual we got there in the end. During the week more ammunition and pyrotechnics were fired than many of us had seen, or will see again, especially after the defence cuts made by the OC in his previous job and the impending Defence Review. We worked our way through various ranges and stands during the day with lessons in the evening, then returning to our respective basha areas for the night. Live firing was extensive. Starting with the individual and pairs fire and manoeuvre, building up to section attacks and

culminating in a section in defence night shoot. CQB ranges included the Browning pistol and Remington pump action shot gun fired from the hip. The adage targets will fly to pieces when hit, springs to mind.

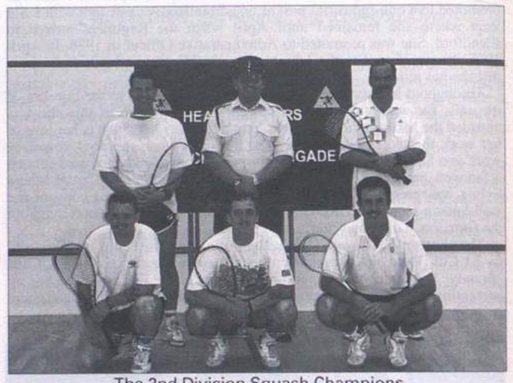
Cpl Shaun Fardy taking aim with Cpl Mac MacDonald looking on

Evening activities were arranged to revise and practice the drills we should know. After clearing a wooded strip of three enemy positions in mutual support, few in the section were able to speak and were thankful that a fourth position wasn't to be assaulted. We covered methods of judging distance under **SSgt** 'Gaz' **Steel** who refused to believe **Sig Jack Nicholson** that a mast on a far distant hill (at least 2km) was a couple of hundred metres away. Back in the basha area **Cpl** 'Loggy' **Wright** was shown how to erect a basha by **LCpl Steve Birchall** (well, he is a tech!). **Sigs John Atkinson** and 'Scotty' **Scott**, not to be out done, built a rather impressive log cabin that they inhabited for the week. **Sig** 'Johno' **Johnson** was able to join us occasionally when he couldn't think of a suitable excuse to stay at the DS camp! To sum it up, it was a successful and enjoyable battlecamp with a lot of worthwhile and valuable training that was much needed. Finally, a note of thanks to RQMS, **WO2 John Gibson**, for running the 'sticky wagon' at very reasonable prices which went a long way to relieve the trauma of the Warcop 'four seasons in one day' climate.

SQUASH–2ND DIVISION CHAMPIONS

After much consternation and discussion it was decided that despite heavy commitments the Squadron would enter a team into the 2 Div inter unit squash league which commenced in October 1996. The league consisted of seven teams from both major and minor units predominantly in the, Catterick area. The Squadron, despite being a minor unit, has always had a nucleus of interested and keen players and augmented with a trio from Bde HQ were hopeful of a final placing. Over the season (October-March 97) the team had to play a total of 12 matches, a tall order within a busy organisation, however, off we went, each match was the best of five games, with points being allotted for any games won.

Despite the heavy discussions at the start of each game about who was playing at which seed and at what time players were available for their game the season progressed rapidly and somewhat successfully. The odd game was lost albeit 3-2 with the majority of games won convincingly due to the depth of players within the team. At the conclusion of the season the unit squash officer received a suspect package from HQ 2 Div, which when opened contained, much to his amazement, six individual winners medals for the 2 Div inter unit squash league. Despite its losses, the team won the league because of their enthusiasm and endeavour to play all of the matches within the allotted time. They had amassed a total of 118 points, seven points clear of the second place team (ITC Catterick). With an average age of 36 and an extremely busy calendar the team are to be congratulated for their outstanding efforts.



The 2nd Division Squash Champions
The team consisted of: (top row *L-R*)
WO2 (FofS) Mark Edwards, WO1 (RSM) Dave Showell,
Capt (QM) Chas Dale, (bottom row *L-R*) SSgt Stu Conway
Sgt Pete Wilson, WO2 (SQMS) Steve Evans

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210) Colchester

Sqn Comd **Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Pocock**

The Squadron has had a busy period since Easter Leave, with a number of commitments in addition to our normal training and exercises, including Op Fresco (provision of emergency fire services) and a KAPE tour. The highlight of the training programme was Ex Gryphon's Lift, a week long Brigade airmobility exercise based on Stanford Training Area. The sun shone (for a day at least), the RAF flew and the Squadron had all the helicopter support we could use–training heaven. This was an excellent opportunity for the Squadron to practice airmobility skills and our SOP procedures without the restraints of providing support to the Bde Staff, and the opportunity was exploited to the full. Both Bde HQ complexes and Tac HQ deployed to a number of locations and the complete recce, air movement and change of control procedure was practiced by day and night, and in a variety of weather conditions! All airmobile detachments within the Squadron (including the OCs' beloved 16/24 generator) flew at least once during the week. The new members of the Squadron, accompanied by a number of Soldiers Awaiting Training were introduced to the joys of helicopter flight by a particularly impressive display of Lynx low level tactical flying. The new Sqn 2IC and Recce Officer, **Capt Mark Hanby**, maintained his predecessors' tradition of not finding enough time to complete any recces, whilst managing to find the time to ensure that the Squadron motorbikes were functioning correctly. There was one notable difference–**Capt Hanby** failed to find an excuse to return early from the exercise. **Capt Deans** must have forgotten to include a list of suitable excuses in his hand-over notes!

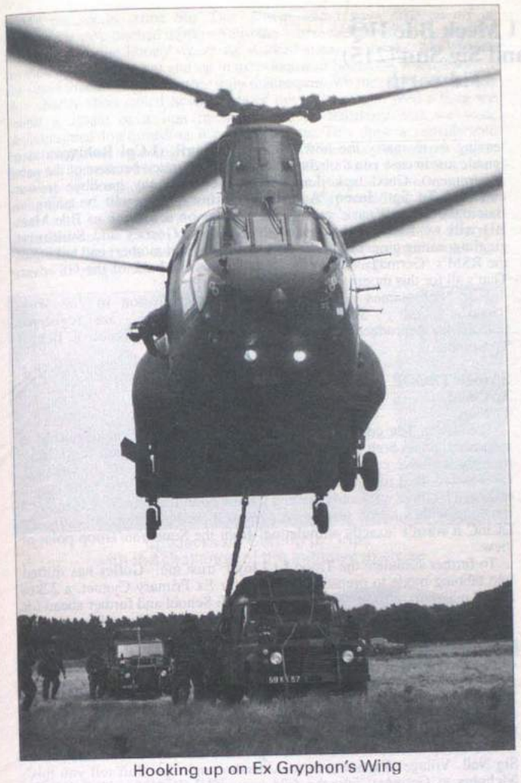
SUPPORT TROOP

Welcomes go to **Capt Hanby** from 21 Sig Regt (AS), **Sgt Croxon** from AFCENT, **Cpl Hoskins** from 39 Inf Bde, **Cpl Walker** from Bde HQ, **Sigs Comery, Harris, McCall** and **McTeer** from RSS Blandford and **Sig Campbell** from an 8 month vacation in 'Civ Div.' Congratulations are due to **Cpl White, Cpl Lodge, Cpl Wyatt** and **LCpl Partridge** on becoming fathers–nights will never be the same again!

SQUADRON STEEPLECHASE

This was no ordinary Friday PT session. **Capt Dave Worden** and **Lt Andy Parfitt** had done some scheming and devised a 'short' cross country course over some jumps (horse jumps) and through some streams in the infamous Friday Woods. At the end of this short but extremely strenuous race, the winner was **Cpl Bob White**, narrowly beating **Sgt Jim Pritchard** and **Sig Fletcher**. Once everyone had recovered sufficiently to smile, the Sqn Elder, **WO2 (FoS) Cooper** took a Squadron photo. All of the runners were extremely wet and dirty and it was decided to thank **Capt Worden** for his planning by playing 'King of the Pit' in the stream, with him at the bottom of the pile of bodies. Strangely, **Lt Parfitt** failed to turn up!

Lt 'Cindy' Crawford struggling to avoid that last place in the Squadron Steeplechase



Hooking up on Ex Gryphon's Wing

OPERATION FRESCO

Op Fresco was the provision of emergency fire services by all units within 24 Airmob Bde during strikes by the Essex Fire Brigade. The Squadron was warned of the impending strikes prior to Easter leave, and training in fire fighting skills began immediately on return to work. The Squadron was tasked to man three 'Green Goddesses,' and establish a Temporary Service Fire Station in Goojerat Barracks to cover the Colchester area. Each Troop provided three crews of five, commanded by a Cpl, and a three day shift system was organised with crews working a 24 hour shift on immediate NTM, a second shift on sixty minutes NTM and the third shift stood down. Members of the RAF Fire Service and the local police force assisted the Squadron crews. A number of strikes took place over a month long period, with training for each shift continuing throughout, and the crews were kept busy tackling everything from small forest fires to false alarms. Thankfully no life threatening incidents occurred and the crews were able to deal professionally with all the fires they were called to deal with, and enjoy some of the more unusual incidents. The citizens of Colchester appear to have a strange habit of burning down their own garden sheds. Clearly there are a number of amateur inventors in the area whose experiments went slightly wrong - and a false alarm at Debenhams in the early hours of the morning allowed one lucky crew the opportunity to try on the latest fashions in lingerie.

Op Fresco crews on parade with their 'Green Goddesses'

KAPE TOUR

The Squadron ran a week long KAPE Tour in the final week of April planned and led by **Lt** 'Cindy' **Crawford**. Breaking with the traditional format of travelling between towns, the tour was centrally located on Stanford Training Area with schools being bussed in from the local area on a daily basis. 14 soldiers were involved and ran a number of stands including; a vehicle familiarisation stand and driving course, fieldcraft and static small arms weapon display, communications equipment display and practical activities, a sensory deprivation assault course and a number of command tasks. The Corps recruiting caravan was used to provide information on Corps activities and careers, and provided **Cpl Topps** with an opportunity to practice his wheel changing after it had shed large chunks of rubber all over the A12. **Cpl Topps**, as expected of a member of the Sqn MT, then did his best to destroy another tyre by forgetting to release the handbrake! Six schools and three ACFs visited the tour and it was a great success, with over one hundred requests for further information on recruitment.

ALPHA TROOP

Welcome to **Cpl Duplock** from RSS Blandford, **Cpl Smith** from 39 Inf Bde, **Cpl Turner** from 7 Sig Regt, **Cpl Samuelson** back from Bassingbourn, **LCpl Horton** from 21 Sig Regt (AS) and **LCpl Robinson** back from six months dreaming up war stories in Belfast. Welcome also to **Sig Lawson** from 3 Div, a lone Signaller for all those JNCOs to boss around. Farewell to **Cpl** 'Judas' **Terrett** defecting to Sup Tp, **Cpl Thomson** and **LCpl Anderson** to 3 Div and **Sig Webb** to 'Civ Div.'A special mention must go to **Cpl** 'Guido' **Giddens** who has finally left Colchester after seven years to discover the wonders of life in Bulford. Congratulations to **Cpl Milne** and **LCpl Hill** on their well deserved promotions. And finally, congratulations go to **SSgt Algeron** for discovering how to apply the handbrake on the new wide-track trailers. He was so excited that he wrote to kit magazine to tell them all about it!

BRAVO TROOP

Welcomes to **Sgt Fairfield** from JCUFI, **Cpl Poole** from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl White** from 264 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Barringer** from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Childs** from 4 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. Farewell to **Sig Tattersall** and **Sig Stevens**, off to try their luck in 'Civ Div.'

SPORTS

The Squadron has managed to find time to achieve a number of sporting successes despite the high number of commitments over the past two months. Squadron teams have reached the final of the 4 Div (E) competition in three different sports; football, cricket and swimming. The football team has had an excellent season helped by an influx of fresh talent from Blandford, and the coaching of the RSM. This rather youthful side faced the experience of a team from the Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) in the final, and the team were out-played in the first half, trailing by four goals to nil at half-time, despite the athletic endeavours of **Sig Glen** 'The Cat' **Brunskill** in goal. The team performed well in the second half but was unable to make up the deficit and the game finished with a score of 5-1. A special mention must go to **Cpl Bob White** and **LCpl** 'Tam' **Bremner** whose performances have been particularly strong throughout the season.

The cricket team also faced MCTC in the final and again sadly lost. The team batted first and achieved a score of 132, a considerable improvement on last years' game against the same opponents, but was unable to restrict MCTC to a lower score. In the swimming final, the Squadron swimmers performed extremely well. The team won the minor units honours and was placed second overall, beating three major units. In the Bde athletics meeting, the Squadron team was runners up in the minor units competition, being robbed of victory by the CSS Battalion who claimed to be a minor unit.

Finally, on a more military level the Squadron Shooting Team placed fourth in the minor unit rankings at the CORPSSAAM, and **Sig Cooley**, a novice with the pistol, performed outstandingly in the pistol shoot to earn a silver medal. If only he had remembered the sequence of practice five!

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST!
Publish it in *The Wire*
The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) Tidworth

SQUADRON PERSONALITIES

Sqn Comd	**Maj P. J. Davies**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R. Bray**

HELLOS AND FAREWELLS

The Squadron has seen quite a lot of new faces arriving over the past two months and we warmly welcome the following to the fold: **Sig Kinsella** and **Sig Rutter** who arrived in April from The Royal School of Signals and 7 Sig Regt respectively. May saw the arrival of **Cpl Jenner** from 21 Sigs, **Cfn Levett** from 28 Engr Regt, **Sgt Smith** from a cushy posting with 17 Cadet Training Team and last but not least **Sig Britton** from The Royal School of Signals.

We said farewell to **LCpl Wall** RLC (3IC Egg Ops) to 39 Regt RA and also to **LCpl McGregor** to the QRH. Two members of the Sqn opted to embark into the real world and we wish **Sig McKay** and **SSgt Graveson** best wishes in their new careers.

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Nick Shenow**
SSgt	**SSgt Dave 'Hair' Gosney**

The wacky adventures of Bengal Tp can finally be published for the world to see. The Troop has been involved with the rest of the Squadron in regular exercises on the Plain. Our favourite enemy Generia (Funnily enough they come from France) have been beaten every time. All these wars have meant that the pace of life has been neck breakingly swift, fortunately the soldiers have been comforted by the words of Manning and Records and Army recruiters who on their recent visit said, 'If you can't take the Army you shouldn't have joined a joke'.

We say farewell to **LCpl 'Boz' Borril** who certainly couldn't take the joke and is off to a telecommunications company (name and address withheld), that is doing it's damnedest to recruit most of Bengal Tp. The recent flotation on the Stock Exchange has boosted Troop funds considerably and our shares are providing a nice dividend, unfortunately we cannot park the panzers now the garages are full of complimentary mobile phones. **Cpl** 'Noshee' **Nicholas** has been posted to 7 Sigs, **Cpl Mick Gregoire** has been dispatched to 30 Sigs. We wish these chaps all the best in their new posts. Congratulations to **Sig** 'Geordie' **McGuire** and his new wife **Jane** who got married on or around the 31 May and will also be off to 21 Sigs.

By the time these notes have been published **LCpl Robinson** will be leaving us to marry the now **Mr** 'Boz' **Borril, (LCpl Robinson** is a female just in case you thought we'd gone all liberated because of the new government). Good luck. Last but not least we say goodbye to our esteemed Tp Sgt, **Jason** 'Adjuster' **Smithurst** who will be going to Bassingbourn to 'Knack' recruits. No longer on activation of Bde Main HQ will we find that happy trio of **Shenow, Gosney** and **Smithurst** giggling, eating ginger cake (Courtesy of wives and mother) and talking of the RSM's 'Germany Adventures' huddled in the back of the GS rover. That's all for this month. Eyes Front Carry on Please.

NB: Nick names added especially for publication in *The Wire*. 'Geordie' 'Taff', 'Smudger', 'Chalky' and 'Jock' are registered trademarks. Reproduction is prohibited without the permission of Bengal Tp Comd.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Lloyd Golley**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Rutland**

The Troop has continued its busy start to the year, contributing to several exercises both with and without our illustrious Brigade Staff. Most recently we have completed 'THE' Divisional Exercise of the year, Ex Lion Sword. Ex Lion Sword in the main consisted of a hectic build period followed by three weeks of manning a static communications network and finishing with a hectic tear down period. In between this, to quote the DCinC it wasn't 'exactly stimulating' from the Squadron/Troop point of view.

To further stimulate the Troop **Lt Lloyd** 'trust me!' **Golley** has shifted into tabbing mode to prepare the Troop for Ex Primary Cygnet, a 22km forced march to raise funds for Bulford CofE School and further ahead for Ex Lion Sun in August/September 97. Due to this the Troop has renewed its acquaintance with the North Face of Sidbury Hill and many other areas of Salisbury Plain not yet discovered. To escape from all this 10 members of the Troop are in Switzerland adventure training on Ex Iron Shadow; gentle hill walking, plenty of lederhosen slapping and the sampling of the local Hooch is expected. This all depends however, on the organisation of **SSgt John** 'NO, Trust Me' **Rutland**, a full report will follow from one of the victims.

The Troop therefore, soldiers on regardless and says a fond farewell to **Sig Neil** 'Village' **Farnsworth** to Aldershot and **Cpl** 'Taff tell you this' **Nicholas** to Germany into the fold come **Cpl Si Jenner, LCpl Dave Saunders, Sig Rutter, Sig Copeland** and **Sig Wild.**

5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para) Aldershot

Sqn Comd	**Maj D. G. Halstead**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) N. Turnbull**

EXERCISE ANTIPODEAN VENTURE 11-29 MAY 1997

Ex Antipodean Venture was a 216 Para Sig Sqn organised Rugby Tour to Australia during May. On the afternoon of Sunday 11 May, XX members of the Squadron met and departed on the long journey to Sydney. A 5 hour stop over in Japan gave us a break from flying and **Sgt Jones** a chance to change his clothes! We arrived it Sidney, on Tuesday morning and were met by our hosts, 3 Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) who are the Australian Army's Airborne Battalion. After settling into our accommodation the team went out for a leg stretch and training session to shake out the long plane journey.

We had the opportunity of a couple of days training before our first match, which was against 3RAR. A closely contested match saw the Squadron team narrowly beaten by 1 try and a score of 26-21. Team Captain, **Sgt** 'Taff' 'Quoff' **Jones** scored one try and successfully converted that and the two others. The next few days were taken up with some more training and going to see the Super 12s match, Auckland versus New South Wales. That was a very impressive game with the unbeaten Auckland side showing a convincing win.

The following week we played some more rugby, again narrowly conceding defeat against a variety of Australian Regimental sides. In addition we went parachuting with 3 RAR and managed to get two jumps in to qualify for our Australian Wings. 22 personnel successfully completed the jumps, but no thanks to the Aussie navigator who saw to it that the majority of people completely missed the DZ on the first pass, as **Sig Firth** realised when he put his tree landing drill into use.

After two weeks there was the opportunity for a couple of days R&R prior to returning to England. Some took the opportunity to travel further afield whilst others could now probably re-write the 'Lonley Planet' guide to Sydney and in particular Kings Cross. Over all everyone had an excellent tour. Commiserations go to **Capt Jason Gunning** who missed out at the last minute and spent the time on an African holiday in the Congo instead!

Ready to enplane and gain our Australian Wings

EXERCISE ARNHEM DROP
by Cpl Jackson

Ex Arnhem Drop was an initiative exercise held from 23-25 April 97. All available members of the Squadron were involved. The exercise started with a full Squadron recall in the early hours of the 23rd. We were paired off and instructed to change into smart civvies, pack a bag, between pairs, with wash kit, spare clothes and a sleeping bag. We were then briefed on the exercise. The aim was to complete as many initiative tasks as possible out of a list of fifty. We had to get proof of completing each task by photo-signed document, tickets etc. We were then searched and relieved of all credit cards, chequebooks, mobile phones and cash, bar five pounds per man. In our pairs we were then placed in different mini-buses and dropped off in various locations around the country.

My partner in crime **Sig** 'Daz' **Barns** and I were dropped off in Weymouth. We hitched a lift to Salisbury where we started our tasks. Our first stop was the library where we worked stamping books. Next I was dressed up in sportswear and sat in the window of Intersport where I stayed for some time acting as a rather ugly mannequin. We then worked (slaved) in a charity shop called Scope. One of our tasks was to feed a lion, we found a statue of a lion in the centre of Salisbury and we were photographed force-feeding it a Snickers bar. This drew a considerable crowd including a passing motorcycle cop. After explaining what we were doing he agreed to breathalise us as another of the tasks was to prove that we were not drunk. Our next port of call was a Hospital where we worked in the kitchens. We could not understand why they would not let us on the wards until on leaving we found it was a Psychiatric Hospital. Next we made our way to a farm just outside the town where we milked a Jersey cow called 'Bramble' and mucked out a pig sty, whose occupant was a rare breed with ginger hair, (not unlike the RSM it was noted).

Cpl Jackson 'Getting to Grips'
with the challenge of the initiative exercise

249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) Bulford Camp

249 SIG SQN (AMF(L)) DET
ATTACHED TO 280 (UK) SIGNAL SQUADRON FORWARD

Cpl Si Ferrer, Sigs Jamie Brown, Chris Cant, Dave Howie, Rich Littler, 'Gaz' **Prydie** and **Mike** 'Tips' **Tiplady** made up the Squadron's detachment to 280 (UK) Sig Sqn Forward. Initially we were deployed to Sarajevo, Bosnia. After arriving at Zetra Stadium in Sarajevo, we were given a brief overview of what 280 Sig Sqn were trying to achieve and then we were dispatched to our individual detachments.

Cpl Si Ferrer and **Sig Dave Howie** went to Ilidza where they became part of the O+M (operator + maintenance) team, which was responsible for telephone maintenance and for CODAN, an HF radio set. **Sigs Rich Littler** and **Mike** 'Tips' **Tiplady** went to the Residency (Sarajevo), where they made up the Quick Reaction Comms Team, and were responsible for anything slightly comms related! **Sigs Jamie Brown, Chris Cant,** and 'Gaz' **Prydie** were sent to Mostar, Tuzla and Banja Luka respectively, where they operated the Video Tele Conference systems.

We all experienced different hardships at each location, but the main common factors were the harsh winter months, basic (to say the least) living conditions, then extremely warm temperatures towards the end of the detachment. Everyone enjoyed their detachments and was made to feel most welcome by 280 personnel, and at least it makes you appreciate sunny Bulford-on-Sea.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Duncan Noble**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Frank Flaherty**

Salutations from the Troop go to **Cpls Wright, Stone** and **Foster, LCpls Howell, Tones,** and **Sig Gibson**. Those recently departed are **Sgt** (I'll never go there) **Turner** who has disappeared off to the training wing, **Cpl** 'Drudge' **Coates**–3 Div, **LCpl Bound**–216 Sqn, and **LCpl Chandler**–Army Apprentices at Arborfield. The roulement to Bosnia is still continuing with four lucky soldiers having descended on the region. They are **Cpl Grassick, Cpl Stone** and **Sig Shore** (Satcom tours). **Sig Dytham** has been detached to 280 Sqn. Those even more fortunate to be returning from the region to continue their time within the Squadron are **Cpl Ferrer, LCpls Butchart** and **Sigs Calvert, Howie, Prydie, Littler** and **Tiplady**.

Since returning from Norway in March the Troop has been involved in a variety of activities such as training for the Lanyard Trophy and the annual Battle Camp. Coming up the Troop also has an AMF deployment to Sardinia and Summer Camp to look forward to.

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jeffries**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Martin**

Welcome to **LCpl Spearpoint** from 14 Sigs and also **Sig Richards** and **Tierney** from 11 Sig Regt Blandford, **LCpl Hamblen** from 3 Div and **LCpl Henson** from 1 (UK) Armd Div. Farewells to **LCpl McDiarmid** to 14 Sigs, **LCpl Tailford** to Civ Div and **Sig Copeland** to 1 Mech Bde. Congratulations to **Sig** and **Mrs Copeland** on the birth of their baby and to **Cpl Hilton** on becoming engaged.

After re-deployment from Ex Hardfall 97 the Troop has been busy getting operationally turned round. Physically the Troop built itself up in preparation for another demanding year in the AMF. **Cpl Smith, Sig Brown, Sig Cant** and **Sig Copeland** return from Bosnia on Op Constant Guard, welcome home. Taking their place for the summer will be **Cpl Elliot, Cpl Mick Dundee Robjant, Sig Lark, Sig Milne, Sig North, Sig Reed** and **Sig Tierney.** In May the Troop was deployed on battle camp in Barry Budden consisting of lots of live firing which was greatly needed. Six of the Troop idiots (members) were hill walking casually around the Brecon Beacons in preparation for Lanyard Trophy, stocking up on ice cream every afternoon. The Troop deployed last Wednesday to cover the 'Three Peaks Race' race the highlight of our exercise calendar.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt. John Marriott**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Colin Dennis**

Since returning from Norway the Troop has had a busy time. Adjusting to the Troop acquiring some new departments as the Tech workshop now finally joins Support Tp. The ceaseless programme of Tech inspections, LAD vehicle inspections and the routine servicing of the Squadron's vehicle fleet has kept the Troop very busy. We have had many new arrivals in the Troop over the last few months. Welcome to **Cpl Dave Atherton, LCpl Pat Casey , LCpl Si Hurst, LCpl Martyn Rudland, LCpl Rob Townsend** and **Sig Paul Kemp.** Congratulations are due to **LCpl Si Clayton** on his recent promotion and passing the first week of his AIPT course.

The month of May saw the Troop involved in major efforts for the Squadron. The annual battle camp where most of the Troop was put through their paces on the 4-5 ranges at Barry Budden in Scotland. **Capt. John Marriott, Sgt's 'Gaz' Greaves , Andy Lothian** and **LCpl Si Clayton** and **Sig** 'Popeye' **Doyle** were away in Brecon training for Lanyard trophy over this period. The Squadron athletics day was another resounding success for the Troop. Well done to **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** in organising the day and for winning his events. **LCpl Rob Townsend** made a great impression by doing the 5000m and the 3000m steeplechase back to back. **Sgt Steve Kew** proved to be the Squadron's own Hercules by winning most of the throwing events. **Sgt Andy Lothian** managed to come third on the 5000m after ordering **Sig Clubb** not to overtake him Support Tp were victorious needless to say and won by a country mile.

The rest of the exercise went well for us and amongst other things we worked in an abbatoir, appeared on BBC Radio Southern Counties, helped on a milk round, interviewed a stripper, worked in a girls school, drove a steam roller and skippered the Gosport to Portsmouth ferry. In conclusion the exercise was enjoyed by all, and the reception we got from the members of the general public was very good indeed.

BRAVO TROOP–APRIL/MAY

The Troop has, as usual, been extremely busy, due to exercise commitments both internally and with outside units–namely providing HF comms for Pathfinder Platoon's recent exercise in Belize, a Hunter force for Hereford and attachments to 1 PWRR for possible deployments. The Troop has also contributed to assorted pre-Battle Camp training including P-Section and Combat Survival.

P-Section involved most of the Troop at one stage or another. Most notable was **Cpl Mick Brown**'s instruction, **Cpl** 'Mad' **Jackson's** frenzied bayonet drill, the top acting from **Cpl** 'Nosher' **Brown** who once more lost another part of his anatomy in the name of First Aid and **Cpl** 'Goma' **Goddard** for running around 'fiddling' to make sure it all went smoothly. The week included harbour drills, battle drills, casualty simulation, recces and finished with a Platoon attack that started with a bang (thanks to the Troop bomb factory) and finished with a stretcher run. The small part of the Squadron that was around on 28 June took part in a day's Combat Survival training near Godalming. **SSgt Karl Weaver** was in his element killing and skinning things but **Sig** 'Del' **McDowell** preferred to keep out of the way.

Finally congratulations to the newly promoted **LCpl Nick Sanders,** goodbye to **LCpl Patmore, LCpl Steve Baigent** and **Cpl** Mac **McBean** and welcome back to **LCpls Henderson** and **Howe** from their Australia tour–apparently they got their Australian wings but they're keeping it quiet.

BATTLE CAMP 15-31 MAY 1997.
by Cpl 'Geordie' Wright.

I'm writing this with a fresh perspective, as I am a new boy to the Squadron. Battle camp was held at Barry Budden Training Camp, just outside Dundee. Surprisingly the weather was good over the entire period, which helped to keep morale high. The advance party, which had departed on 16 May, was ready for the main body's arrival on Sunday 18 May. We immediately moved into section rooms, and training began on the Monday morning, consisting of ATD training, and supplemented with battle shoots and introduction to various other weapons systems, some of which were new to many of the Squadron. This period lasted for five days.

The Squadron then moved into a combat phase, with each section in separate locations, carrying out individual tasks. Some funny incidents occurred, due to other units also using the training area, with my own fire team tracking a Royal Artillery section to its hide location. Meanwhile, back at the platoon HQ, plans were afoot to move into a platoon harbour. That night, all five sections moved into the planned location. From the platoon harbour, each section carried out individual tasks and missions, consisting of ambushes, OPs, patrols and recces, over the next two days, leading up to the platoon in defence live shoot. Once this was completed, the sections, as a platoon moved back to our harbour area to carry out further patrols and ambushes .Endex was called at 2am on Thursday 29, by **Sgt** 'Ez' **Ezard**, who narrowly escaped being butchered by the platoon–as he previously led us to believe that we were staying out longer than anticipated (oh that old one!). Then he ended our torment (only joking Sergeant Major) with that wonderful word "ENDEX".

Many thanks go to the DS, for a varied training programme, with new things for everyone, and congratulations to section 2, winners of the best section competition, well done **Cpl Al Bell** and all his lads.

251 Sig Sqn

RACE THE SUN 97
'TEAM PHOENIX'–FEMALE TEAM
by SSgt P. A. T. Millar

Race the Sun is a 16 stage multi event relay race over 150 miles of North Yorkshire countryside. The events include running, cycling, forced march, canoeing, orienteering and swimming. The competition is a high profile charity event, which is held annually and organised by 2 Sig Regt. Each team must consist of the minimum of 16 competitors (one per leg). However, due to the complexity of the competition–an admin support team of around six personnel and three vehicles is essential. The aim of Race the Sun is that all competitors enjoy participating in a challenging, competitive and novel event whilst raising money for charity. The 1997 competition was held on 14 May 1997. This year, 251 Sig Sqn at Aldershot, organised the first female team ever to compete in this event.

THE STORY

The signal from 2 Sig Regt York, advertising the event, was initially spotted by **Mr Derek Keen**, the Civilian Traffic Officer (CTO) 251 Sig Sqn. He hastily passed the information to my desk–suggesting that I entered a female team! Good idea! The information was studied, and a plan was put into operation immediately. I had exactly six weeks before the event, so various signals and a Race The Sun booklet was sent to all units under HQ Aldershot Garrison, HQ 4 Div, and also to all Royal Signals units UK. The request was for any 'brave' female soldiers to compete in this strenuous event. The response was excellent. Within four weeks I had a team of 24 competitors and 6 admin support personnel. Volunteers for the admin support team was easy–as they all came from 251 Sig Sqn. However, the co-ordination and release of the 24 competitors was somewhat tasking. The competitors were from units spread across the UK from Blandford to Catterick, and not all were R Signals. Finally the team was complete, with all co-ordination and liaison with competitors agreed over the telephone! Now for the team name... well all the staff in the Ops Room, 251 Sig Sqn, collectively decided on the name 'Phoenix'. Evidently the name Phoenix derives from a mythical bird which rose from the ashes with renewed youth to live again. The name 'Phoenix' is described as being unique–one of a kind.

With one week to go, we were hit with the first blow–5 team members couldn't compete. The reasons were varied...broken arm, sick, desperately required for duty... etc etc. However, I remained optimistic, and immediately rang my reserve competitors. They were kept in reserve, because I had to draw the line initially at 24 competitors. One reserve competitor, **2Lt Anna Cliff**, 35 Sig Regt, came to the rescue. Well the travelling day 12 May 1997 arrived. I waited with baited breath to see who (if any) would turn up for the transport. All went well, nine competitors and all 6 admin support personnel set off for York. The remaining competitors promised to meet us there! The second blow came on arrival at York, with just 1 day before the event I was informed that two competitors were not coming....illness and injury!! However, again I remained optimistic. The day arrived, or shall I say 0500 hrs on 14 May 1997. 'Team Phoenix' was complete with 18 competitors and 6 admin support personnel.

Capt Jules Walster–Isn't this fun, will I win?

The first leg a 6km canoe went off with a cracking start. Two competitors, **Capt Jules Walster** R Sigs and **Capt Woo Allen** 28 AEC canoed. An excellent start for Team Phoenix with **Capt Jules Walster** finishing 11th out of 28 in a time of 54.17 mins. **Capt Walster** promptly handed over to the leg 2 runners **Sig Anderson** and **Pte Elliott** both of 19 Inf Mech Bde, Catterick. The entire team performed excellently, **Capt Allen** of 28 AEC competed in two events, **Capt Walster** achieved remarkable results in three events and **Sig Wilkinson** of 251 Sig Sqn had a brilliant performance in the half marathon and the forced march plus assault course. Team Phoenix completed the course in a total time of 18 hrs 20 mins, and for our efforts was presented with the 'Sporting Team' shield. The admin support team worked constantly throughout the day. Thanks to a master plan devised by **SSgt Dave Whiting**, 251 Sig Sqn, all competitors arrived at the start of their leg on time and with the correct equipment.

SSgt Dave Whiting offering support to 2Lt Anna Cliff prior to starting Leg Three 'The Biathalon'

Entering 'Team Phoenix', the first female team in Race the Sun, was a demanding task. It was made possible with the help from the staff in the Operations Room, 251 Sig Sqn. In particular, **Claire Silman, Mr Derek Keen** and **Capt Tommy Baldwin**–who provided unlimited advice and assistance. We have now opened the path for other female teams–maybe Race the Sun 98 will see a few female team challengers. WELL DONE TO EVERYONE.

SATISFIED SOLDIER SCHEME

- ***Are you a satisfied soldier?***
- ***Would you like to be attached to your home town ACIO for 5-10 days?***
- ***Would you like to visit your old school and ACF to tell them about life in The Royal Signals?***
- ***Would you like to help in recruiting soldiers into The Royal Signals?***

YES!!

Then contact your Troop Office for details of THE SATISFIED SOLDIER SCHEME

259 Sig Sqn
BFPO 53

Sqn Comd — **Maj Steve Turnbull**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hardwidge**

CYPRUS SERVICES ROAD RACE SERIES 1997

It is amazing that when there is a free T-shirt up for grabs there is never a problem fielding a team of runners. But it was not until the interested parties had turned up for the first race that they were informed that they had to complete three out of the five races in the series to qualify for their 'freebie'. The races were run over a three-month period (Jan-Mar) and we had perfect running conditions for the time of year. The distances should have begun with a five miler, gradually increasing to 8, 10, half marathon and finishing with a 15 mile race from Dhekelia to Ay Nik. We managed to enter a team in all the races. **Cpl Ian Hughes** did the front running for the Squadron, and he managed to produce some excellent results. Chasing him were the two new arrivals to the Squadron **SSgt Steve Casson** and **Sgt Steve Lynch** who were busy having their own battle for the second place slot. With three races gone there was no catching **Sgt Steve Lynch** and it looked as though **SSgt Steve Casson** would have to accept defeat to the 'younger' runner, but all was not lost. An emergency call of nature in the half marathon and an injury from Inter Tp rugby saw the last two races being lost to a delighted **SSgt Steve Casson.** After all the competitiveness both runners finished with exactly the same points.

The Squadron were never going to be able to compete with the might of the United Nations contingent, predominantly the Argentinians, who collected virtually all the prizes. We still achieved a creditable result and can only improve next year. Finally, a mention to **Sgt Neil Blenkinsop,** who at his age should only be concerned about ATD training, well done and at least you got your free T-shirt. **Sig Jim Lang** now knows not to approach **Sgt Lynch** the day before a race saying that he is unable to run due to the rehearsals of 'Richard the Lionheart' being on at the same time. Any other excuse imaginable would have been more acceptable.

25 YEARS TYPING FOR LITSA

On Friday 2 May **Pantelitsa Nicolaidou** completed 25 years of service to the Squadron. She celebrated by taking a surprise flight in a Gazelle helicopter. It was a flight through the ages, touring the various places she had worked over the 25 years, and flying over Limassol to see her house as she had never seen it before. Inevitably she returned to Episkopi for a drink at the Jimmy Club. **Litsa** joined 261 Sig Sqn in May 1972 as the typist at the Airfield, joining 259 in 1975 when the two Squadrons amalgamated. She has worked in SHQ ever since. Congratulations **Litsa**.

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Mark Finneran**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt 'Yogi' Caudwell**

At last the proper Cyprus weather is here, which is great if you have time off but not so funny if you are working. Our daily routine starts off every morning with the communal ceremony of liberal suntan lotion application. As we all know it is a military offence to be sunburned so the odd organised Troop sunbathing session has appeared in the programme. If **Sig Wilkinson** carries on as he is he will be a general before long. Last week the troop had their summer party at the beach. It was a great day out for all the families with an excellent freeish barbecue and drinks. Well done to **Cpl Wainwright, Cpl Webster** and their team of fix-its for the day that was enjoyed by all. A number of hidden talents came to the fore that day: **Sig James**, the whitest man on earth, **Lyn Hardwidge**, the best volleyball player on the beach, **Sig Kelly**, the best bikini, **Sig Bennett**, the second best bikini, **Sgt Rothery**, the finest red nose. Despite the hectic lifestyle of Airfield Tp it still remains the best Troop in the Squadron, consistently performing well, keep those inter troop posting proformas coming men – but be warned the selection process is tight!

DHEKELIA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Cath Waudby/2Lt Kath Honan**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ken McGirr**

Dhekelia Tp would like to say a fond farewell to two of its members, **LCpl 'Col' Davies** who is going sheep worrying at sunny 14 Sigs in Wales, and **Cpl Ian** "the nice PTI" **Hughes** who is off to beast some sprogs in Blandford. We also extend a warm welcome to **Sig Barney Barnett** who has arrived from the factory. Thanks to **2Lt Honan** who did an almost upstanding job standing in for **Capt Waudby** who was away at Headley Court. There seems to be a strange affliction which effects OC's of the Troop, it seems that after a few beers they fall over and break various bones. We all hope that the new OC can stay on his feet as the MRS are running out of crutches.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Phil Newton**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt 'Kev' Tierney**

It's all work and play at Episkopi Tp, the heart of communications in Cyprus. The recent influx of new recruits has enabled us to tackle some of the major projects and take part in some of the sporting events around the Island. **Sig Owen Trimble** led the way at the minor Units Athletics championships taking first place in the individual 400m, while **Sig** 'Knuckles' **Sheppard** and 'Flan' **Flannagan** eased their way to victory in the shot putt and long jump respectively. The troop thespian **Sig** 'Sam Dingle' **Lang** played the part of a crusader in the widely acclaimed Richard the Lionheart currently running at the Curium monument. Budding actor **Sig Simon Davies** the backstage roadie ably assisted him. The Hodgson shield is now underway with Episkopi Tp leading the way after **Cpl** 'Who ate all the pies?' **Baz Pickles** captained the team to victory in the cricket. The Epi Tp dolphins are already practising for the next event, swimming. There has been a massive change of personalities within the Squadron, this has had the usual effect on the Troop. We welcome **SSgt Kev Tierney, LCpl Cooper** and **Sig Darke**, we wish them and their families all the best. We say farewell to **Sig Chris Evans** and shortly to leave the Army **LCpl Michelle Mitchell** who has enjoyed her tour so much in Cyprus that she has decided to live here.

GAZELLE FLIGHT - 654 SQUADRON
4 REGIMENT ARMY AIR CORPS

On the 27 March 1997 **Cpl Eddy Smerdon** and **Cpl Mat Loosemore** were among twelve student pilots to be presented their Army Pilots Wings by **Gen Sir Michael Walker KCB CMG CBE**, on successful completion of the 12 month long course. Candidates come from all Corps and Regiments and ranks range from LCpl to Major. A multiple stage selection process and thorough medical must first be completed, before beginning the Fixed Wing phase of the course. Ground School reinforces the 'hands on' learning, giving the soldier a sound understanding of the Principles of Flight, Navigation, Meteorology, Aviation Law and the Technical aspects of the aircraft. These subjects are consolidated as the student progresses from Fixed Wing, through a Survival stage and on to Basic Rotary training. Advanced Rotary next where the recently acquired ability to handle the helicopter is applied to the military environment. For example Instrument Flying, the procedures for flying into and out of confined areas and the use of Night Vision Goggles.

A further phase of ground school takes the student through a syllabus of Tactics and an understanding of the 'larger picture' in which they'll be expected to operate. This is then applied in the final stage, where the Instructor flies as pilot and the student acts as Aircraft Commander. Now in the left hand seat, with the Gazelles optical aid to hand, the student must command single and multiple aircraft sorties, including Recce patrols and Air OP to guide Artillery fire. This culminates in a week-long tactical exercise in Devon, and the final course test, the Aircraft Commanders Assessment.

The course is both mentally and physically demanding, however the 'fun factor' is a great motivator. As well as a dashing badge and learning a lot about yourself. Those who are successful receive Flying pay. Qualified Royal Signals pilots are posted by RSM+RO to Army Air Corps Regts for a flying tour of three to four years. Options during that time are to transfer or remain Signals badged, with the possibility of being posted for a further flying tour or returning to Corps Communications.

Like driving, it's a great relief to pass the test but once qualified the real learning has only just begun! You may wonder, but you'll never know unless you try! I hope this gives an insight without starting a tidal wave of defection.

Cpl Smerdon (Left) and Cpl Loosemore with Gen Sir Michael Walker KCB CMG CBE

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
BFPO 35

Sqn Comd — **Maj Ian Condie**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Ivan Shiels**

MT TROOP
Tp Comd — **Capt Dougie Wright (MTO)**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Tony Barker**

As usual the phone call comes 'Cpl M, yes it's the MTO, Sgt H is once again on one of his little trips down to Bosnia and so you have to do *The Wire* notes.'

So here goes . . . first of all we have to say well done to **Sgt Dave Honeyman** on his promotion to Tp Sgt. Hello to **SSgt Tony Barker** on his move from Trg SSgt to the MT SSgt, let's hope he can handle the workload and find out where the office is located; also part-time stand-in Tp Sgt/**Cpl Paul Meredith** (who took time out from the gym to help). Thanks to **Cpl Ally Munro** who has now taken over the post of Families Sgt but still gets dragged over to help out in the MT due to his vast knowledge and experience.

Cpl Dennis McDonnell (Mick) has gone to shoulder the workload in Bosnia. **Cpl Keith Betts** has just got over his little accident of breaking his ankle while trying to show the lads how to play rugby . . . honest guv.

We have to say a few goodbyes: **SSgt** 'Big' **John Fisher**, who is posted to the UK; **Sgt Brian Green** to 14 Sig Regt and **LCpl** 'Daz' 'Tommo' **Thomas** who is posted to 30 Sig Regt. We wish them all the best. Also we say goodbye to **Sig** 'Jock' **Wells** and **Sig** 'Polley' **Pollock** who are both going to civvy street. We wish them all the best in whatever they do.

With all the ups and down in the Troop we also had an abundance of drivers sent to us from the factory with the likes of **Sig Custy**, **Lister**, **McDougall**, **Molden** and not forgetting our very own Serb Siggie (**Sig Radivojsa**) all the way from UK.

We are now set to do our TUV with all our fleet and so this is going to be probably our busiest time of year. Also we had to help out with the Squadron Summer Ball and the Medal Parade for all those who have just completed their Bosnia tour. After all this the MTO still manages to get us out onto the football pitch where we all see the great Rangers winger, that man yes, **Capt Dougie Wright** trying to run like a 25 year old and his idea of playing for 30 mins lasts for about two hours and by then the MTO is the only one still running around.

After all the hard work we do, we still manage to have some time off and we look forward to Fridays and having a few drinks in the rest room, a most excellent end to the week. So if you want to have a good time and see how we keep NATO up and running, then get your dream sheets in now. Do not delay, do it today.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Gareth Lamb**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Rob Melotte**

Many Troop members have returned to the fold following their Bosnian tour. Upon returning, all spent their five days cooling off period doing ATD training and debrief before our much needed two weeks leave. After this we were very much back to normal when reunited with our detachments–just in time for TUV and first line inspections.

The Troop has been very busy, taking an active part in the Bruggen 10 where **Cpl Icke** came a very respectable 84th out of over a 1,000 entrants. At the UKSC(G) Skills at Arms Meet the Squadron team consisted of **Lt Lamb**, **Cpl Keith**, **Sig Edwards**, **Sig Foulkes** and **Sig Hillson** from Bravo Tp. Although not entering the main competition we achieved some good scores, **Sig Edwards** making the final of the Rifle Competition and the Falling Plate team achieving a respectable fourth place without the benefit of SUSATs.

On 31 May the Troops enjoyed a families barbecue and paintball day in glorious sunshine. Congratulations to all those with lovely war wounds–they won't leave quite so much flesh showing next time!

After this we had a week's drill practice in preparation for our Squadron's medal parade, where **Brig Shaw** presented all the Troops NATO medals. This was held on 5 June with the Summer Ball commencing when the parade was finished.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Jo Evans**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt** 'Tommy' **Davies**

During the past three months Bravo Tp has been completely reformed, with many old members returning from tours on Operation Lodestar and several new members posted in. After a brief spell of post tour leave the Troop is back up and running as normal as possible with half of the Troop still deployed in Bosnia and the other half due to redeploy in August. Due to little time and much work we are constantly occupied at the moment preparing for the medal parade, TUV (German MOT), and forthcoming exercises.

The reformation has meant a change in personalities within the Troop, **SSgt Tom Davies** comes in to replace **SSgt Terry Murrell** who moves across to the Training Wing, **Sgt Rob Barnes** has easily filled the gap left by **Sgt Al Peel** and **Sgt Martin Stebbing** finally escaped the PRI to come and do a proper job. In addition to these splendid SNCOs the Troop adopted several urchins from the factory, **LCpls Phil Gavan** and **Ronnie Radford, Sigs Andy King** and 'Damian' **Sherriff** welcome one and all.

Alas as always we must also bid a sad farewell to **LCpl** 'Eddie' **Cochran** posted to Aldershot and **Sig** 'Bellies' **Benham** posted to 16 Sigs, goodbye and good luck.

Congratulations are in order to **Sgts Karl Scaife** and **Desmond Jenkins** on their success at the recent Foreman of Signals selection board, good luck to you both in the future.

Alongside this the Squadron had to prepare for a training exercise on our RMA equipment in order to give the new arrivals valuable hands on in the operation and maintenance of the installations and also to enable the experienced personnel to pass on their knowledge, before redeployment in August.

Hello to **Sig Foulkes** and **Sig Ellison** on their arrival in the Troop and congratulations to **Cpl Icke** and **Cpl** 'Chippy' **Chipperfield** who received their second. Best wishes also to **SSgt Melotte** and his family, and we hope to see you back in the Troop very soon.

Joint Communications Unit
Falkland Islands

OC — **Maj M. J. Fensom**
USM — **WO2 S. Mitchell**

257 Sig Sqn are presently providing the Army Element of the Joint Communications Unit in the Falkland Islands. In the blink of an eye, we are now half way through our tour. Hopefully the next three months will pass by as quickly. It's not that we don't want to be here of course, it's just that we could think of a thousand other places we would rather be. Even Bulford sounds appealing at the moment! So over to the Troops for their observations on life at MPA.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd — **Flt Lt S. M. Valentine**
2IC — **SSgt I. Flooks**

The ups and downs at the 'RADCON' Roadside Cafe are still ongoing. The happy family that we have now become has been tested to its limits, but we still remain working as a team. Our illustrious leader **SSgt** 'Squared away' **Flooks** has turned out not only to be a man of action, but also a bit of a diva on the dance floor. **Sgt** 'Richard Gere' **Patterson** has not only been an invaluable source on the technical side, but his skills in horse riding have also come on in leaps and bounds. His duty tech **LCpl** 'Spuddy–I can eat 12 bowls of Weetabix' **Murphy** has been tracking close on his heels. **LCpl** 'we don't do that' **Richardson** has kept a tight rein on her shift, consisting of **Sig** 'Staff, Staff' **Knight** and **Sig** 'Houseproud' **Gardyne** who insists on waking up at 4am to do the hoovering. Next on the list are the likely lads, a small group of four boys who should not be allowed out without parental supervision. **Cpl Kutzner**, newly promoted **LCpl** 'Wayhay' **Bonham**, **Sig** 'Let's party' **Hodgson** whose driving skills leave little to be desired and not forgetting **Sig** 'Fimbar' **Saunders**. This leaves our new Tp Comd, **Flt Lt** 'Shirley' **Valentine** who was dubious to say the least about taking over as OC RADCON, but after much tension and a few slabbing fines for having too many blueys she has finally settled in.

BRAVO TROOP

Mount Pleasant COMCEN is Navy led using mainly Royal Navy systems, but is manned by all three services. The army element is led by **Sgt** 'JP' **Partridge** (known as aridge, as there is no PT in Partridge, unless Guinness drinking is now a recognised sport). He is ably assisted by **LCpl** 'Ski' **Mckie** the 'Queen Vic' nude dancing champion, **LCpl Paula Scully** the march and shoot heroine, **Sig** 'Ginga' **Wright**, **Sig Kerry Angus** and **Sig** 'Mac' **Matthews** who is off to the IT cell.

The Troop recently took part in the Falkland Islands march and shoot competition with **LCpl Paula Scully** the only women to take part. Her effort was admired by all and she certainly put some of the lads to shame. Well done **Paula**!

Life here goes very quickly and it is hard to believe that we are over halfway through our tour already. The recce team from 1 Div have been out and they can be sure of a warm welcome on their return in August.

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt H. L. Bosley**
2IC — **SSgt M. Nuttall**

The Troop continue to make steady progress in the Falklands and are well clear at the top of the OC Units 'interview' league causing **SSgt Matt Nuttall to** sprout more grey hair than is probably normal. **Lt Helen Bosley** took the sensible option and opted for a two week exchange visit with the Navy. The only drawback being the fact that she had to endure a two week cruise to Montevideo. **LCpl** 'Mansell' **Porter** has learnt the hard way that Landrovers are not quite designed to drive on BV tracks down a 30ft drop. **Sig** 'Allbran' **Mason** has become notorious within the Unit for his stuffing cereal in the roof? **Cpl Al Dawes** and **LCpl Richie Bryan** are now confirmed as the Troop fashion kings after their performance at the Troop 70's night. Rejects from the set of 'Shaft' had better dress sense! The 'mountain men' continue to prosper. **Sgt Phil Cooper** now looks more like the RAF than the RAF do and that is an achievement in itself. **Cpl Paul Drysdale** is coming to terms with the heinous crime of tampering with the CSE show comedians jacket and **Cpl Mark Wilkinson** is rumoured to have put in a generous offer to secure the long term lease of his bunk at Alice.

IT CELL

Despite what you may have heard, the Falklands are not a group of barren, cold and wind swept islands in the South Atlantic. They are more off to one side of the middle. Nevertheless, it's not enough to get good men down and after our arrival we have settled in nicely in our new found home.

As for the personnel in the cell, everyone seems fine and bearing up to the SA summer well. The task has been made easier for some than others. **Sgt** 'Gav' **Henderson** and **LCpl Tony Carter** are the lucky ones because they are going back to the UK on 31 May. This could also explain the smug faces around the office. **LCpl Tony Carter** has a pressing engagement in the form of his upgrading course at Blandford. Luckily enough though **Sgt** 'Gav' **Henderson** has to come back after a week but no doubt we will have to endure his stories of McDonalds and draught beer! The remainder of the Cell, **Sigs Ian Shaw** and **Ian Dodds**, will just have to muddle through without their glorious leader.

MARCH AND SHOOT

JCUFI has certainly not been resting on its laurels in the last few weeks. The recent march and shoot competitions saw to that. The first was the Falklands Islands Defence Force competition which was a navigation march/run of 10 miles cross country followed by a falling plate competition. Two teams from JCUFI took part. Curiously, the 2 FIDF teams came first and second followed by the Gurkhas. The JCUFI teams came a well deserved fourth and a not so well deserved eighth (mainly due to the shooting of **Lt Gray**'s team!) This was useful practice for the competition a week later which was organised by the Reinforced Infantry Company. Teams of 24 were required. JCUFI just about managed a team, dragging in not only men from the mountain sites but also the USM. It was a truly tri-service team. We had one member each from the Navy and RAF! This competition was more of a sprint than a march and we did well to be the first non Infantry team, coming sixth after the five Gurkha teams. A special mention must go to **LCpl Paula Scully** for completing the course with ease, much to the amazement of the Gurkhas.

55 Sig Sqn (V)

Sqn Comd — **Maj J. Crackett TD**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) J. Lloyd**

30TH ANNIVERSARY
by Cpl Davies

Where do we start! Some time around November 1996 it was noticed by **Cpl** 'Adonis' **Doyle** whilst reading the Squadron history (the OC or SSM must have been close by) that the Squadron would be 30 years old on 1 April 1997. It was then that the idea of planning some sort of event so as not to let such a distinguished date pass by unnoticed was born. The following Thursday there was much discussion, mumbling and finger pointing, and it was decided that a new committee should be formed to concentrate solely on a charity day to celebrate the anniversary. The committee would consist of **Cpls** 'Bos' **Davies**, 'Adonis' **Doyle**, 'Billy the Kid' **Halewood** and **Sigs** 'Gumby' **Hilton**, 'I used to be a Colour Sergeant' **McCourt** and 'Does my bum look big in this' **Woodford.**

First on the agenda was to pick a date, and the 22 March was the closest we could get to the actual anniversary date. Venue–Altcar Training Camp. Activities–we decided to set up a full showing of the Squadron's equipment/roles: RRB, RLD and para support. Next some sort of crowd-pulling activities. We went for the traditional Coconut Shy, Face Painting and a Gladiator Pugel Stick Bouncy Castle (the poor kids never got a look in). There was a football match against the Radio City XI, from the local radio station. There was also a normal Bouncy Castle, Mini Assault-Course, Inter Sqn Tug of War, It's a Knock Out and Dunk the Boss. Then there was also a car boot sale as a peripheral event. It was also decided to hold an evening function and invite as many ex-Sqn members as possible. A further committee was set up to arrange this and **Sgts** 'I'll be a Yeoman one day' **Coleman** and 'Driving Ass Daisy' **Hankin** were responsible. So two committees were established with **Lt** 'Barry Sheen' **Reardon** as overall commander.

Everything was running along smoothly (honest) when it was decided by the powers that be that the weather could play a crucial element in the days events, so a new date had to be found. So 3 May was chosen as the new date but this caused problems with the venue. With less than six weeks to the anniversary we were frantically trying to find a new venue when a Mr J. Saville from Jacobs Biscuit factory across the road from the TAC offered some real estate within the factory. The Radio City XI pulled out from the football match so an alternative opponent had to be found. Saturday 3 May finally arrived and **WO2 (SSM)** 'Don't let yourself down' **Lloyd** was seen to do much shouting and screaming, trying to sort out the delivery of the equipment from the TAC to Jacobs. By 1100hrs the sun was beaming and the turn out was good with much local interest, as well as Squadron members and families and friends in attendance. There was a great deal of interest around the 'Dunk the Boss' stand with the **OC Sqn, SSM, Lts Mason, Reardon** and **McCann** lining up to be 'dunked'. I have never seen so much interest and money spent by so many to gain revenge on so few.

Next was the football match with the Squadron team looking like a scene from Escape to Victory with most of the team having just had their heads shaved for charity. After a slow start the Squadron got into their stride with goals from **Cpl Davies**, **Sig Goulart** and an ex-Squadron member **Mr Jimmy Orme** and ran out 4-nil winners. Unfortunately the rain started at about 1500hrs and the Tug of War and the It's a Knockout had to be cancelled but nevertheless a great day was had by all and everyone was looking forward to the evening's function in the TAC. The evening function was a great success and plenty of ex-members arrived and spent the night reminiscing with old comrades. The buffet provided by **WO2 Goolie** and assisted by **Sig Woodford** was second to none, catering for 180 guests. It was a great evening and rounded off a great day. Special thanks must go to all the Squadron members who gave up their own time to man the stalls and provide guards both for the day and the evening function. Roll on the 40th anniversary!

CORPS SAAM 4-6 APRIL 97
by Sgt Swan

This year's Corps SAAM had a record 21 teams entered and a first time entry from the Squadron. The aim was to get a taste for competition shooting which was certainly achieved. All Squadron team members thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it is hoped to enter two teams next year. **Lt** 'This way' **Mason** was a notable success winning trophies for the best officer, joint APWT winner and overall Champion at Arms–an outstanding achievement.

(*L-R*): Pte 'I'm not really with it' Pethard, Sig 'I can shoot better than that' Bradley, SSM 'When I' Lloyd, Lt 'This way' Mason, Sig 'Sorry I'm late' Murphy, Sgt 'Calm down' Swan

STOP PRESS

The OC, **Maj Crackett,** experienced a bad fall from the back of the Radcon stores vehicle on 31 May resulting in a broken ankle. Unfortunately he will be unable to go on the Sqn summer camp. Ex Able Condor this year and he will be dearly missed. All the Squadron would like to wish him all the best and a speedy recovery. Remember there is always next year!

70 (EY) Sig Sqn

Sqn Comd **Maj Simon Palmer**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The Essex Yeomanry Sig Sqn bids farewell to **SSgt George Farrar** and his wife **Gill** on posting to 7 Sig Regt. We thank them both for their interest in the Squadron throughout their tour and thank **George** for his help and guidance that is appreciated and remembered. We wish them a pleasant tour in Germany. The Squadron welcomes **SSgt Steve Matthews** the new SPSI from 3 Div. We hope he enjoys his tour with the Essex Yeomanry.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our Congratulations go to **LCpl Joanna Smith** who was awarded the 'Best Soldier of the Year Trophy' by the Essex Yeomanry Association Harlow Branch at the Annual Dinner held at the TA Centre.

The Trophy is awarded annually for the young soldier who has, in the opinion of the Committee, actively promoted the Squadron in recruiting, social and welfare throughout the year.

EXERCISE ORIENT DAWN

The Squadron deployed to Stradishall Training Area on an Infantry Tactics Ex in preparation for Annual Camp that is to be held in Belgium. Many lessons were learnt on this Exercise. Whilst it was extremely arduous, which is the nature of these exercises, the Troops enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to putting into practice at Annual Camp lessons learnt. **Capt Craig Tallents** and **Lt Andy Austin** controlled the Ex. The SPSI and his team of **SSgt Liz Murphy, Sgt Dave McCready** and **Brian Malyon** assisted them.

Sgt Dave McCready–How do I open my sandwich box?

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

Tp Comd **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**
YofS **SSgt (YofS) Pete van den Broek**

Another thrilling period in our lives was spent in Drawsko-Pomorski, before Ex Prairie Eagle 1 came to a welcome end. The team were in some need of rest and recuperation. So we had some leave in an attempt to use up some of that 'carried over' stuff we missed out on last year.

Sig 'Andy 2' **Powell** entered the London Marathon for the fourth time! He completed the gruelling course in 3hr. 28min. Well done to him.

SSgt Pete van den Broek, **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** returned after leave, quickly retracted their statements that 'Skippers were Sippers' (see *Wire* February 1997) and departed to Kiel for their Day skippers course.

The sailing was definitely different compared to the trip on *Flamingo* with much more mental effort required. The weather was also a lot different, with near storm force winds keeping the crew on their toes and the boats on their sides. A day spent in Aeroskobin, storm bound, passed slowly (very slowly, in fact). Although the local cinema put on a film especially for the crews, it was in English but with Danish sub-titles and we don't know the name! Something about Hugh Grant being a doctor and uncovering a perverse clinic experimenting on tramps spines to find a cure for paraplegia. Answers on a postcard please!

The second night in Aeroskobin passed quickly enough with much singing and merriment. Unfortunately the wind was blowing more water into the harbour. The result–the water level of the non-tidal Baltic rose by nearly a metre, leaving the boats in danger of being grounded when the water dropped again. So the fearless twosome, and crew, **SSgt Pete van den Broek** and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** waded knee deep across the now submerged jetty, through the freezing Baltic to get on the boat and move her to safety. **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** crew, from the other boat, were much more switched on (or sissy) and avoided getting wet by using their dinghy. Once the boats were safe, the bar was enticing them back but one small task remained. **Capt Roger Ayres** (from 204 Sig Sqn) calves had swelled to the size of a normal mans' thighs and it took the whole crew to pull his trousers back over them. The day skipper crews returned to the bar and proceeded to tell tall tales of extreme winds, seas and temperatures.

The course was littered with events such as this, far too many to mention here. However, in summary, **SSgt Pete van den Broek** and **Capt Roger Ayres** ate all the bacon rations while the rest of the crew were partying to the wee hours in Svenborg. **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** fell asleep standing up in a Svenborg night club, although he redeemed himself by waking up and dancing the night away after his brief 'power wob'. **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** finally got over his fear of the boat tilting when it suffered a 'knock-down' by an extremely strong gust of wind!

The day after the sailors returned to Hohne, the team deployed on Ex Prairie Eagle 2 and 3. No rest for the wicked, at least, not during most of April and May.

After the 23 hour drive (48 hours for the OC and YofS, who happily munched their Yorkie bars while quoting EC driving regulations to the movements staff, before refusing to truck another kilometre) we found ourselves marooned on planet Mars, also known as the Brigade Support Group (BSG). A neat, temporary pad was sorted out and the Sky systems installed. The days in the BSG passed slowly, with routine maintenance on the generators and general pottering about in eager preparation for getting out of BSG. The team, always making the best of a situation, promptly erected a volley ball court, using mine-tape, tent poles, cam string and some pegs. Many hours were killed playing volley ball, and many injuries to hands sustained as the ball was a little flat! The next door neighbours, a few dets from 204 Sig Sqn, declined the offer of a game for some reason.

Cpl 'Mick' **Murphy** and **Sig** 'Andy 2' **Powell** were tasked with providing an orienteering course. The course, like some of the distances, was ably dreamt up and consisted of running to checkpoints, reading the clue to find the next checkpoint, getting the next part of a long mathematical problem and at one point building a box. The course definitely pointed out some weaknesses in the team's abilities. On the whole, a great deal of imagination was required to believe that some of the constructions left at stand 5 were actually boxes!

To complete the teams' entertainment facilities, **LCpl Andy Johnstone** brought his pride and joy, the complete collection of Star Trek films! (Yes, he is a trekkie, there's always one, isn't there). Much to **Sig Scott Yuills** disgust, the team proceeded to watch them all, starting with the motion picture, during the cold, dull nights in BSG.

COMSEC Team and LCpl Meakin (Centre)

We soon moved to our location, colloquially known as 'COMSEC Corner'. This is our very own, reserved 100 square metres of Poland. It even has symbols denoting it as 'Out of Bounds' on the maps. Except for the HVM battery from a certain Air Defence regiment who thundered through one night, until the OC showed them where they were and told them never to disturb our nightly dose of 'Trek' again.

Sig 'Vic' **Vernon** managed to build an (even bigger than last time) washing table while **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** constructed an earth oven. Built from a Warsaw Pact trench, a Trabant door, drip tray and some assorted training area debri, this cooker cooks chickens with some surprising, but tasty, results, It also cremates pies which aren't checked regularly. Feeling pleased with himself, **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** branched out into recreational facilities. The Commander of our organisation, an ex-infantry Colonel, is ever impressed by our abilities. During a visit he was heard to mention that we would benefit from the addition of a sauna. Take one **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy**, one 9x9 (formerly the OC and YofS tent), one steaming Burco boiler and hey presto, a sauna. The Commander was suitably impressed but the OC and YofS decided the alternative sleeping arrangements weren't quite adequate and demanded the tent back. Plans are currently underway for the construction of a log cabin, due for completion during Ex Ulan Eagle 1997.

Cpl Murphy's field oven

The YofS arranged a navigation exercise named Cunning Plan. The team became a group of crack (cracked?) commando types who had been dropped behind enemy lines. Unsurprisingly, the RAF dropped them in the wrong place, leaving them stranded all over hostile territory with nothing but a map, compass and absolutely no idea where they were. Their mission, should they choose to accept it, was to find out where they were and return to 'Cafe COMSEC' by the quickest route and brief the others on how they did it. All pairs arrived safely, including, somewhat surprisingly, **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** and **Sig** 'Andy 2' **Powell** who had worked out their location as being some kilometres distant from their actual drop off point.

LCpl Andy Johnstone waved a fond farewell to Poland for the last time and the team returned to Hohne. During the drive home, the power vehicle decided it had had enough and broke down and the landrovers' gearbox began acting rather strangely. We had a brief respite from exercises and it was **Sig** 'Andy 2' **Powell**'s turn to organise our Friday afternoon PT event. It consisted of an individual run, following a map (which showed the route and nothing else) with the aim of getting back to camp as quickly as possible. Simple. No, **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** got lost, found himself in a local village called Walle and ran 6kms, away from camp to Winsen Aller. On arrival he realised what he'd done and set off to run the 16km back to camp. The search party of **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** and **Sig** 'Andy 2' **Powell** picked him up near Belsen memorial site, a mere 4kms from camp with a time of nearly three hours and a 20km run. This was compared to 45 minutes and about 8km for those who could follow a sketch map. None of this deterred our three intrepid singlies from venturing off to Denmark for a well deserved long weekend.

We then deployed on Ex Armoured Eagle, during which our complex was visited by Command Troop of the Queens Dragoon Guards, every single one of them! The site had more Sultan command vehicles than you ever knew the Army had. They all gained from their visit and left much more COMSEC aware than when they arrived, especially after listening to recordings of themselves on our hard disks. The battlegroup commander popped in and was persuaded to stop using yet another one of those secret codes which the comat arms invent to keep our job interesting.

The end of Ex Armoured Eagle signalled the end of our first rush of exercises which have kept us in the field since February and we now have a few weeks before the next onslaught. The OC **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle** is still expanding his horizons with the Open University while the YofS **SSgt Pete van den Broek** is re-building our local area network in our skills training room. **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** has been sent on a crypto course, **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** is training like ten men for his det commanders course and **LCpl Andy Johnstone** is counting the days till his promotion to **Mr Andy Johnstone**. **Sigs** 'Andy 2' **Powell** and **Scott Yuill** are on truck driving at our newly opened garrison driver training school and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** has one week of this before being despatched to join a leg of a UK-based sailing expedition.

COMSEC Monitoring Team (UK)

OC **Capt Terry Crosby**
2IC **SSgt (YofS) Mark Hogan**

Since the teams' last inclusion in *The Wire*, there have been two noteable changes. First and foremost, the Team has said goodbye to **Capt Steve Roden** and his wife **Bettina**, who have departed for a warmer climate. Our best wishes go to them both. Secondly, the Team have now moved to Warminster from their long time home in Hullavington, which is where PJHQ turned up for a presentation!

OPERATION BERLIN

On Sun 11 May, under the command of **LCpl Wilman**, four members of the team deployed to Glasgow on a monitoring task in support of a friendly Government Agency. This experienced team had an average age of 23!

After an 8hr cabbie in the slowest minibus that Warminster Support Unit had to offer, we eventually arrived feeling a little worse for wear. Deeper into Glasgow and we found that our digs for the week was a 4-star hotel kindly supplied by our hosts. It was a slightly higher standard than we usually have to put up with - except **Sig** 'I've got a plum in my mouth' **Dunbavand** who found the Glasgow Thistle a little under par. We set up the equipment ready for an early start on Monday, then set off to check out the local drinking establishments. The evening got off to quite a slow start until we came across a karaoke bar! The 'talent' in the bar was unbelievable and the singing wasn't bad either. Wanting to fly the flag whilst in bonnie Scotland, we decided to get someone out of the team to show the Jocks how to really sing. After much deliberation, we came to the decision that our musical talents were limited to **Sig** 'Renbo' **Stuart** with Twinkle Twinkle Little Star or **Sig Sara** 'Dime Bar' **Glasspool** with her version of La Bamba. With **Ren** not wanting to waste any time from investigating if Glaswegian womens tonsils were the same as their English counterparts, **Sara** and her croaky version of La Bamba flew the flag. On another night scouting the bars for local talent, **Geoff** 'fat boy' **Wilman** decided to take time out and see if Scottish bars were more comfortable than English bars by sleeping on them.

After a week of some very hard work and even harder socialising, we reluctantly had to pack up the kit and make our way back south to reality and rejoin the rest of the team.

ORIENTEERING

Not many units can boast that 25% of their unit strength are Corps Champions – but we can! At the Corps Championships on 10 May, **Sig Ren Stuart** won the Junior under 21 Championship at the first attempt having only been orienteering for a month or so, whilst his boss and coach **Capt Terry Crosby** captured the M40 title.

Sig Sara Glasspool

Corps Orienteering Champions
Capt Terry Crosby (M40) and Sig Rennie Stuart (U21)

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS

604 Sig Tp

PERSONALITIES

Tp Comd	**Capt Richard Spencer**
YofS	**SSgt(YofS) Paul Sutcliffe**
FofS	**SSgt(FofS) Martin Flather**

The Troop has been through a busy few months, of which the highlights are below. On the domestic front we have welcomed **Sig Mary Farnsworth** who joins us from 1 Mech Bde and our congratulations are extended to **LCpl** 'Davrog' **Rogers** and his wife **Christine** on the birth of their son **Aaron**.

EXERCISE ARCTIC EXPRESS 97
by LCpl 'IT' Harrison

On a windy Monday morning, **Sig** 'Nath' **Hadley** and myself set off for 249 Sig Sqn and three days of Cold Weather lectures, this was to be our first taste of conditions in Norway. In good humour on 8 January we flew out to Bergen (South Norway) where we found out the rumours of a mild winter were totally untrue. Next we were taken down to the Stalilhiem Hotel and another two days of lectures, then on to six days of Nordic Ski Training, where **Sig Hadley** perfected the 'head plant' on numerous occasions.

The Survival Course and Arctic Warfare Course flew by with a mixture of weather ranging from 'brass monkey's' to 'where's my sunblock' then the real work began with getting the det's ready for the Northern deployment and exercise. The move up north was to be by road over a period of two days. This went very well apart from my Rover's heater packing in 20 minutes into the journey. We had a week Sqn Ex practising tactical deployments then onto a ferry for the three day trip up to the Arctic Circle. We deployed immediately from there, I was attached to the German NBC unit who proved to be a good host even if the food was a bit suspect (pasta and boiled cabbage).

LCpl Harrison takes the plunge in Norway

Our flight home was booked for the 17th so we had a two day wait in Bardufos Air Base where we caught up on exercise gossip and had a few very expensive beers in the local town. All in all we both had a good exercise with 249 Sig Sqn and would like to thank them for the opportunity to go out there on exercise and experience the conditions.

EXERCISE NATIVE TRAIL
by Sig 'Dar' Merry

Sigs Merry and **Norton** were attached to the 1st Bn The Queens Lancashire Regiment for 10 weeks to do jungle warfare training on Ex Native Trail in Belize. Both of us went to 2 Sect 2Pl to learn and improve on our infantry skills. It was an interesting exercise with many phases including a comprehensive live firing package, survival phase and Final Test Exercise. Both of us did well and proved that Signals can turn their hand to anything and come out on top. Many thanks to the QLR for taking us and just managing to get us back again.

Sigs Merry and Norton assisting 2 Section, 2 Platoon

EXERCISE LOG COMMS 18 - 25 APR 97
by Cpl 'Si' Link

Ex LOGCOMMS was the Troop Commanders annual communication test exercise, which this year took the form of a call-in deployment and skills exercise. Once called in to barracks the Troop deployed onto the local area under the watchful eye of **Sgt** 'of the snake' **Mullen**. Once set up the Troop commenced the PACEX in preparation for the next phase that was to test the Troop's movement and long range communication skills. The movement and communications phase turned out to be the most beneficial for the majority, as over the next three days the Troop were tested on procedures, antennas and equipment reaffirming, expanding and testing previous trade knowledge.

Comd Comms (LAND) meeting Cpl Pete Byrne during Ex Log Comms with YofS Sutcliffe and WO2 Phil Lord looking on

During the exercise the Troop were visited by **Brig Kerley** (Comd HQ CSSG UK) and **Brig Griffin** (Comd Comms LAND). They were briefed by **Capt Richard Spencer** and **SSgt (YofS) Paul Sutcliffe** on the role and layout of the Troop in a deployment. Afterwards they were then let loose on the Troop's detachment commanders and also **Sig** 'Shaggy' **Watkins**. All in all the exercise was a great chance to practise skills that under normal circumstances would not be possible.

RACE THE SUN 1997
by Sig Chris Howell

The Troop entered a team in the annual 2 Sig Regt charity race with no expectations except those of enjoying the outing and giving 100%. With such a small cast to choose from the entire Troop was involved, whether it be competing in one of the legs or providing Admin support.

The day started at around four in the morning with the first event starting at five, a 6km canoe race, and ending much later in the day with a ten km road run into Imphal Bks. All the team competed with great determination and spirit as one would expect. All the performances were outstanding in their own right, however a special mention goes to **Cpl Pete Bryne**. After a splendid hill run he donned his boots and bergen to finish an excellent second in the tab and assault course event. The day's performances were shown in the final result with the Troop finishing fourth out of a total field of 28, which is quite exceptional considering the size of the Troop. Another mention goes to the Admin support team headed by **Sgt Pete Mullen** which managed to get equipment and team members to each leg without any hiccups.

Tayforth UOTC

REPORT ON EXERCISE WILD STORM

Basic Wing: Ex Wild Storm took place at Barry Buddon, which is one of the coldest parts of Scotland. We set up basha and prepared for sleep after a comforting cup of soup. The following day we learnt many a mnemonic and how to set-up patrol harbours and also the various methods of patrolling.

The real action came after the sun had fallen from the sky. We were cammed-up, loaded into a truck with our weapons prepared for action and driven off into enemy territory. This was fantastic, we could have been anywhere on any mission. We attacked Advance Wing. The operation was not particularly successful but for my first time, in that sort of scenario, it was exhilarating.

The weekend was a great success and every one enjoyed it. The only duty left was to return to HQ for kit return, a wash and brush-up followed by a jolly good evening in the mess.

Intermediate Wing: Positions of responsibility determined and orders given, Intermediate Wing embarked on Ex Wild Storm. Ably led by **2Lt Lorriman**, as Platoon Commander and **2Lt Hoy**, as Platoon Sergeant, we ventured into enemy occupied Barry Buddon. In the dead of night we established our Platoon Harbour and set-up a rota of two sentries. We were armed camouflaged and eager for action.

The following morning most of us woke well rested, an unfamiliar feeling for a UOTC weekend. Not only were we sober but it had neither rained nor was it cold and contrary to expectations we had received no noisey visitors during the early hours. Indeed, none of the sentries had any enemy movement to report, nor weird noises with the exception of the grunts, which were believed to have emanated from the basha residence of **OCdt Blyth** and **WOCdt White**. **Miss White** has made subsequent assurances that DPM wings are not necessary.

With the continuing variation of Section ICs and 2ICs the Platoon set about the days' task of consolidating our knowledge of patrolling skills which were to be used in ensuing reconnaissance patrols on a suspected enemy position. It was difficult to establish from these patrols the exact position of the enemy but the overall area was surveyed and plans drawn. More importantly, the patrols gave all the opportunity to experience the lie of the land that, theoretically at least, would benefit us during the assault. The question that remained was how was the attack to be carried out? For this no expense was spared and for the period of one hour, Section ICs and 2ICs were to make helicopter recces over the assault zone, minus **OCdt Reid**! The 'heli-recce' was a complete success providing an immediate remedy to over indulgence on biscuit browns. Nevertheless, with regard to pinpointing the exact position of the enemy they were less fruitful. Sand trenches can look curiously like the dunes that surround them and we saw nothing. We were up against some cunning 'gooks'.

The assault began that evening at 2100hrs and the long thin line that was Intermediate Wing set out into the darkness. Some distance was travelled and the moonlit scenery consisted only of sand dunes. It was then that I had recollections of past lectures and the emphasis that had been placed on the practice of pacing. To mutterings of, 'Are we lost?' those of us at the front end of the line responded that we knew exactly where we were. We were of course in the Southeastern corner of Barry Buddon and would, naturally, have located the enemy had they not located us first. In our defence we were equipped with night-sights.

The battle that ensued, I suspect, would in reality have been rather bloody, with perhaps more of our blood being spilt than that of the enemy. We charged in good order but most of us had expended all our ammunition before we reached the trench line. We were further exasperated to realise that in our haste to engage the enemy we had forgotten to draw bayonets! 3 Section giving covering fire from the left flank, ignited flares that unfortunately drifted in the wind, and whilst we were lit-up like Christmas trees, the enemy trenches lay in darkness. Despite the overwhelming odds we were successful with only one casualty who had picked up a slight limp and at 0100hrs we victoriously returned to camp.

City OF Edinburgh UOTC

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE
by OCdt Sarah Gilchrist

The Ex Lightning Strike team from CEUOTC had a fantastic weekend on Salisbury Plain under the guidance of **WO2 (SSM) Jim Gray** and team captain **OCdt Pete Franklin** ... that is once we got there. The map to guide us to Knook Camp had been left in the capable hands of **OCdt Kieron Francis** who had left it in the bus heading up to Cultybraggen in sunny Scotland. So after a scenic tour of Hampshire and Wiltshire we finally arrived at the camp.

The weekend competition was made up of nine stands illustrating the diversity of fields covered by the Corps, ranging from Electronic Warfare with 14 Sig Regt to the more physically exerting log run from 216 Sig Sqn. The latter of these rapidly questioned any secret ambitions that the contestants may have kindled for taking 'P' company, as after just 300 metres all the team were knackered. The teams success varied from stand to stand, but when it came to the crunch the team pulled through to win the Troop Commanders course command task stand, for which we were awarded the only alcoholic stand prize. The team proved to be in a league of its own in the final race as well. CEUOTC was the only team who managed to push a SCAM mast under the camouflage net and eventually pull it out four metres longer! I don't think any of the team members are still clear as to how it happened - maybe it was just **JUO** 'Tazo' **Broadley**'s famous pulling power!

The evening proved to be no less of a disappointment than the days competition. Teams from 18 UOTCs were wined and dined by the officers that had been dragged along to represent the Corps. The highlight of the evening would have to be the Corps band, who delighted the guests and hosts alike with their stunning performance throughout the meal. The party went into the early hours with CEUOTC leading the way on the dance floor under the guidance of **OCdt Jeremy Hill**. Then it was back on debauched return coach journey to Knook camp. Many thanks from the whole team to both those from SORLS and the visiting units that made the day, and the evening, such a memorable success.

Angus and Dundee Battalion ACF Royal Signals Detachment

REPORT 1997

Last year we revealed the existence of our Royal Signals Troop, who share Newman House, the TA Centre of 2 Sqn (V) in Dundee.

Since we last met, the Troop has held another open night. This time, though the numbers of proud parents, grannies etc. were slightly down on last year's record 50-plus, there was a valuable spin-off, as no fewer than 10 youngsters joined up as a result, bringing the Troop strength past the 30 mark once again. This will be of considerable help as the Troop has recently had to lose several seniors on age grounds (cadet retiring age being 18 or so). And there was another bonus – unlike the last time the Troop Open Night appeared in *The Wire*, it wasn't snowing!

Inspecting officer this year was **Col Alastair Dorward, TD ADC**, the TA Colonel for the Highlands, in one of his last appearances in that role: from 1 April this year he stepped up to the post of Commandant ACF Scotland, and the rank of Brigadier. **Col Kenny Simpson MBE TD**, Cadet Commandant of Angus & Dundee Battalion, welcomed everyone to Newman House, and thanked 2 Sqn's PSAO, **Capt Bill Naismith**, who was present (to count the spoons, perhaps?) for the facilities on the evening and for the Squadron's continuing help and support. After inspecting the cadets, **Col Dorward** presented awards for achievement, as follows: Cadet of the Year, 1996-97, **Cdt Jamie Fraser**. NCO's Prize, **Cpl Karen Balfour** (who also received her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award); Signals Proficiency, **Cpl Kirsty Mills** (who also lifted the Drill Trophy). Most Improved Cadet, **Cdt Lindsey Anderson**. Sport Trophy, **Cdt Paul Denham**; Troop Best Shot, **Cpl Gemma Criffley**; Best Turnout, **Cdt Teri Thomson**. **Teri Thomson** and **Jarnie Fraser**, already flushed with success, had another cause to celebrate, as they were made up to LCpl that evening. Another popular award presented by **Col Dorward** was the Cadet Forces Medal to Troop Commander **Lt Phil Tanbini**.

Last year one of our captions read, 'It's fun to be in the Signals.' This picture shows that it still is

After the parade and the 'grip-and-grin' session, the Battalion Pipes & Drums entertained cadets and visitors, before all enjoyed a buffet in the Sgts Mess, courtesy of 2 Sqn. Lest purists and AB 397-conscious people tut-tut over such largesse, it should be pointed out that Squadron interest in the ACF Tp is by way of an investment – this year's dividend is three ex-cadets signing on for the Squadron: **Cpl Carol McKelvie**, **Cpl Kirstin Macaskill** and **Cdt Jackie Kidd**.

This year, however, there is more to report than just the Open Night. **Cpl Kirstin Macaskill**, of signing-on fame above, attended her post-qualification signaller's course at Blandford, and enjoyed the experience thoroughly, especially the practical aspects. **Kirstin**, who is 18, joined the cadets less than three years ago, and has enjoyed the experience greatly ('I wish I'd joined sooner,' she told *The Wire*). In her 2 years and some months, she has achieved two tapes, two proficiency stars, and a Duke of Edinburgh Silver. Now an HND student at Dundee College, she hopes to enter the University of Dundee and gain a Regular commission after graduation.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col J. E. F. Kirby OBE**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt I. Gray** Glasgow Mil
Secretaries:	
General	**Capt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2849
Dinghy & Dayboats	**SSgt Bungay** Blandford Mil 2409
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	**SSgt N. Finnegan** Osnabruck Mill 2225
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster** Bulford Mil
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** York Mil 2346
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney** Bulford Mil

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club. If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

OFFSHORE SAILING

In the last edition of *The Wire* I said that I would inform you of any progress in the replacement of *Skywave*, which was sold in December 1996. Since then, there has been a dedicated team of 'sailing experts' who have been scouring the pages of the small advertisements in the yachting magazines, and have worn out the floors in numerous yacht brokerages in the south and west of England. Finally, it is success that I have to report.

On a bright and brisk morning on 24 May 1997, the Corps took delivery of its' new acquisition, a Dehlar 35 CWS, from Hamble Point Marina. Although not new (it was originally launched in 1994) the yacht was in an 'as new' condition, as the previous owner had used it for weekend sailing, only putting in 87 hours on the engine from new. (*Petasus III*, the Corps' Victoria '34 is expected to run for about 750 hours in a season.) The new yacht was officially commissioned by the Corps and named at the Royal Signals Yacht Club Offshore Rally weekend by **Mrs M. Alexander**, wife of the Admiral of the Royal Signals Yacht Club, **Maj Gen (Retd) J.O.C. Alexander**. The Corps, for the new yacht, has retained the name Skywave. Skywave is very well appointed with many of the modern conveniences expected of a modern yacht. As sailing enthusiasts will know, the Dehlar is a light displacement yacht with a fractional rig, and as such is expected to be very quick and competitive against the opposition when sailing in the SOR and ASA regattas. For this reason, Skippers will need to be holding at least a RYA Coastal Skipper qualification, and have the usual backup of at least one Competent Crew on board.

The Corps yachts are available to all Corps personnel, serving or retired, to charter at very competitive rates compared with a civilian sailing organisation. Qualified personnel can take the yachts 'bareboat', but non-qualified personnel can use the services of the Corps Bosun at no extra cost, **Cpl Martin Kendell**, who is a commercially endorsed Yachtmaster Offshore and RYA Yachtmaster Instructor. For further details on booking terms for either of the Corps yachts, or their availability, contact the Yachtmaster Royal Signals Yacht Club, **Maj Graham Neal**, on Bulford Mil 2616 (or 01980 672616)

INTER CORPS DINGHY LEAGUE

After a dismal start to the Dinghy League with a lose to the RA at Thorney Island, admittedly we had two novice crews and a crew that had never set foot in a boat before, the Corps helms started to get their act together and had convincing wins over the AGC, RE and AAC winning the Wakeham Trophy against the Royal Engineers.

The Corps Helms and Crews have been

HELMS: **Lt Col (Retd) Keith Powell**, **Maj David Ellis**, **Maj George Odling**, **Maj Scott Workman**, **Capt Simon Spiers** and **Sgt** 'Chas' **Cowell** (out of Heavy Pres).

CREWS: **Maj Tim Pender Johns**, **WO2 Chris Arnold**, **Sgt Pete Blagg**, **Sgt** 'Taff' **Davies**, **Cpl** 'Mitch' **Mitchell**, **LCpls Jones** and **Sutherland** and **Sig** 'Stu' **Suthern**. Our OOD's for our home matches have been **Lt Col (Retd) Keith Powell** and **Sgt Phil Hawkins** (RLC)

CORPS KEELBOAT REGATTA SEAVIEW

Maj George Odling and his motley crew – Seaview '97

The Keelboat Regatta was held at Seaview IOW 21-22 May 97 with an excellent turnout of 10 boats and Helms from Cyprus, NI, Germany and UK, some making a return after many years. **Col Bill Roper** was sailing his last Seaview Regatta as a serving member. **Maj David Ellis** and **Maj George Odling** dominated the Regatta, but racing was very intense for the remaining places. **Sgt** 'Chas' **Cowell** decided to take the scenic route round one of the marks while in a very strong 1st place and had to come back and round it properly. **Maj George Odling** was seen with a grin from ear to ear a day later as this put him in first place and he went on to win the race. The Racing was, as ever, run superbly by the Commodores Past and Present (with a small bit of influencing from **Major Ellis**)

TRIANGULAR KEELBOAT REGATTA

The Triangular Regatta comprising of The Royal Signals, Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery was held the week after our Corps Regatta and all our crews were brimming with confidence. The first race was against the RA that was won in style. Retribution for the dinghy league! However, on arriving back at the club, we were found to have two boats over the line, but after redress one was reinstated to second place. The next race was again won convincingly against the RE and so at the end of day one the Corps was in a commanding position, they continued their winning ways on day two to retain the Glover Trophy.

Notes for your diary, The Corps is hosting the Triangular next year on the two days following our Corps Regatta.

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following:
ALL PHOTOS accompanying Articles for *The Wire*, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they
MAY NOT BE USED

NOTICE

For: ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS FUND
Read: ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

SPORT

Royal Signals Games Club

AWARD OF CORPS COLOURS

Corps colours were awarded to the following members of Corps sports teams for their outstanding contribution to their sport:

RUGBY UNION

Sgt Piears	9 Sig Regt
Sgt Kay	14 Sig Regt
SSgt Day	3 Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt Garside	2 Sig Regt

LADIES HOCKEY

Sig Burkitt	30 Sig Regt
Sig Smith	16 Sig Regt
Sgt Graham	16 Sig Regt
Sgt Calabrese	30 Sig Regt

HOCKEY

ARMY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION MAJOR UNITS CUP FINAL
11 SIGNAL REGIMENT V SEAE ARBORFIELD

The Regiment Team played The School of Electrical and Aeronautical Engineering (SEAE) on the 9 April 1997 at Aldershot. The scene was set; last years' winners against last years' runners–up, glorious sunshine on the hottest day of the year so far, at 26°C this was going to be a hot one, game included.

SEAE immediately pushed forward and put pressure on the 11 Sigs defence for the first five minutes of the game. The defence marshalled by **Sgt** 'Bru' **Baker** coped with all that SEAE could throw at them, **2Lt John Fraser** and **WO2 (YofS) Paul Sexby** performing man to man marking which was second to none. After the initial pressure, 11 Sigs started to play some excellent hockey, with **Maj John Stuart** and **Sgt Gaz Duffy** playing some incisive passes through to **Sig Matt Salmon**, who created some excellent chances with **LCpl Dusty Dryburgh**. With these chances and the support from **Maj Nick Hammett** and **Sig Jamie Butt** the Regiment was very unlucky not to score. Only solid defending on the part of SEAE and the 2.5" of metal post kept a goal out.

Half way through the first half, disaster, a rash tackle from one of the defence resulted in a penalty being awarded to SEAE. The REME's best penalty stroke taker stepped up. **Sgt** 'Taff' **Davies** made a spectacular save to keep the Regiment on level pegging and proved to the crowd (thanks to C Tp) that he's the Army's No 1 keeper. Both teams should have capitalised on the short corners, 11 Sigs having six and SEAE having 10. This failure to score proved the quality of both teams' defences. **WO2 (YofS) Sean Sutton** proving that the old men can still do it when required, bravely stood with the rest of the defence in front of some strikes, which were coming in at frightening speeds. The game developed into a pitched battle in midfield, with neither team coming out on top. This was a game where a lucky goal from either team would be the winner. With seven minutes left to play, SEAE followed up a short corner and the ball took two deflections to bounce in off the underside of the crossbar, leaving no chance for anyone to prevent it crossing the line.

SEAE, having scored and with only six minutes remaining, used their experience to consolidate their slender lead and frustrate the 11 Sigs midfield and forward line with a possession game. 11 Sigs didn't give up and fought to the last but it was to no avail, the little cup was going back to Blandford, not the big one. Overall, it was an excellent team performance, with some superb hockey being played by both sides including **Sgt Baker** saving a goal off the line. The support from all those who sweated it out on the bench was excellent, **Cpl** 'Si' **Nice** in particular who acted as bench manager.

On a brighter note, **Sgt** 'Taff' **Davies** was voted Man of the Match by **Maj Gen N. W. F. Richards OBE**, General Officer Commanding 4 Division and President of Army Hockey. **Sig Jamie Butt** has been selected to move from the Army U23 side into the senior squad and **Sig Matt Salmon** selected for the Army U23 squad. Well done, everyone.

GOLF

Corps golfers have been busy during the past two months with three major tournaments throughout the UK. The Army Golf Championships were held in May this year at The West Lancashire Golf Club, Crosby, near Liverpool. 10 Corps players entered the tough individual knockout stages. **Cpl Dave Rogers** did extremely well, he played fine golf to reach the quarter finals beating **Maj Martyn Allen**, the Army Golf Captain, on the way.

Royal Signals entered two teams in the Inter Corps Competitions, the Royal Irish Ranger Bowl and the Singapore Trophy. Our 'A' team, captained by **Sgt Rob Hare**, faltered in the first round and narrowly lost to the Intelligence Corps. Thankfully they regrouped and went on to win the Singapore Trophy. The team played excellent golf in the final beating the Adjutant General's Corps, who were the favourites. The 'B' team was just not strong enough and did not progress past the first round, however, they gained valuable experience playing at this high level.

(*L-R*): Cpl Dave Rogers, SSgt Andy Harriott, Lt Col Willie Brewin Sgt Rob Hare

gained valuable experience playing at this high level.

Two weeks later, the Royal Signals Golf Championships took place at The Ashley Wood Golf Club. Premature midsummer conditions prevailed making the annual sports gathering extremely enjoyable for all those who entered. A full field of 96 players did battle. The general standard of play was high, however, as usual, certain individuals excelled further still. The prestigious scratch event was won once again by **Sgt Rob Hare**, who beat **Cpl Dave Rogers** into second place by the very narrowest of margins. The handicap event was won by **Mr Paddy O'Conner**, a military guard officer at the school, who obviously has had far too much time off shift to practice. **Sig Nigel Brennan** won the Junior Soldiers Trophy. Unfortunately the trophy has temporarily disappeared, probably to Bosnia!

(*L-R*): Sgt Rob Hare, Lt Col John Macfarlane

Our thanks go once again to **Maj (Retd) Len Yates** for organising the event. To the invaluable **Christine** for her patience and coolness under fire and to **Sig Warren Yates** for helping out everywhere! Many thanks to **Lt Col John Macfarlane** for presenting the prizes and the humorous anecdote! We must not forget (again) to congratulate **Sgt L. Chapman** for 'holing out' in one for the first time, well done and thank you for the whisky.

Finally and most recently, the Royal Signals officers showed they meant business by winning the Inter Corps Trophy at the Army Officers Golf Championships at North Berwick & Luffhess Golf Club on 12/13 June 97. Scotland's heavens opened throughout the two days, however, both courses remained in excellent playing condition. Armed with umbrellas, **Maj (Retd) Len Yates** and fellow team mates, **Col (Retd) Mike Hales**, **Maj Jon Williams**, **Maj (Retd) Brian Young** and **Capt Steve Watson**, successfully captured the highly regarded 'Ordnance Cup' from the grasp of the REME in the final. **Maj Brian Young** had a cracking match playing controlled accurate golf under the pressure of a play off. He birdied the 18th to halve the match and had another brilliant birdie at the first play off hole that halved it yet again. A thoroughly splendid result considering that the Royal Signals were not at full strength. **Maj Jon Williams** made a flying start to the final by driving from Glasgow airport to North Berwick in 50 minutes (exclam). He didn't stop there and went on to pleasantly surprise us all with a splendid performance, winning his game by three holes.

Dates for Diaries: All members are requested to note the proposed dates for the next meetings:
The Autumn Meeting- 10/11 September 1997
The Championships- 28/29 May 1998

ORIENTEERING

RESULTS FROM THE CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Corps Orienteering Championships (RSOC 1997) were held in the New Forest area on 10/11 May 1997. A cross-country event on Sunday 10 May 1997 was followed by a 'Harris' event on Sunday 11 May 1997. Almost 300 runners took part on each day. The full results will appear in the October issue of *The Wire*.

Corps Champions for 1997 are:

Male Regular	**SSgt (FofS) Cowie**	96 Sig Sqn (V) (PS)
Female Regular	**Lt Carr**	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Male TA	**Cpl Nesbitt**	87 Sig Sqn (V)
Female TA	**SSgt Walker**	45 Sig Sqn (V)
Junior	**Sig Stuart**	COMMSEC UK

The 1997 Corps Champion - SSgt (FofS) Cowie receives his Trophy from the President of Orienteering, Lt Col Richard

SHOOTING

THE R. SIGNALS CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (CORPSSAAM) 1997

The Royal Signals were the lead Corps on this years' Joint CORPSAAM Committee being chaired by **Lt Col Peck R Rignals** (Captain of Corps Shooting) and **Maj I. R. C. Brown** R Signals being appointed as secretary. This is the fourth year that R. Signals CORPSAAM has been shot at Ash ranges near Aldershot as part of the Joint CORPSAAM. The meeting was an outstanding success with nearly 900 TA and Regular competitors shooting from the following Corps: RAC, RE, R Sigs, RLC, REME and AGC. The competition is run at minor unit level and allows units to combine their Regt SAAM with their Corps SAAM. Top teams from each Corps also compete on the final day for the inter Corps matches.

THE REGULAR MEETING 7 - 11 APRIL 1997

The Regular Meeting started on Monday 7 April until Friday 11 April 1997 and had for the second year running an increased number of units entering the competition. A total of 18 teams from 13 different units together with 20 individuals participated. The following units were represented:
1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt,
204 (4 Armd) Bde Sig Sqn, 210 (24 AM) Bde Sig Sqn,
218 (8 Inf) Bde Sig Sqn, 223 Sig Sqn (RAF Digby), 243 Sig Sqn

The Rifle competition was shot with iron sights and again 30 Sig Regt dominated the competition with their teams of Gurkha Signals. 30 Sig Regt Teams were 1st, 2nd and 4th in the competition with 11 Sig Regt 'A' Team coming 3rd and 21 Sig Regt 5th. 30 Sig Regt continue to set the standards for shooting in the Corps with outstanding examples of personal and team marksmanship. Although 30 Sig Regt took most of the Major Prizes, most units went away with either individual or team prizes. Congratulations to 204 (4 Armd) Bde Sig Sqn who won the Minor Units Cup.

Thanks must go this years' organisers and admin team, **Maj Body** and **Capt Reith** together with **WO2 (SSM) McVey** and his team from 32 Sig Regt (V) assisted by the Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training (SATTs) from 11 Sig Regt. A great deal of work before and during the meeting ensured a very successful CORPSAAM. There was generally a high standard of Range Management on all ranges but R. Signals were praised, for the second year running, by the Joint CORPSAAM Committee for providing the best run ranges of the meeting. **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, Commander 2 (NC) Sig Bde presented the prizes on the final day followed by a curry buffet attended by most COs, RSMs and Team Captains. Engraved pewter tankards were presented to individual winners along with the Corps Shooting medal which incorporates a round bronze medal with crossed 5.56mm Rifles on a ribbon in the Corps colours. Appropriate date and match bars are issued for the medal for each prize winner. 1996 National Rifle Association Service Rifle Medals were also presented at CORPSAAM to the following who shot for the Corps:

SSgt J.P. Johnston	11 Sig Regt
SSgt Rideout	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Copley	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Yam	30 Sig Regt
Cpl Brotherston	3 Div Sig Regt
Cpl Bell	204 Sig Sqn
Cpl Nirmal	30 Sig Regt
LCpl Bharat	30 Sig Regt

SSgt Rideout was also presented with a NRA medal for the Target Rifle Imperial meeting.

R SIGNALS 1997 TA SKILL AT ARMS MEETING

The TA meeting was held over the weekend from 4 – 6 April 1997 and had an excellent attendance with 21 teams from 12 units at the competition. This compared with the previous year that only had six teams competing from three units. For many of the TA this was their first taste of competition shooting and all thoroughly enjoyed the weekend were very keen to compete again next year. 71 Sig Regt (V) won the overall TA Championship but the individual and match prizes were spread across most units.We hope to have enough room to publish the full results in the October issue of *The Wire*.

CONTINUE THE ACTION

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

TA
TERRITORIAL ARMY

Have you left, or are about to leave the Regular Army? Do you feel you still have much to offer? Do you miss the life? Will you be settling in the North West of England?
Join Us . . .

Contact:
The Adjutant
33 Sig Regt (V)
Alamein TA Centre
Liverpool Road
Huyton
Liverpool
L36 3RW
Tel: 0151 489 8331

THE MUSEUM SHOP

Since the closure of PRI the Museum Shop now stocks the following items:

Stable Belts
Badges of Rank Slides
Embroidered Beret Badges

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig C. T. Garton Area 1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3; Brig K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans CBE Area 5; Lt Col J. G. Billingham Wales; Maj R. Sampson CBE Scotland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.
All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

There will be no news from **Peter Cuckow** this month as at present he's got his hands full, with helping to organise the Corps Reunion Weekend. By the time this publication hits the streets **Peter** will be a gibbering wreck in the corner of his office, and the Reunion Weekend will be over. Hopefully there will be a full report and photos of the Weekend in the October *Wire*.

WELFARE NOTES

Just a few of the grants made during recent weeks:

Ex LCpl served from 1964/70, grant of £700 towards purchase of artificial limb.

Ex Sgt served 1947/54 and recalled for Suez grant of £950 towards purchase of electric wheelchair.

Ex wartime LCpl served 1939/46, both him and wife in their 80's decreased mobility and can no longer manage stairs, grant of £400 towards stairlift.

74 year old ex National Service, Regular and TA soldier, had a stroke now in Nursing home grant of £200 to purchase essential clothing.

Ex TA member, has severe spinal problems, grant of £660 towards the purchase of specially designed recliner chair to support spine in reclining position.

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

At our Spring Luncheon at the Army Golf Club we were happy to welcome **Maj Gen Gordon Oehlers** and **Rosie** and many other friends. We always are glad to see Members of the Reading Branch and on this occasion their President, **Maj Gen Bill Macfarlane**, who also is a Member of our Branch and **Helen**. The Luncheon was followed by our AGM, at which **Col Jimmy Ward** was elected to the Branch Committee and also **WO1 Joe Fairbairn** as our Serving Member. To him we owe thanks for the facilities accorded us for some of our Meetlngs by the Garrison WOs & Sgt Mess.

We were very glad that **Eileen Murray** was able to attend and to receive from our President, **Maj Gen Henry Hild** the 50 Year Badge awarded her husband, **Col Ron Murray** shortly before his death. It was a poignant occasion, sad but bringing to those who knew him happy memories of the many years of his service to our Branch and to the Association.

In March we had a most informative talk by **Col Gordon Barnett** on The Chunnel Communications, Our most recent gathering, our Quiz Night also was a night to be remembered. It was attended by Members of the West London and Reading Branches, as well as ladies from the local Squadron and many others. The victors were the Hi IQs of the Garrison WOs & Sgts Mess. We have always known the NCOs are the backbone of the British Army, but could they also be the brains?

BATH & DISTRICT BRANCH

The Bath and District Branch has once again held its AGM at 21 Signal Regt HQ, Colerne, Wilts, on 9 April 97. The Branch Officials were re-elected en masse, and **Mr Roy Baldwin** was elected to the Committee to replace the late **Mr Tom Evans**.

On 17 May thirty members and guests enjoyed an informal but delicious lunch at Pockeridge House, 2 Signal Brigade, Corsham, Wilts. Our last Chairman, **Edgar Harrison OBE MC MBE** was unable to be at the lunch as he was attending and giving the Oration at the Reunion of the "Veterans of the Greek Campaign 1940/41". This commemorated the Battle of Kalamata, the last battle on the Greek Mainland after the Retreat from Albania in 1941. The Heads of the Greek Forces and H.M. Ambassador attended it. After the battle the majority of the British Troops were taken prisoner. **Edgar**, as a member of the Special Operations Group was in particular danger. So with no knowledge of sailing, he stole a small boat and with a small amount of water, bread and fetta cheese, set out to sea. He was picked up two uncomfortable days later by one of His Majesty's Ships and taken to Crete and another retreat - thence to Egypt, Yugoslavia and Russia.

We are expecting to hold a barbecue at 2 Signal Bde HQ at Corsham on 31 August 97. As this coincides with the 2 Signal Bde Territorial Camp period, we are hopeful that members may meet some of the current T.A. and, who knows, may recruit a member.

We have to report the death on 18 Mar 97 of **Mr.John Boylan**, a member for many years and Chairman from 1981-91. As a mark of respect members stood briefly in silence at the AGM.

COTSWOLDS BRANCH

It is with great sadness that we have to record the deaths of **Mrs Marie Farlow**, widow of **Maj Reg Farlow**, **Mrs Freda Smart** and **Mrs Iris Thorpe**, wives of **Mr Charles Smart** and **Lt Col Leofric Thorpe**. All were proud members of the Corps family, always participating in Association and Branch activities at Catterick, Blandford, Cheltenham and elsewhere whenever they were able to do so. Our deepest sympathy goes to their families.We shall miss them very much.

On a lighter note, our May meeting as usual consisted of a Social Evening when a goodly gathering of Members and their wives and friends enjoyed an evening of Paper games, Bingo and Reminiscing.

A sumptuous Buffet, prepared by the Stewardess of the Victory Club, was enjoyed by all, including a 'doggy bag' to take home. The whole evening was organised by our hardworking Secretary, **Marjorie Cropp**. Congratulations to the Victory Club (where we hold our monthly meetings) on reaching their 50th Anniversary of service to Ex-Service Men and Women. A week long celebration was greatly enjoyed by members and friends.

Our Chairman **Maj Arthur Cropp** and his wife (our Secretary) attended the Annual General Meeting at Donnington and found it to be a good venue with easy access by road.

By the time these notes are printed, several of our Members will have attended the Blandford Reunion, our Standard will be carried by **Mr Alan Wingate** and we hope he does well in the competition. Membership of our Branch is decreasing due to natural wastage so if there are any ex Royal Signals living in the Cotswolds and reading these notes, please come along and join us at the Victory Club, Cheltenham on the second Tuesday in every month at 7.30pm (1930hrs). To conclude we would like to mention **Mrs Farlow**'s interesting account of her life and experiences as a young service wife with two small daughters, in India, both before and during the Second World War. This is contained in her 'Memories of India 1937-1947' a copy of which has been kindly donated to the Corps Museum by the Family.

DORSET BRANCH

Attendance at our monthly meetings held in the Sergeants' Mess Blandford Camp, by kind permission of the RSM, **WO1 Dave Sacree**, grows. We now have an average of about 30 members who attend regularly, and the bottle of whatever which is raffled helps our funds. This year we reluctantly moved the venue for our Annual Dinner from the Sergeants' Mess to the Crown Hotel, Blandford. Some 94 members and guests attended. We enjoyed an excellent meal and everybody had a most enjoyable evening. The Corps Band played throughout dinner, thanks to the Director of Music, **Maj David Wall**. They also played for the dancing that took place afterwards. As ever the Band were up to their usual high standard both in music and entertainment. Our thanks go to the Band for their music. We were fortunate to have as our senior guest, **Col C. L. Le Gallais CBE**, the commander of the Royal School of Signals and his wife **Mrs Le Gallais**. The Commander gave an interesting talk on the Corps also Blandford Camp as it is today and in the future. Also the much travelled Corps RSM, **WO1 Dave Deegan** and **Mrs Deegan** kindly attended as our guests.

The Branch provided a bottle of port that was raffled by our Secretary, **Dave Walker**, at the Association AGM held at Donnington in April. This raised £120.00 for the Corps Benevolent Fund, a worthy-cause. We are now looking forward (it's only May) to meeting many of our friends at the Reunion in June. It will be over by the time you read this, but it was nice to meet you all.

'He did say smile'
Col John Francis, Col Le Gallais, Mrs Le Gallais, Maj Pat Lafferty
Mrs Deegan, Brig Evans, Mrs Lafferty

EAST KENT BRANCH

Taking your own picnic anywhere Sunday 4 May was not a very promising outlook, nevertheless nearly seventy members showed their determination to stick to their plans by turning up as if there was no rain in sight! We had a visitor from the Aldershot Branch, **Jane Knight** and it was good to see **Jimmy Hand** and **John Raymond** after their treatment in hospital. The Hon Sec had scrambled a 'wet weather programme' together and in the event a lot of fun was had. Everyone with their chairs and hampers packed into the Atrium where at first they were invited to look for 450 pennies which were hidden within (and 50 without). For every ten pennies which they had to put in a Pilgrims Hospice collecting box, they received a small prize. Judging by the weight of the box, most must have been found.

The hampers were opened and the raffle started which grossed £42 which prompted **Roy Andrews** to present **Edith Thomas** with a Life Membership of R Signals Association Certificate for her support for the Corps over the years and the East Kent Branch in particular with much applause from the members.

The children then braved the rain in competing with **John Badcock** our Hon Sec at croquet whilst **Bert Sawyer** ran another excellent and amusing quiz in which **Doreen Mitchell** and **Jimmy Hand** were co-winners.

SUNDAY 6 APRIL.

We have all been getting used to seeing a cartoon that when it is missing, there must be a good reason for it, especially as the visit to Finchcocks museum would have given **Donald Crisp** plenty of ideas. The fact is that early in the week before Easter, **Donald** of all people suffered a heart attack, a mild one fortunately and having spent several days in Maidstone Hospital, is I'm glad to report making good progress and is back on the Committee.

About 30 members attended Finchcocks Museum. All we can say is that anyone who has not been, should make a point of going. The house itself and the gardens are full of history. It is also full of the largest number of working historical keyboard instruments, chamber organs, virginals, harpsichords, clavichords and a large range of early pianos in Great Britain. We were entertained to an extremely witty and interesting description by **Richard Burnett** but better still, they were played by himself and another leading concert pianist, on top of that **John Hall**, a leading tenor sang to their accompaniment. One member remarked 'If they had been dressed in Evening Dress we would have been paying £25 a head!' Children are welcome at Finchcocks and there are special sessions for them too.

Afterwards there was a sumptuous lunch in the restaurant and the opportunity to walk round the house and the gardens in the spring sunshine.

NEWS OF BRANCH MEMBERS

Peter Foakes has kept up his record in the veteran swimming competitions. Recently at Crystal Palace he achieved two Golds in the 100m freestyle and backstroke, a Silver in the 200m freestyle and Bronze in the 50m free and backstroke. He says that this is his last year in the 70-74 year olds; promotion next year.

We are glad to welcome **Mr Phil Dawkins** of Tenterden. **Phil** served from 1942-47 with the rank of Sgt. After initial training he served for a short while with 115 Bde Sigs before going to the SOE Special Forces Det No 2 Signals with the Canadians in Northern Europe until 1945. His final posting was with the Indian Signal Corps HQ

Sad to say that **George Woodcock** continues to undergo serious treatment at Kent & Canterbury hospital and as in the past, we wish him a speedy recovery.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

It is a few years since we submitted our *Wire* notes for publication, so just to let you know that CERTO CITO is still alive and well and thriving on the first Sunday of every month at the RBL Ladybarn Branch, Beverly Road, Fallowfield, Manchester. For further information please contact our Secretary, The Jovial Jock, **Mr Harry Ferguson**, 2 Furness Grove, Heaton, Mersey, Stockport SK4 2AU, Tel: 0161 442 2054

Our format for the year now runs pretty smoothly. We usually plan our Social Calendar from Xmas to Xmas. We have refined the organisation by electing an Entertainment's Rep by the name of **Ian Ashworth-Davies**. He is actually an ex RE but we took pity on him one cold and snowy night a few years ago when we found him begging outside a hostelry in Manchester. We took him home cleaned him up a bit, fed him and elected him. Needless to say under threat of banishment to that draughty barmaids apron he has proved an asset to the Branch. He surpassed himself in Xmas 1996 by organising a wonderful Xmas dinner night in the Hopkinson Suite at Manchester University. The table decorations and menu's set the tables off, and were decorated in the Corps colours. We eagerly await this years details.

We always try to have a weekend away as well as the Annual Reunion, funds permitting. Our previous Treasurers and present Branch Treasurer, **Mrs Ida Harvey**, deserve a special vote of thanks for their diligence in making sure our funds are well looked after. In the past few years we have been to Blackpool a couple of times and had a great time in 1995 when we booked into The Grand Hotel in Llandudno to take part in the Butlins VE Day celebrations. I had the honour of presenting 50 year certificates to **Ernie Gibson**, **Bob Dunn**, **Harry Bailey** and **Mrs Ida Harvey**. Unfortunately since then I have to report the sad loss of **Ernie** and **Bob** our thoughts are always with their respective families and it is pleasing that their ladies **Audrey** and **Trudy** still regularly support the Branch and ultimately the Corps.

Just as a little aside to any Corps members past and present who are thinking of joining a Branch in whatever capacity. Please don't hesitate as you will be pleasantly surprised by the warmth and friendliness with which you will be greeted. Esprit de Corps is very obvious in all the Branches I have come into contact with and I urge you to make contact with your local Branch.

In closing since our AGM in April I have pleasure in informing you of the following appointments: Hon Life President **Maj (Retd) J. Holmes** (Mr America), President **Maj (Retd) C. Reynolds-Jones**. Myself **Mr Ron Taylor** Chairman, **Mr Peter Griffin** Vice Chairman. All other appointments as previously mentioned. I look forward to meeting many of you at Blandford this year and extend a warm welcome to you all should you be passing through Manchester.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Since last writing we held our Branch AGM and elections of Branch Officers. For health reasons **Fred Holmes** retired as Vice-Chairman. Our thanks to him for his very regular attendance and support. **John Lucas** takes the Vice Chair. **John Loveday** is Assistant Treasurer and **Brian Nesbitt-Clarke** is Property Member. All other Officers were re-elected.

Sadly **Gerry McCullough**, who for several years represented the Branch at HQ meetings until ill health intervened, has lost his wife. We extend our sympathy to him.

The highlight of the year so far was the visit of the National Chairman, **Maj Gen A. Yeoman**, **CB** to our May Branch meeting. Our Branch President **Maj Bill Douglas** and Vice President **Maj Noel Johnston** entertained him to dinner prior to the meeting, along with **Maj Tony Lomax**, Training Major, 40 (U) Sig Regt (V). We are indebted to **Maj** and **Mrs Lomax** for kindly acting as hosts to the Chairman for his overnight stay. At the Branch meeting the Chairman gave a most interesting talk in which he outlined the aims and objects of the Association. After presenting 'Honour Member' certificates to **Maj Bill Douglas** and **Tom Maguire** the Chairman spoke to every individual present. Everyone found him very easy to talk to and we really did appreciate him giving up his time to visit us. As far as we know he is the first Chairman to do so. Thanks also to **Hon. Sec. Ian Wolfe** for making arrangements for the visit and to **Debbie Wolfe** for looking after the post meeting catering.

It seems no time at all since Blandford Reunion 1996 yet here we are in the throes of organising the 1997 trip in a few weeks time. Unfortunately it clashes with TAVR camp but such is the enthusiasm of our TAVR Members that some intend to travel straight from camp to Blandford. Branch Chairman **Tom Maguire** hopes to lead 16 stalwarts across this year.

Finally a reminder to all Regular, TAVR, serving or ex-service Signallers–you will be welcome at our Branch meetings on the third Wednesday of each Month.

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

Almost 21 years to the day after a gathering of ex-Corps members, living in the Peterborough area met to look into the possibility of forming a branch of the RSA, we held our 21st Anniversary Dinner Dance on Friday 25 April 1997. The venue was Woodlands Leisure Centre in Castor near Peterborough where we had a first class function room. 60 Branch members and guests enjoyed an excellent meal, during which some of the Corps Bands' recorded music was played. **Brig Stan Gordon**, our Area Vice-Chairman, and **Mrs Gil Gordon** joined us for the evening, having travelled up (and back afterwards) all the way from Essex, and spent much of the time talking to members and guests.

Col K. R. (Ken) Smith OBE, TD, DL, our Branch President, and **Mrs Margaret Smith** who were present along with **Maj Bob Rowland**, our Chairman, met everyone as they arrived. An excellent raffle was organised by (ex-WO2 RQMS) **Michael Eady BEM**, with a range of prizes which included a television set and a microwave oven.

Our Branch Standard, generously donated by a member in 1995, was 'on Parade' under the care of (ex-Cpl) **Reg Briggs** our Standard Bearer, who also took most of the photographs during the evening. Two of the Branches founder members were present. They were **Maj Gilbert Davy** who proposed the Loyal Toast, and **Bob Rowland**. Our oldest member Mr Len Voller, also with us at the beginning and now well into his nineties, was unable to be present but a letter of good wishes from him was read out to everyone. The Chairman's wife **Dorcie**, a little indisposed that evening was advised to spend most of the time sat in her chair. She said, "I felt like royalty sitting there, whilst people came to me to sit and chat with me."

The Branch presently has 31 members and 18 associate members who live in the Peterborough area, and also as far south as Huntingdon and St Ives, and west to the Kings Lynn area and as far north as Grantham and Spalding. Everyone enjoyed a good evening of eating and dancing, and a few drinks! We send greetings to the Corps and other Branches of the Association as we become 'of age'.

One of our Branch Founder Members
Maj (Retd) Gilbert Davey, now aged 84 years and still active

(*L-R*): Cpl (Retd) Reg Briggs (Branch Standard Bearer)
Brig Stan Gordon, Maj Bob Rowland,
Col Ken Smith OBE, TD, DL (Branch President)

Brig Stan Gordon talking to retired Sgt Bob Rogers (Wartime SOE) and an active member of RSARS–Call sign GO CNL

READING BRANCH

Reading Branch of the RSA were beaten soundly into 7th place at the Quiz held recently in the Aldershot Garrison Sergeants' Mess on 21May. It was good fun and we all had a good laugh. We've continued to hold our monthly meetings (now) on Saturdays in pubs. It has proved to be quite successful, and as predicted, we do need bigger pubs to hold our ever increasing numbers of attendees.

We have travelled to Winchester and Southampton to Dinners and Luncheons, to Donnington on business, and to Kneller Hall for the Band Concerts. Our immediate plans include a trip to 'Britains' Best Kept Secret', ie: Bletchley Park. Here we hope to see the Colossus Computer, all 3,000 valves of it. It was used to break cypher codes during WWII. We are not forgetting the Annual Reunion is the weekend of the 27/28/29 June, and are looking forward to meeting old friends and making new ones.

SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT BRANCH

There was good support for the Annual Reunion lunch which was held at the Avenue Hotel, Lodge Road, Southampton on 27 April. Our President **Brig J. C. Clinch** and Chairman **Mr G. Packer** were present together with the Area 4 Rep. **Mr Roy Andrews** and his wife **Patricia**. Visitors were also present from Winchester, Salisbury, and Reading Branches. A tribute was paid to our late Chairman **Maj N. T. Warren**. The usual toasts were proposed, and thanks were expressed to our Treasurer **Capt Christine Cluett** and our Secretary **Tony Dear** for the organisation of another successful Reunion.

For the benefit of those who read *The Wire* and would like to know where we meet, it is at the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Archers Road, on the first Tuesday in the month, when we enjoy an excellent lunch. Since we have attracted a few more younger retired ex Signallers, some ex National Service, we are currently looking at ways of increasing our activities!

There may be people out there who might remember the following names from 1942-1960 who in recent years have joined the Southampton Branch: **Tony Dear, Jack Mackenzie, Brian Burt, Sidney Smith, John Ashman, Tony Hull, Tony Hulse** and **Ron Bailey**.

SWINDON BRANCH

The First Anniversery of the formation of the Swindon Branch was celebrated at the meeting in May. The Branch President, **Lt Col Gent (Retd)**, welcomed **Col Carter (Retd) MBE** and **Peter Cuckow** from Headquarters. The President then spoke of the Branch's first year of operations and of his pride in the Branch. Listing the numerous first's that had been achieved by the Branch, he particularly highlighted the participation as a Branch in the Remembrance Day Parade, the Social Evening and a joint evening with the local RE's Branch. He also praised the efforts of **Robin Shepphерd** who produces the Branch Newsletter and appealed for more members to submit articles for inclusion in future issues.

The election of Branch Officers took place and future plans for Branch activities were announced. Members were very enthusiastic about plans to carry on with the speakers after Branch business has been dealt with. Past subjects in the last year have included: Tales of an Ex-Policeman, Coalport Pottery, Life of a Bentley Mech, He who would a Magistrate be.

Branch members before the start of business

WEST LONDON BRANCH

The Annual Dinner & Dance of the Branch was held at the Civic Centre at Hounslow in April. We were joined by Members of the Reading Branch and many other friends and it was a great success.

In May a party from the Branch went on a most enjoyable weekend to Belgium, staying in Antwerp and visiting Bruges and the battlefield of Waterloo. This was organised by 31 Sig Regt, **Maj Ron Miller** being our Liaison Officer with his old Regiment. Unless reports have been exaggerated, everyone enjoyed it, 'Dusty'!

REUNIONS

56 Div (City of London Sig) OCA

DRs CELEBRATE THEIR 60TH ANNIVERSARY

On 12 April the Despatch Riders' Section of 56 Div (City of London Signals) Branch held their Annual Dinner/Dance in Eastbourne and celebrated the 60th Anniversary of their first performance at the Royal Tournament. Current team members–average age 80–who attended the dinner were **Jim Law** (team captain), **Arthur Overton** (2IC), **Jack Tyler** DFC (one of the original team before joining the RAF), **Robin Thyer**, 'Tubby' **Gasson**, **Geoff Putt**, **Bill Barry** and 'Hec' **Bennett**. The Signal Officer in Chief, **Brig Nigel Wood** and his wife **Wendy**, were the principal Guests of Honour at the dinner. **Maj Keith Russell**, OC of the White Helmets and his wife **Joan**; **Sgt Don Brebnor**, the White Helmets team captain, **Mrs Ilene White**, the White Helmet's secretary and her husband **John**. Unfortunately OC White Helmets, **Capt Lisa Giles**, was unable to join the celebrations since she had to keep in trim for the London marathon the next day!

After a splendid meal, and after **Arthur Overton** had made some interesting matrimonial readjustments in welcoming the guests, the SOinC replied on behalf of the guests and brought members up to date with topical issues in the Corps. A dance and, (surprisingly) more drinking followed this and the 60th anniversary was well and truly celebrated. **Jim** 'I'm not organising another one' **Law**, who organises the event each year, thought it didn't go too badly; the 64 other attendees considered it to be the best yet and are looking forward to next year!

The SOinC with members of the 56 Div Signals Motorcycle Display Team and others after dinner

219 Sig Sqn (Tripolitania) OCA

MUA-MUE-MU13. All Telegraphists recognising these Call Signs are requested to contact the Secretary on 01925 481024. Teleprinter Ops may recognise RBTBA-RBTBAA or RBTBAB.

Terry has to keep a fairly low profile this month, having forfeited Chairman **Roy Andrews** photograph of the 1964 Rugby Team to *The Wire*. It may well be the only one in existence, and it would be no surprise if he puts a Contract out on me! Sorry **Roy**, honest! Mayhap the Editor will be touched by my plight and return it.

Our Treasurer **Muriel Hearldon** was presented with her Honorary Life Membership by **Gen Yeoman** and **Mr Peter Cuckow**. This was at AGM, where a lot of new friendships were made and many old ones renewed.

Let's hope this new format for the AGM continues, I'm sure all will admit it was a resounding success.

Yours Sincerely
Terry Hearldon

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Off we trundled, into Europe, again this time to Antwerp. It was all organised by our Tour Operator **Maj Ron** 'Dusty' **Miller**. We all had a great time. The Secretary, **Henry Holman** said that it was a laugh a minute, as far as he can remember. We even managed to stay on Plan 'A'. Our Chairman, **Col Donald Crawford**, remarked that he sees more of Europe with the Association than he ever did on Exercise. Despite **Steve Bland** wanting to look at it, we managed to steer clear of the dreaded 'Grobbendonk'. The word 'Grobbendonk' will put fear into the hearts of some *Wire* readers, sorry.

We had a Tri-Ply of colonels on this trip, the other two being **Col John Eversfield** and **Col Keith** 'Goldie' **Morrison**. A special mention must go to **Mrs Jean Crawford**, who having just had a hip operation managed to make the trip with the help of a wheelchair, walking sticks and a highly qualified Nursing Sister in **Mrs Beryl Eversfield**. The walking sticks came in very handy for keeping order at the rear of the coach. **Maj Bob Simpson** was heard to say, 'Ouch!!' several times.

Our Picture shows some of the group outside the beer tent. Spot the ten foot tall driver at the back. Our conducted tour of Waterloo was first class, followed by lunch in Brussels. The evening saw our nerves being tested by the Antwerp taxi drivers, one of whom even knew Stirling Moss. The move back via Brugge and Calais was just as smooth. With the 'Duty Frees' well hidden, we zipped through customs, (it was never like this with the Regiment), arriving back at base right on time, brilliant!

Our next function was the Military Band Concert at the Royal Star and Garter Home, Richmond. This took place on 7 June. Our man on the inside **Maj James Mill** ensured that we had a good day, met lots of interesting people and gave them all our money. I suppose we had to show willing, after all he is the Financial Director at the Home. I'm off now to drink my 'Duty Frees', do not feel sorry, somebody's got to do it.

THE MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

Since our last *Wire* notes we have attended the Cavalry Memorial Parade at Hyde Park. The salute was taken by **HM The Queen Mother**. The weather was cold and damp (someone forgot to say their prayers). Halfway through the Parade the skies opened and down came the rain. The Queen Mother stood firm, so did we, as somebody remarked, "If she can stick it out, so can we". Our numbers were good and there were 72 marching led by **Col Ted Scarlett BEM, TD**. Also on parade were several members from the Squadron led by **Maj Paul Willmott**. He in his turn brought along his Sergeant Major, **WO2 Steve Prance** to keep everyone under control. After the Parade lunch was taken at the Duke of York's HQ, this was organised by **Maj Ron** 'Dusty' **Miller**. Our Chairman, **George Key**, was unable to make it for lunch but he promises to do better next year.

Our photograph shows some of the good looking chaps who were on parade. Please note the highly polished medals, almost matching the colourful Middlesex Yeomanry Tie. The gentleman with the armband is not our team captain, it is **Len Smith**, one of the stewards for this well organised event. Next year the massed bands will march up from the Knightsbridge Barracks at 10.15am on 10 May 1998, try to be there.

The next big event is the 200th Anniversary Summer Ball at Uxbridge TA Centre on 5 July 1997, but more about that next time. I will now saddle up and ride off into the sunset, towards Uxbridge.

The Fourth ENIGMA Reunion

This will take place at Bedford on the weekend of 19/22 September.
It will be accommodated at the Swan and Moat House Hotels.
A full programme of talks has been arranged and there will be a visit to Bletchley Park.
All ex-Royal Signals or ATS 'Y' Service personnel are invited.
For details telephone SAGA on Freephone 0800 300666

MEETING OF THE ROYAL SIGNALS KOREAN VETERANS

I have in the past attended many military functions, reunions and branch dedications, overseas revisits etc and not found many wearing the Corps badge, except on Remembrance day parade in London.

So it was a great pleasure today, Sunday May 25 1997, while attending the dedication of a new branch standard of the British Korean Veterans Association.THE ESSEX NO 1 COLCHESTER BRANCH. This was held at the Garrison church of St Alban the Martyr in Colchester. The church was packed to capacity and from the many branches attending from all over the United Kingdom I found SIX wearing the Corps badge. Some 40 Standards were on parade. Three Royal Signals members were carrying their branch standards of the BKVA.

If you would be so kind as to publish their names addresses, units served etc, whilst in the Korean conflict, as there may be someone out there who would like to make contact.

Ron Larby 28 Bde Signals
178 Braemar Ave
Neasden
LONDON
NW10 0DS

Ron Batchelor 28 Bde Signals
8 Fullwell Ave
Barkingside, Ilford
ESSEX
1GB 2HT

George Quigley 29 Bde Signals
26 St Mary's Road
Southend on Sea
ESSEX
SS2 6JS

Reg Briggs Royal Signals attached
28th Field Regt R.E.(Nan Troop)
157 Chaucer Road
PETERBOROUGH
PE1 3LS

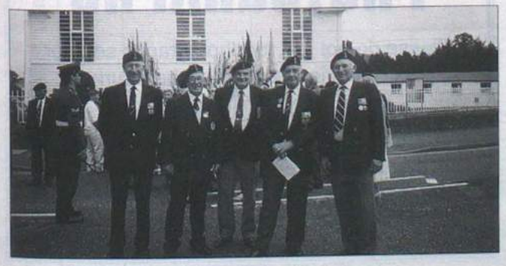
When in Korea my home town was then Boston in Lincolnshire.

Two of the standard bearers were **Arthur Store**, attached to 45 Fld Regt RA and **Pat Brieley**, attached to 20 Fld Regt RA. I was unable to get their addresses. **Alan Campbell** 29 Bde Signals unable to get his address. I have photographs of them carrying their Standards should they like a copy please write or phone me. Dignitaries attending were, taking the salute **Maj Gen P. A. Downward CB, DSO, DFC**, President of the Association **Lt Col Thomas Grant**, US Army-Assistant Army Attache American Embassy–For and on behalf of the American Ambassador, the Korean Military Attache **Col G. Gadd**, **Lt Col P. G. Raven SBM**, **Lt Col H. B. Orpen-Smellie**, **Lt Col I. Jung** Korean Defence Attache.

The present membership of the BKVA is about 4000 and growing. If you qualify for membership and wish to join please apply for membership to National Recruiting Officer, BKVA, 4 Lightoaks Road, Salford, Manchester. The association holds many functions each year including revisits to Korea. There are at present some 55 branches and the BKVA publishes a journal 'THE MORNING CALM' four times a year. Anyone wanting information can contact me on Peterborough 01733 701963.

Membership is open to all ranks who served Korea 1950 to 1953 and the subsequent Peacekeeping Forces. (Men & Women)

Reg Briggs, Member Peterborough Branch RSA.



LOST COMMS

Mr John Edward Johnson would like to hear from any ex-comrades that served in 11th Air Formation Signals, 2 Squadron, 115. D.R. Section from January 1943 until May 1946 at Colwyn Bay, Gatton Park, Purbrook and thence to Normandy. Passing through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany ending in Horsen Denmark. Then from 1946 until August 1947 based in the Middle East. Serving in Cairo, Tel a Kebir, El Bala, 7 HQ Signals, Palestine Command Signals Jerusalem and Haifa. He would like to receive any information of the personnel or members of the DR Sections of the aforementioned units. Please contact him at:

2 Eckington Close, West Hallam
ILKESTON, Derbyshire DE7 6NE
Tel: 0115 9309512

Harry Marshall of Tooting (Letchworth Street?)–Joined the TA (Signals) in 1939 at Atkins Road, Balham. Please contact **Steve Bland**, Secretary, 56 Div (City of London Signals) RSA Branch, 222 Wickham Road, Croydon, CRO 9BJ.

Sidney Skinner served in the Corps during the last war and was based in Venice. Anyone knowing the whereabouts of **Mr Skinner** or his family is asked to contact **Maj David N. Philip** at 161 The Keep, King's Road, Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 5UF.

VETERANS OF THE GREEK CAMPAIGN 1940-41

I write to seek the support of *The Wire* in tracing members of the Corps who served in the above campaign. My reason for so doing follows:-

Almost wholly due to **Edwin Horlington** RASC who was determined that those who fought in the Greek Campaign should not be forgotten, we now have the 'Brotherhood of the Veterans of the Greek Campaign 1940-41'. Since 1995 the veterans have made pilgrimage to Kalamata in the Peloponnese where the last battle on the Greek mainland was fought on 27 and 28 April were the Allies surrendered on the beach there.

Our commemoration takes place at a monument given to us by the Municipality of Kalamata that is part of the province of Messinas. There we participate in a service similar to but much smaller than that which takes place at the Cenotaph annually in November. This service, led by the Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in Messinas, is attended by the Heads of the Greek Armed Forces, Ambassadors, Mayor of Kalamata and other Civic dignitaries. A Greek guard of honour and a military band greets our arrival at the memorial stone. After the service is over we retire for an al fresco lunch behind the old railway station, courtesy of the Municipality of Kalamata. This year it was my privilege to deliver the 'Oration' and lay the wreath 'For all who did not return'.

My retreat in Greece started at Jannina on the Albanian border and ended at what is now the old railway station at Kalamata after assisting in commandeering and running a train from Nauplion. During the fighting around the port and on the beach I met up with a **Sgt Long** whom I had last seen when we were Signalmen together in the Shanghai Signal Section 1937/38. Apart from **Sgt Long**, I do not recall any other Signallers at Kalamata but feel there may have been some. Almost all the ex-servicemen who make the pilgrimage to Kalamata are ex-P.O.W's., mostly R.E.'s and R.A.S.C. I was fortunate to escape and be picked up at sea by H.M.S. *Kandahar* after the surrender.

So, if there are any Signallers around who served in Greece in 1940-41 a **Mr. Edwin Horlington** would like to hear from them. His address is:- 163 Walton Road, Walton-on-Naze, Essex. CO14 8NE. Tel: 677178 or they could contact me, **Edgar Harrison**.

From: **Lorraine Binnie**
66 Porterfield, Comrie, Dunfermline
FIFE KY12 9HJ

Dear Sir

I sent you a letter in the hope that you could trace my mother's father for her. Unfortunately I gave you his name as **Capt Michael Kelly** when it is in fact **Capt Edward Michael Kelly**. I would like to apologise for this error and hope that you will be able to help. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Lorraine Binnie

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **WO2 F. E. Roberts** R.Signals

Dear Sir,

I am the Royal Signals Permenant Staff Instructor at Southampton OTC and one of my current sidelines is to look after all training publications in the Unit. We have just entered into a full check of the library which includes a limited amount of communications material.

Here in Southampton we are lucky enough to be one of the few OTCs which still retain a dedicated Signals Troop. I am keen that this should remain the case and would like to enhance the Signals library within Sarawak Troop.

I am writing to you in order that, I may request the help of serving or past members of the Corps. If any reader is in possession of any Signals type publications for which there is now no need, the Unit in Southampton would be keen to take them off their hands. Perhaps anyone wishing to help us out could contact me on 01703 332211 or (Military) 727 8023.

DONATIONS

Friends of the late Mrs Stella J. Lynch	£110.00
Col (Retd) James Proudman In memory of Col John North	£15.00
L. A. Moignard In thanksgiving for the life of Col John North	£50.00
Mrs B. Hughes In memory of Col John North.	£25.00
Friends In memory of Col John North	£111.76
Mrs A. Mawson In memory of Maj R.C. Mawson	£10.00
In Memory of Mr. H. Jones ex-RAMC	£20.00
252 Sig Sqn, 16 Sig Regt	£114.63
George Brew of 19 Sig Regt OCA	£27.70
Terry Hearldon	£50.00
Swindon RSA	£50.00
Liverpool RSA	£20.00
Peterborough RSA	£75.00
Eastbourne RSA	£50.00
SSgt B.J. Halliday (7 Sig Regt)	£50.00
Maj Gen E. W. H. Huntley	£50.00
Mr T. V. Seddon	£10.00
'Certo Cito Lodge'	£20.00

LAST POST

Amos–Dvr J. E. Amos	Served 1942/46	Died 1997
Bell–Sgt F. Bell	Served 1942/56	Died 27/02/97
Boylan–Sig J. A. M. Boylan	Served 1940/46	Died 18/03/97
Burley–Sgt W. S. Burley	Served 1949/78	Died May 97
Cash–Dvr S. A. Cash	Served 1941/47	Died 17/06/97
Fisher–WO2 D.E. Fisher	Served 1941/46	Died 18/05/97
Goose–Sig B. C. Goose	Served 1992/97	Died 21/03/97
Jack–WO2 James Jack	Served 22 years	Died 19/04/97
Palfrey–Maj J. W. Palfrey TD	Served 1932/46	Died 05/12/96
Pocock–Sgt K. J. Pocock	Served 1942/47	Died 15/05/97
Pringle–Maj R. C. Pringle	Served 1939/73	Died 28/04/97
Sweet–Sig R. E. W. Sweet	Served 1952/56	Died 29/04/97
Timpson–Maj C. E. Timpson	Served 1946/86	Died 23/05/97
Truscott–Lt Col M. E. E. Truscott	Served 1934/71	Died May 97
Wright–Sgt J. Wright	Served 1931/46	Died 07/05/97

Maj S. W. Mawson. Died October 19 1996. **Bill Mawson** joined the Royal Corps of Signals at the age of 20. He did a preliminary course in England before leaving for India, where he successfully completed the Officers course, in the Indian Academy. The war years were spent in India and Burma.

In 1945, he was sent to Germany, repairing and replacing radio communications. His knowledge of the language was helpful, with a workforce of 2,000 people. Later he served in Khartoum, and joined the Sudan Defence Force in the South. He was made a Bimbashi (Major) met his Swiss wife **Annette** there and married her in 1954.

After a spell in Aden and Somaliland, with the Air Formation Signals, he went to Freetown, Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone had become independent in 1961, and the Royal Sierra Leone Military Forces comprised one Battalion, trained and supervised by British Officers. His expertise and work there earned him the M.B.E. By 1967, only the Paymaster (Col West) and the Signals Officer, **Bill Mawson**, remained there. The Army mutinied twice, and **Bill** found himself in the position of virtually running the country, for almost a year. The last few years with the Signals were spent in Germany.

Bill was also a keen and knowledgeable gardener and enthusiastic beekeeper. He leaves his wife, one son, three daughters, a son-in-law, and two grandchildren. His wife **Annette**, family, and his many friends sadly miss him.

Brig Richard Brian 'Dick' **Ridley-Martin MA MIEE**, died on 17 January 1997 aged 98. As a boy, he lived in Purley, Surrey, was a member of the local choir and had a lifelong love of music. He went to Malvern College from 1923-1927, followed by The Royal Military Academy, Woolwich from 1927-1928. He was commissioned into The Royal Signals on 31 January 1929 and was promoted to Lieutenant two years later. He went up to Cambridge in 1932 to read for the Engineering Tripos at Kings College and obtained a degree in Mechanical Sciences in 1934. Whilst there, he gained an half-blue for fencing and went on to represent England at fencing in the European Championships in Turin in 1933.

He met his future wife **Vera**, (nicknamed Peter), at Tidworth where, at fencing he was expert with sabre and epee, and **Vera** with foil. They were married at St. Mary Abbott, Kensington in May, 1936 at which time he was an instructor at the School of Signals Catterick and whilst there, he found time to obtain a Civil Pilot's License.

He was attached to the Sudan Defence Force from November 1937, and he and **Vera** were at sea, returning from leave en route to Cairo when war was declared. He left the Sudan in July 1940 and joined the 1st Armd Div Sig Regt in Egypt as acting Major. 'Dick' spent the war largely in the Middle East moving the length of North Africa from Iraq and Palestine to Algeria before ending the war in Italy. He was mentioned in dispatches in 1941 (London Gazette, 5 July 1941). From February to September 1943, he was GS01 HQME as acting Lieutenant Colonel.

Immediately after the war, he returned to Egypt as Chief Signals Advisor to the British Military Mission in Cairo where he remained until 1947. He then returned to England as SO Royal Signals in AAComd followed by GSO1 War Office before returning to Cairo as GSO1 GHQ Middle East from September 1952 to April 1954. He was promoted to Colonel in 1954 and served again in the War Office before moving to the British Joint Services Mission in Washington D.C. in November 1957. Returning from the USA in March 1960, he was promoted to Brigadier for his last posting to HQ Eastern Comd in Hounslow.

After retiring from the Army in 1962, he worked at Bracknell before joining NADGECO, a NATO division co-ordinating all European early warning systems where he had overall responsibility for all security aspects. He was a keen sailor throughout his life and was a member of the Royal Signals Yacht Club as well as the Royal Lymington Yacht Club.

He and **Vera** returned to Brockenhurst in the New Forest in 1977. He was a strong member of the Church, always working around the churches in the parish and he made it his particular mission to maintain the organ at St. Nicholas'. He was also Chairman of the Service Committee of the Royal British Legion, projectionist for NADFAS, and at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club. He was frequently found working on improvements, with regard to the electronic equipment.

The Service of Thanksgiving was held at Parish Church of St. Nicholas, Brockenhurst on 31 January. He is survived by his wife **Vera** and sons **Michael** and **Patrick**.

Goose–Sig B. C. Goose. **Brett Goose** joined the Corps on the 16 December 1992 as a Junior Leader, and successfully completed training as a Driver Lineman on 20 January 1994, with 8 Sig Regt. He joined 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt on 11 February 1994. He deployed with the Regiment on Op Resolute 2B in 1996, and on his return joined 211 Sig Sqn's MT. **Brett** will be sadly missed by all members of the Regiment. Our deepest sympathies go out to his friends and family, especially his parents and brother **LCpl Clive Goose**.

Luckett–Mrs Mary Luckett. It is with deep regret that I have to report the death of my wife in Nottingham City Hospital on May 14 1997.

Mary joined the WRAC in 1970 and was affiliated to the Intelligence Corps. She had the good fortune whilst serving in 13 Sig Regt (R), to meet an ambitious and sporty signalman who, deferring to her senior rank, agreed to get married. **Mary** was an astute, intelligent and truly supportive wife who was always deeply involved in Regimental life wherever we served. She will be fondly remembered by many past and present Corps cricketers as the lady who did the scoring and operated the fines book. A generation of Apprentices from Harrogate knew her as the lady in the PRI Shop who issued the tracksuits, sold the cuddly toys and helped them with their new cheque books.

My constant companion for 28 years and mother to **Martin** and **Karen**, she will be greatly missed by all her friends and family.

Pickard–SSgt Gordon Pickard was born in Newton Abbot and at the age of 15 he joined the Army Boys Service. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals. He travelled the world and most of England as well. He spent a lot of time at Catterick having been posted there on no less than 4 occasions. He also served at Bulford, Ascot, Tewksbury, Blandford, Corsham and Aldershot. He also served in Egypt, Cyprus and Germany. For six years he was in Kenya, during the time of the Mau Mau uprising. **Gordon** retired from the army in 1987, after 40 years of service, with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

He was immensely proud of his association with the Army and regularly attended Old Comrades and Royal Signals Association Reunions. He would at every opportunity wear the uniform of his Regiment as it was during the First World War, his Old Comrades uniform. After his retirement his wife **Jan** thought that perhaps he shouldn't be under her feet every day, even though she enjoyed his company after several long periods of separation, whilst he was in the Army. She saw an advert in the paper for a custodian at Alfred's Tower, a National Trust property near Stalbridge. **Gordon** applied for the job and got it. During the time he was custodian he increased the time he spent there from two days to five days a week. It is largely thanks to him that the Tower is now such a tourist attraction. Our thoughts are with **Jan** and the two children **Michelle** and **Duncan**.

Wire

PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in *The Wire*, to be returned, unless they are irreplaceable.

Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing a photograph that cannot be replaced.

How was the money spent? (All figures are in thousands)

EXPENDITURE	£K	%
Association Welfare and Benevolence	249	31
Association Grants (Army Benevolent Fund etc)	56	7
Salaries and Pensions	42 20	8
Running Expenses	19 15	4
Institution	56	7
Band	8	2
Sports	53	7
Wire Subsidy	27	3
Capital Grants	69	9
Entertainment	6 28	4
Other (Note 1)	72	9
Invested or Carried Forward	85	10
	£806K	

NOTE 1.

	£K
Adventure Training	22
Assistance to Units	2
Grants	5
Recruiting	32
HQ Officers' Mess	8
HQ Sergeants' Mess	3

Where did the money come from?

INCOME	£	%
Soldiers Subscriptions	308	38
Soldiers Covenants	91	11
Officers Subscriptions	146	18
Officers Covenants	44	6
Investments	121 82	25
Donations	14	2
	£806K	

NOTE. *Association is shown in shaded areas.*

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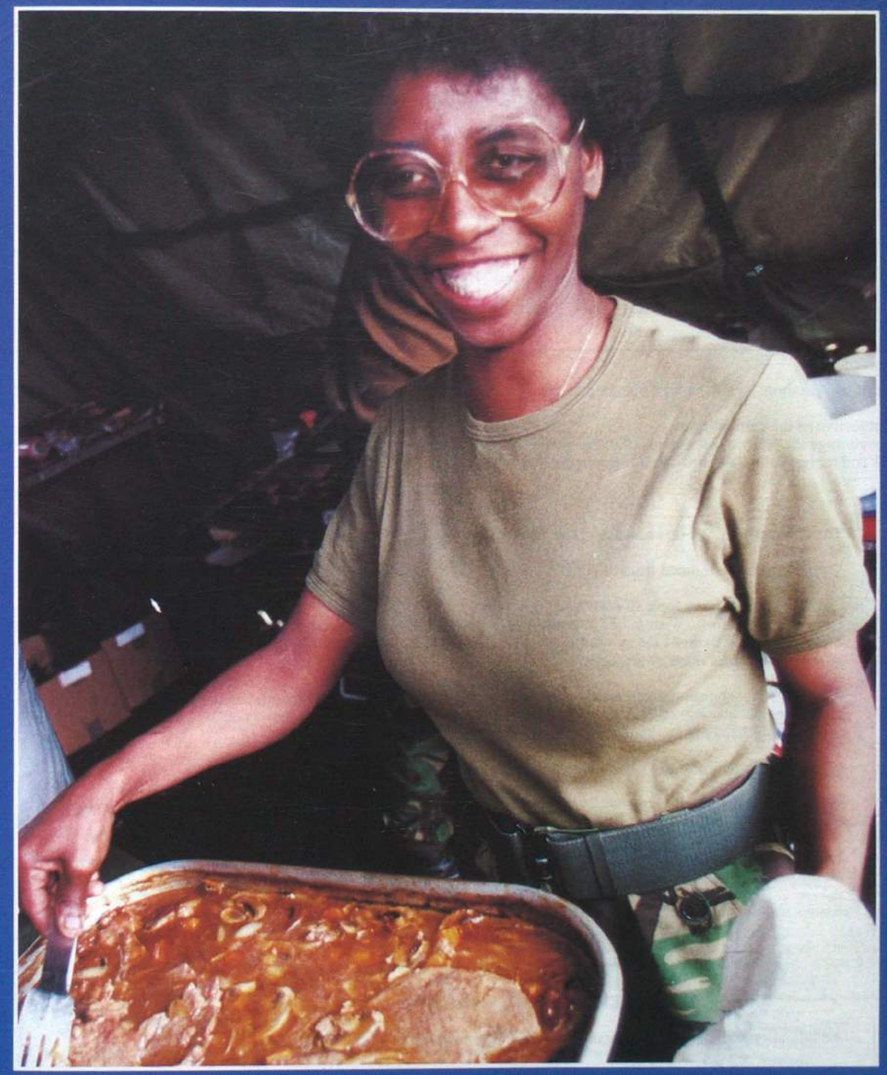
THE Wire

Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Association

October 1997



The Royal Corps of Signals

THE ROYAL SIGNALS CHENEVIX-TRENCH PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION 1998

PRIZES

First Prize £750

Available to all entrants

SOinC's Special Award £125

Available to non commissioned ranks of Royal Signals.

Young Officer's Award £125

Available to Royal Signals Officers below the rank of Major.

Non Royal Signals Award £125

Available to the Retired Corps, civilians or officers and soldiers of other arms and services.

None of the last three awards will be awarded to the winner of the first prize.

The objective of the competition is:
"To encourage the study of all aspects of relevance to The Royal Corps of Signals and, in so doing, enhance the reputation of the Corps and its Institution and provide a fitting memorial to its benefactor".

RULES:

1. The Competition will be known as **"The Royal Signals Chenevix-Trench Prize Essay Competition".**

2. Entries will be welcomed from anyone.

3. Essays may be on any topic of relevance to the Corps. In addition the SOinC (A) has nominated one subject of current interest for those who wish to use it: **Digitization promises to revolutionise the way the British Army conducts its business. It will present many challenges to Royal Signals. How should we ensure that our officers and soldiers are equipped to meet these challenges?**

4. All essays must be submitted complete with duplicate. They may be of any length, and preferably should be typewritten in double line spacing, but manuscript entries will be accepted and will not incur a penalty provided they are legible. Essays will be judged on quality, not quantity, of reading matter.

5. Classified matter must **NOT** be included.

6. When a reference is made to any work, its title and author must be quoted. Quotations and extracts must be acknowledged as such to the title and author concerned.

7. Every author must write under a nom de plume and must submit with the essay a sealed envelope with the nom de plume on the outside and name and address inside.

8. Essays should reach the Secretary of the Royal Signals Institution,
Regimental Headquarters,
Blandford Camp,
Blandford Forum,
DORSET DT11 8RH
NOT LATER THAN 1ST APRIL 1998.

9. Adjudication will be arranged by the Council of the Institution.

10. The Council of the Institution reserves the right to publish any essay submitted, in the *Wire* Journal, whether it wins a prize or not, and will pay the author at the current Institution rate.

The Royal Signals Magazine

October 1997 Vol. 51 No: 5

The Wire

All correspondence and matter for publication in **The Wire** should be addressed to **The Head of Publications, The Wire,** RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, DT11 8RH Dorset. Tel No: Blandford mil 2079 STD 01258 48 2079

Matter for publication must be received by the 15th of February, April, June, August, October and 10th December for publication six weeks later.

All enquiries regarding subscriptions/despatch should be made to ext: 2087

Subscription rates 1997 (Bi-monthly) (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec). Individual: Yearly **£9.00**; Bi-monthly **£1.50**.

Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder
Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

***The Wire* is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers**

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FRONT COVER: Cpl Stephanie Gibbons, of 35 Sig Regt (V), putting the finishing touches to one of her exceptional meals–and providing us with a bright smile for the Front Cover after a sombre month.

BACK COVER: 249 Signal Squadrons' Lanyard Trophy Team en route to winning in fine style.

THE LONDON LECTURE

THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 1997

Speaker :	**Mr Richard Marriott OBE**, Director, Office of the Chairman and Chief Executive of British Telecom.
Place :	The Merchant Centre, New Street Square
Time :	1730hrs-1800hrs
Supper :	Available afterwards with wine £27 per head
Tickets :	From RHQ, Blandford

ROYAL SIGNALS 9th HERITAGE LOTTERY

The winners of the 9th Heritage Lottery drawn on Saturday, 28 June 1997 were:

Serial	Prize	Winner
1	£1,500	Col (Retd) G.W.A. Stephenson
2	£ 500	Central Bank, 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
3	£ 500	Mr A.N. Smith
4	£ 250	Mrs T.E. Knight
5	£ 250	Mr J.A. Butterfield
6	£ 250	Sgt R. Carter, 251 Sig Sqn, Aldershot
7	£ 250	Maj (Retd) Frank Kemsey-Bourne
8	£ 100	LCpl P.A. Chaplin, 216 (Para) Sig Sqn
9	£ 100	LCpl P.S. Kinsey, 216 (Para) Sig Sqn
10	£ 100	CPO N.P. Nash, 1 Sqn, 9 Sig Regt
11	£ 100	Mr H.D. Corston
12	£ 50	Lt Col (Retd) J.J.H. Swallow OBE
13	£ 50	Mrs C. Bentley
14	£ 50	PRI, 21 Sig Regt (AS)
15	£ 50	Brig D.A. Pringle OBE
16	£ 25	Mr P.R. Stanford
17	£ 25	Miss C. McCartney
18	£ 25	Mr A. Crosbie
19	£ 25	Mr G. Hickmore
20	£ 25	Maj P.M. Kelly, R.Signals
21	£ 25	Lt Col (Retd) P.R. Brewis

Royal Signals Institution
Blandford Lectures 1997/98

The Blandford Lectures are held in conjunction with the IEE Southern Centre and AFCEA (UK) Southern Chapter.

The Lectures are held in Princess Mary Hall commencing 6pm, with tea being served in the foyer at 5.30pm. Members from outside Blandford Camp who wish to attend should contact **Lt Col (Retd) R. P. Shiner**, Army CIS Engineering Group, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH. (Tel: 01258 485407 or ATN 737 5407)

The programme for October and November 1997 is:

Wed 8 Oct 97
'Digital Broadcasting'
by **Mr C. Gandy**, BBC Research Department, Tadworth, Surrey.
(Lecture sponsored by IEE Southern Centre)

Thu 20 Nov 97
'Above us the Waves–Strategic Communications'
by **Cdre J. B. Sadler RN**, DSWS MOD(PE)
(Lecture sponsored by AFCEA (UK) Southern Chapter)

AFCEA (UK) SOUTHERN CHAPTER

Programme for October and November 1997

23 October
"Defence Needs Analysis"
Speaker: Maj S.I. Andrews, Project CAPITAL, HQ LAND
Venue: The Vine Hotel, Ower (Nr. Jct. 2 M27)
Time: 18.00 (Drinks and Supper followed by Lecture)

20 November
"Above us the Waves – Strategic Communications"
Speaker: Cdre J.B. Sadler RN, DSWS MOD(PE)
Venue: Princess Mary Hall, Blandford Camp
Time: 18.00 (Lecture followed by Supper in HQ Mess R. Signals)

(Held in conjunction with RSI & IEE Wessex Area)

AFCEA Members and their guests are welcome.
Reservations must be made through:
Maj A. Gibb, Secretary AFCEA (UK) Southern Chapter
BMDT
Blandford Camp
Dorset
DT11 8RH
Tel: 01258 482621 Fax: 01258 482620

Forecast of Events

October 1997

6-8	RSM's Convention	HQ R. Signals/ 11Sig Regt
7	RSI Council Meeting	RHQ R. Signals
8	RSI/IEE Lecture (IEE sponsored)	RSS (Tech Div)
19	Tower Half Marathon	MAA 11 Sig Regt
31	Scottish Dinner	RHQ R. Signals

November 1997

6	Opening of the Field of Remembrance	RHQ R. Signals
9	Remembrance Sunday	Gar HQ/11 Sig Regt
13	RSI London Lecture	RHQ R. Signals
20	RSI/AFCEA Lecture (AFCEA sponsored)	Army CIS Eng Gp

December 1997

18	The Corps Carol Service	RHQ R. Signals London

February 1998

4	RSI/IEE Lecture (IEE Sponsored)	RSS (Sch Technology)

March 1998

4	RSI/IEE Lecture (RSI Sponsored)	Army CIS Gp
17/19	RSI/IEE Lecture (RSI Sponsored) (To be decided)	At Blandford

May 1998

12	Royal Signals London Dinner	

June 1998

20	Royal Signals Corps Luncheon	At Blandford
27/28	RSA Weekend	At Blandford

Do you subscribe to The Wire or are you reading someone else's copy?

A financial review has recently been carried out and the combining of *The Wire* and *The Journal*, which are both subsidised by the Corps, will bring about a considerable saving to the Corps.

The Wire will still be published six times a year but twice a year, probably about October and April, there will be a fat *Wire* that will incorporate *Journal* type articles. Many of these articles should prove to be of interest to potential Foremen and Yeomen of Signals. Others will be of historical interest.

The annual subscription will not increase and is only £9.00 per year. This can be paid either by Direct Debit or by Cheque. To obtain further details return the proforma to RHQ.

The WIRE
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THE PRINCESS MARY MEDAL
Maj Gen J.H. Hild MBE

Maj Gen Hild is an officer of the post-war generation who joined the Army as a National Serviceman and decided to stay on for a full career. He spent much of his early service in the Far East and was 'mentioned in despatches' when he commanded a unique joint unit during the Indonesian Confrontation. This was followed by command and staff appointments in the Far East, the United Kingdom and in Germany, culminating in his final appointment as Commander Communications British Army of the Rhine. Throughout his career, **General Hild** was recognised for his very high standards and his interest in emerging technology. His blunt, direct advice was not always popular, but it came from a genuine belief in professional integrity and in his interest in the good of the Corps and of the Army.

On retiring from the Army, **Gen Hild** joined the Board of Siemens (UK) Ltd and for four years ran their defence business. He promoted the need for local content in products and projects, and for co-operation on a European basis. In this he was an excellent ambassador for the Corps and his influence and connections enhanced the reputation and standing of the Corps. As a direct result, many members of the Corps have found worthwhile second careers and are grateful for his forthright advice and support during a difficult transitory period.

He has shown a deep interest in the domestic affairs of Royal Signals and took up a number of key voluntary time-consuming appointments. As the Admiral of the Royal Signals Yacht Club, he laid the foundations for a cost effective venture which has provided a challenging pastime for many and has promoted the image of the Corps. His presidency of the Aldershot Branch of the Royal Signals Association has fostered esprit de corps and has encouraged retired members of the Corps family to retain contact and to be on the lookout for those less fortunate members in need of material or other help. But his greatest contribution to the domestic affairs of the Corps is in the management and control of Corps funds as Chairman of the Finance Committee. He has been involved in the Corps' financial affairs for over a decade, during which time he has implemented many innovative measures. It has been a long, evolutionary process and is a mark of his foresight, energy and determination to ensure that the voluntary subscriptions from members of the Corps are used effectively and for the purpose for which they have been donated. The system of management and control of funds is the envy of other Corps and Regiments, who recognise it as being their ultimate goal. The Corps at large owes a debt of gratitude to him for unselfishly devoting a great deal of time to this crucial aspect of the Corps' affairs.

Maj Gen Hild will be recognised throughout the Corps as a thoroughly professional, talented and genuine officer who has always had the best interests of the Corps family at the forefront of his priorities. The award of The Princess Mary Medal has marked his contribution to the Royal Corps of Signals for the past 47 years.

HRH The Princess Royal presents the medal to Maj Gen Hild

RESETTLEMENT

You will probably be aware that the Corps Resettlement Cell has returned to RHQ. We were able to do this following the establishment of a new post of SO3 Coord RHQ at the beginning of the year and this is now filled by **Lt Col (Retd) Alan Browne**.

The function of Corps Resettlement sadly remains a 'black economy' activity carried out in addition to the other work associated with the post. Whilst this limits the extent of what we can do the feed-back that we receive from those in the Corps resettlement chain is most positive and clearly the service that we are providing is both appreciated and merits the time spent on it. The main functions of the Cell are to provide a focus for resettlement, to provide advice and to provide information about jobs of which we become aware.

This is carried out primarily through the production of a monthly Newsletter augmented by signals to units where the time frame necessitates it. These activities are in addition to the other service resettlement features where the Regular Forces Employment Agency and Officers Association provide job matching for individuals, something that we cannot do. We work very closely with all involved and the good news is that the communications industry is understandably keen to employ those from the Corps of all ranks and trades.

You may view this activity as having a degree of irony associated with it since we spend so much of RHQ's time and effort on recruiting. However, viewed in the broader terms of providing welfare and full career advice I am sure that resettlement is properly located amongst my responsibilities as Regimental Colonel.

SHEFFIELD SOLDIER RECEIVES MBE

But soldiers are beaten 12–0 by John Quinn's All Stars

A Sheffield soldier has been honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. **WO2 Bob Ingham**, the Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant at 38 Sig Regt, Manor Top, was awarded the MBE for his work with local charities and young people as well as his endeavours with the Army. **Bob** (38) is the Group Scout Leader for the 72nd St Andrew's Beavers, Cubs and Scouts which meet in Sharrow. When he is not attending their meetings, church parades or Saturday morning football with the youngsters, he and his wife **Pat** support local charities. He assisted in the recent building work at the Ryegate Children's Centre where staff support and care for children with mental and physical disabilities. He has also been involved with family support groups at Sheffield Children's Hospital and is a hard working supporter of For A Better Life with Epilepsy (FABLE). FABLE recently organised a football match against John Quinn's All Stars, a team of former professional footballers, at the Aurora Sports Complex in Rotherham. When the original opposition dropped out, the TA soldiers from 38 Sig Regt came to the rescue of the organisers and fielded a team for the match. Organised and captained by **Bob**, the Signals Team ranged in age from 16 to 48 years. The All Stars team, which included former England players **Emlyn Hughes** and **Mel Stirling**, won the toss and scored their first goal within three minutes. By the end of the first half the score was 4–0.

'We still thought we might make the score look respectable at that point,' said **Bob**. In the second half some serious football was played amidst a torrential downpour and the final score was 12–0. The match raised £400 for FABLE. Now the Regiment plan to stage a 38km march in aid of the Ryegate Centre.

Fourteen-year-old Cheryl Ingham (centre) wishes her father WO2 Bob Ingham good luck as he and his team play John Quinn's All Stars–a team of ex-professional footballers captained by Emlyn Hughes (right)

NEW MUSEUM PROJECT FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN GROUP EPILOGUE

By The Chairman, **Maj Gen E. J. Hellier, CBE**

At the 33rd meeting of the Campaign Group, held at the Royal School of Signals on 3 July, 1997, we were able to announce not only that all the capital costs of the New Museum Project had been met, but also that a surplus balance of some £25,000 arising from various planned measures, would accrue to the Museum Fund by the end of the year. So ended a protracted period of fund raising effort which can best be described as a 'roller-coaster' experience of highs and lows, success and failure, pleasant surprises and bitter disappointments, good decisions and bad decisions, fruitful initiatives and embarrassing mistakes all contained within periods of frenetic activity and quiet days.

Yet despite this sinusoidal experience, a successful outcome to the raising of £1.15 million was achieved–an outcome not attributable to any one person or group of individuals for, to a very large extent, success was founded on the continuous support and abiding faith in the need for the Project by the 'Family of the Corps'. Throughout what became known as our 'Heritage Venture', the Corps Committee, the Signal Officer-in-Chief, the Royal School of Signals, Regular and TA Units of the Serving Corps together with the Royal Signals Association Branches and the Retired Corps, Corps Widows and Reservists all gave, in their respective ways, the guidance, support or help–both moral and actual–to enable the Campaign Group to fulfil its appointed task. In this respect it is important to make special mention of the Celebrity Amateur Golf Event (CAGE) organising team–led by **Lt Col Palmer** and ably assisted by **Brig Butler**–for their superb and substantial fund raising efforts over several years whilst, at the same time, raising the profile of the Corps with British Industry.

Other major fund raising initiatives also had additional benefits. The series of 20 Commemorative Postal Covers, meticulously researched over five years by **Lt Col Paterson**, forms a unique record of the development of army communications over almost 200 years and the original artwork has been framed and is on display in the HQ Officers' Mess. The Grand Heritage Lottery mail shots proved to be an excellent vehicle to raise awareness of the museum amongst the serving and retired members of the Corps–some of whom were not even aware that we had a museum! The publicity attending both of these initiatives attracted the attention of a number of past members of the Corps who have subsequently become RSA Branch Members and who have attended regimental and other reunions. Hand-in-hand with the fund raising, potential prime contractors were interviewed by the Corps Heritage Committee under the chairmanship of **Brig Griffin**; contracts were placed and, as funds became available, building and modernisation proceeded. As we were seen to be translating our aspirations into bricks and mortar, so the fundamental support from the 'Family of the Corps' was supplemented in large measure by contributions from Industry, Charities and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. These benefactors are too numerous to list here except to note British Telecom, Siemens, GEC-Marconi, The Foundation for Sport and the Arts, NAAFI and the Holbeche-Corfield Charitable Settlement as being particularly generous. All are recorded for posterity on the Benefactors Board over the entrance to the new display area and also in the display areas that they have sponsored. We are, indeed, most grateful for this fulsome and practical support.

The co-ordination and management of these fund raising activities and responsibility for endeavouring to have monies in place to meet the building cash flow requirements was the task of the Campaign Group. This comprised a small nucleus–the Chairman (initially **Maj Gen Badcock**), the Project Manager (initially **Brig Stonham** and later **Lt Col Soward**), **Lt Col Paterson** and the Project Secretary (initially **Mrs Conway** and later **Mrs King**). The remainder of the Group was composed of three civilian members from the London area with wide ranging industrial, political and fund-raising experience together with serving and retired officers from the Blandford Area that meant that frequent changes were inevitable. All those who served with the Campaign Group, whether as the 'nucleus stalwarts' or as co-opted 'volunteers', are to be commended for the diligence and enthusiasm with which they carried out their particular tasks. In particular **Brig Truluck**, **Brig Griffin** (a tower of strength for long periods), **Col Chaddock, Col de Bretton Gordon, Lt Col Relph, Mrs Smitherman, Mr Allick** and **Mrs Pincott** rendered most valuable service during their various tenures.

So, now that the Campaign Group's appointed task has been completed, it no longer exists: it disbanded on 4 July 1997. Whilst all who worked for, or with, the Group have every reason to be satisfied that they were an important part of this 'Heritage Venture', the credit for its successful conclusion rests mainly with the 'Family of the Corps' aided by the support of external agencies. The task now is not only to maintain but also to enhance that which has been established. For whilst today we read in the Museum the aims and ambitions, the ideas and ingenuity, and the craft and creativity of those who went before us we must not forget that tomorrow it will reflect with brutal honesty the vision and values, the aspirations and achievements and, above all, the courage and generosity of our time to those who follow us. I have no doubt that the new structures, to be described in a future article, now being set up will ensure that this is done.

Lt Col Soward, Maj Gen Hellier and Mrs King

The White Helmets

A TRIBUTE TO CPL 'ELLY' ELSON

The White Helmets' activities have been tragically overshadowed by the sudden death of one of the most stalwart members of the team–the Team **Cpl** 'Elly' **Elson**.

'Elly' joined the Royal Signals in September 1984 as a Driver Electrician, completing his training at 8 Sig Regt. His career took him to 21 Sig Regt in RAF Wildenrath, 8 Inf Bde in Northern Ireland and 229 Sig Sqn in Berlin where he also served at the Expeditionary Base in Sardinia. He joined the White Helmets in November 1991 and has been with the team ever since. He became the Team Corporal and was one of the most experienced and highly regarded members of the team. He was an incredibly knowledgeable mechanic, spending endless hours fixing 12 year old Triumph Tigers–a thankless task at the best of times. He was an extremely accomplished and courageous display rider who took part in all the most dangerous and difficult parts of the show. In addition he was a motorcycle instructor, one of the team's coach drivers and an instructor on the annual selection course. In short he was an invaluable member of the team who could never be replaced. His firm belief in the difference between right and wrong and the upholding of that belief, combined with a warm-heartedness and good humour have earned him the respect of everyone with whom he came into contact. Since the news of his death was publicised, tributes have poured in. At the time of writing, his funeral had not yet taken place, but the indication is that it will be attended by an enormous number of friends, family and past and present team members.

'Elly' is already dreadfully missed and heartfelt sympathy is passed to **Pat** and **Dave** and all his family especially since they were a surrogate family to so many members of the White Helmets. His death in a motorcycle accident on the road was a terrible tragedy and one that was particularly ironic considering his enormous prowess at the wheel. He is a tremendous loss to the team and we shall never forget him.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ARMY'S RAPID REACTION CAPABILITY

Syntegra, the systems integration business of BT, has been appointed by the MoD as the prime contractor for a new £25m project called the Land Systems Reference Centre (LSRC).

The LSRC is designed to promote the interoperability of Army Command, Control, Communications and Information Systems. Required to be completely operational within the next four years, if it is based at the Royal School of Signals in Blandford. The LSRC's main role will be to test multiple systems operating together, rather than single systems in isolation. To help achieve this it is planned that the LSRC is linked to the Procurement Executive's Ptarmigan Reference Centre at Christchurch and additional test facilities at Larkhill. The Computer Assisted Support to Headquarters (CASH) operation in Blandford will also be incorporated into the resources of the new centre. Additionally, RN and RAF systems will also be incorporated into the testing centre to ensure robust tri-service interoperability.

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MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
AUGUST 1997

Name and Rank	*Unit to which Posted*
Maj J.M.G. Billingham	2 Signal Regiment
Maj K.E. Clark	31 (City of London) Sig Regt
Maj G.J. Complin	BDLS Canada
Maj P.J. Doherty MBE	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Maj M.D. Fogg MBE	16 Signal Regiment
Maj M.N. Johnston	2 Signal Brigade
A/Maj N.H. Colville	32 Signal Regiment (V)
Capt J.J. Cole	14 Signal Regiment
Capt M.C. Cornell BEng (Hons)	604 Signal Troop
Capt W. Dott	HS 11 Signal Regiment
Capt D.J. Foulkes BEng (Hons)	3 (UK) Div HQ& Signal Regt
Capt I.C. Gray	DERA
Capt C. Greig	30 Signal Regiment
Capt A.L. Hayden	38 Signal Regiment (V)
Capt T.P. Langford	63 Signal Squadron (SAS)
Capt R.T. O'Hara	7 Signal Regiment
Capt D.K.Pawlow	264 Signal Squadron (SAS)
Capt N.H. Range	33 Signal Regiment (V)
Capt D.I. Smith	1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt R.J. Spencer	16 Signal Regiment
Capt R.G. Strawbridge	Welbeck College
Capt R.B. Wyllie	CIS Eng Gp, Blandford
Capt S.S. Youngson	36 Signal Regiment (V)
Lt P.E. Connor	7 Signal Regiment
Lt D.A. Deegan	HS HQ Royal Signals
Lt G.E. Stratton	7 Signal Regiment
Lt N. Turnbull	40 Signal Regiment

SEPTEMBER 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
Col S.M. Siddall	HQ DFTS
Maj J.J.S. Adams	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A.J. Botterill	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj R.J. Freeman	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj P.K. Gorford	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A.G. Hill	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. Hickling	ATR Bassingbourn
Maj R.L. Holt	2 Signal Brigade
Maj H.A. Jenkins	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj D.J. Kinnaird	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj P.W.J. Whitehead	HQ ARRC
Maj C. Yeomans	16 Signal Regiment
A/Maj C.D.G. Storey	33 Signal Regiment (V)
Capt P.C. Baker	DGLS PM/SP
Capt P.R. Barron	30 Signal Regiment
Capt D.J. Bizley	D/CIS3 DGCIS
Capt P. Bosher	HQ 1 Signal Brigade
Capt J. Caesar (BEng (Hons)	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt A..D.E. Cameron BSc (Hons)	CIS Eng Gp
Capt T.J. Carmichael	RMCS Shrivenham
Capt T.N. Crapper BEng (Hons)	Royal School of Signals
Capt J.C. Gillespie	HQNI
Capt I.N. Humter	RMCS Shrivenham
Capt R.S. King	Cambridge UOTC
Capt J.M.P. Leggate	HQ ARRC
Capt J.M. Norris	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt S.A. Rees	Ex Officer, Australian Sch Sigs
Capt T.P. Waites BSc	RMCS Shrivenham
Lt A.H.T. Garrett	Cambridge UOTC

WO and SNCOs
AUGUST 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 R.C. Bray	Royal School of Signals
A/WO1 D.J. Catchpole	5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO1 S.R. Holt	HQNI & 15 Signal Regiment
WO2 G. Hodgson	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 (FofS) M.G.F. Dighton	CIS Eng Gp
WO2 (FofS) M.J. Drake	21 Signal Regiment (AS)
WO2 (FofS) M.J. Hardy	35 Signal Regiment (V)
WO2 (FofS) N.I. Taylor	HQ R Signals
A/WO2 J.T. Cauldwell	CIS Eng Gp
A/WO2 S.A. Dickson	21 Signal Regiment (AS)
SSgt A.G. Aimer	9 Signal Regiment (R)
SSgt G.R. Crozier	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt R.G. Dalton	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
SSgt D.B. Evans	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
SSgt P. Gillespie	399 Signal Unit
SSgt J.S. Hogan	Royal School of Signals
SSgt C. Holmes	220 Signal Squadron (V)
SSgt S.A. Jackson	SHAPE RSSG
SSgt D.C. James	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt P.A. Landsbury	HQ AFCENT
SSgt P.P.N. Mackenzie	7 Signal Regiment
SSgt P.W. McDonald	HQNI & 15 Signal Regiment
SSgt K. Merrie	243 Signal Squadron
SSgt W.J. Scoots	1(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt J.A. Smith	242 Signal Squadron
SSgt G.T. Tinsley	HQ AFCENT
A/SSgt J.P. Marsden	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt B.J. Alderson	UK Nat Mil SHAPE
Sgt R.P. Atkinson	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. Barr	HQNI & 15 Signal Regiment
Sgt S. Beverley	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt N. Blenkinsop	HQNI & 15 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. Boreman	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt N. L. Cain	220 Signal Squadron (V)
Sgt L.C.R. Chapman	220 Signal Squadron (V)
Sgt J.R. Coupland	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt D. R. Covey	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt P.T. Davies	6 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. Dean	1 KOSB
Sgt P.W. Doherty	1 Signal Regiment
Sgt S.T. Gibbins	3 Commando Brigade
Sgt C.J. Gleadow	Royal School of Signals
Sgt A.S. Glover	209 Signal Squadron
Sgt C. Gouldson	RSIT
Sgt S.J. Griffiths	CIS Eng Gp
Sgt M. Meaden	PHQ Comms Coy
Sgt T. Pickergill	CIS Eng Gp
Sgt G. Rahman	21 Signal Regiment (AS)
Sgt W.P. Ratcliffe	259 Signal Squadron
Sgt B.J. Roberts	UK Nat Mil SHAPE
Sgt L.O. Thompson	ABSDA Es Org
Sgt E.S. Tunca	35 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt D. Uttley	2 Signal Regiment
Sgt D. P. Wilson	259 Signal Squadron
A/Sgt S. Gibson	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt W.J. Pool	3 RHA

SEPTEMBER 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 R.G. Nixon	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
WO1 S.A. McElreavey	Royal School of Signals
A/WO1 D.A. Whitaker	2 Signal Regiment
A/WO1 D.W.H. Richards	UK Sp Unit SHAPE
A/WO1 S.J. Lock	12 Signal Regiment
A/WO1 B.J. Alexander	Birmingham UOTC
WO2 (FofS) M.A. Solomons	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
WO2 (FofS) A.J. Bain	642 Signal Troop
WO2 (FofS) D.J. O'Brien	Garats Hay Support Unit
SSgt Q.M. Rose	HQNI & 15 Signal Regiment
SSgt K.R Quinn	642 Signal Troop
SSgt G.J. Low	19 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn
SSgt A. B. Lothian	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt P. B. Haynes	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt D.B. Gill	Balado Bridge
SSgt A. Dick	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt B. P. Croxford	71 Signal Regiment (V)
SSgt A.P. Brown	16 Signal Regiment
A/SSgt K. P. Greenwood	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt D.T. Whitfield	7 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. I. Warren	259 Signal Squadron
Sgt P. Storey	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt M.J. Simcock	40 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt J. Scott	Joint Services Para Centre
Sgt K.S. Scaife	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt M. P. Riley	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. M. Partridge	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt N.A. McGregor	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. E. Lyons	24 CTT
Sgt L.A. Linton	HQ DSF
Sgt P.A. Leach	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt K.M. Johnson	3 Bn REME
Sgt D. P. Jenkins	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt L. Jarvis	36 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt K.P. Innes	1(UK)Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt D.G. Henderson	9 Sig Regt (R)
Sgt C.J. Heath	Royal School of Signals
Sgt M. Hayward	RMAS
Sgt D.M.A. Doody	600 Signal Troop
Sgt R.A. Dickinson	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt D.R. Crowther	1(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt R.L. Clifford	Royal School of Signals
Sgt M.D. Arundell	1 Signal Regiment
Sgt P.J. Arnold	40 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt F. H. Anderson	238 Signal Squadron

A/Sgt D.J. Thomas	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt D.R. Taylor	7 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt D.J. Scragg	5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt R.T. Lee	HQ 1 Recce Brigade
A/Sgt M.A. Jones	1(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
A/Sgt T.B. James	5 AB Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt P.R. Howlett	3 (UK) Div & Sig Regt
A/Sgt A.J. Hartley	33 Signal Regiment (V)
A/Sgt L.S. Ford	HQ British Gurkha's Nepal
A/Sgt P.A. Elwood	259 Signal Squadron
A/Sgt D.W. Carpenter	7 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt T.J. Bickerstaff	Royal School of Signals
Sgt R.D. Inglesant	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt I.M. Giles	1(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt

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In March Spar was awarded the contract to convert Naafi's 200 UK shops into a world class operation. Newly refurbished shops, with longer opening hours, will have a more extensive range of stock, focused on what the customer wants.

Naafi, not merely content with modernising its clubs, is going into the fast food business.

In conjunction with Eurest, part of the Compass Group, trial partnerships are being conducted to introduce a number of leading branded foods to clubs, for example Mama Mia Pizzas and Not Just So Donuts.

Other initiatives from Naafi include the creation of Naafi Select, Naafi's new mail order catalogue and a new financial services company, Warrior Group. Naafi Select offers non food goods to Service personnel worldwide at high street prices while Warrior Group will offer all of those services currently available through Naafi Financial Services as well as many new products.

The Armed Forces can be assured that Naafi will continue to service as it has done since 1921. There is a positive future for Naafi and most importantly, its increased profits are returned to the Service's welfare funds.

Naafinews

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS & TRAINING

HQ North Stavanger Norway

R Signals Personnel at HQ North:

Maj Tony Burgin	SO Comms CIS Division
SSgt Martin Bain	Circuit Control LCO North (Tele tech sys)
Sgt Eddie Palmer	Comms Specialist Ops Sp Branch (Tele Op data)
Sgt Kev Holland	SSS UK (Tele op Data)
Cpl Rod Hood	SSS UK (Tele Op Data)
Sgt Dominic Cooke	Supply Specialist (Procure) (Stores Accountant)
Cpl Grahem Deller	Supply Specialist (Ship) (Stores Accountant)

There has been little or no input to *The Wire* from this organisation for the last few issues. As such the Senior Royal Signals Officer Norway (SRSON!) has decided that the situation should be rectified and the rest of the Corps enlightened as to what is actually done here in Norway. The personnel listed above are all regular serving R Signals personnel and are a mix of trades and ranks. All have postings lasting 30-36 months. All postings are accompanied. For those out there that do not know anything about Norway here are a few facts:

The posts are all NATO posts and as such you will be working with NATO personnel from the US, Germany, Denmark, Canada and Norway. It is a tri-service environment, predominantly RAF but with a mix of Navy and RM thrown in. The Army has several Corps and Cap badges represented with the R Signals having one of the highest representations. The work is different and challenging as well as being frustrating at times, NATO does not do things in a hurry. The environment is excellent with opportunities for all kinds of sports and outdoor activities. Contrary to popular belief Norway does have a wide range of cultural and tourist activities that are easily accessible. The Skiing, whilst not of European alpine resort standard is plentiful and varied, and goes on until mid May! The sailing opportunities are huge with a well run and established Sailing club here in Stavanger.

Quartering is of a high standard with all ranks living in 2, 3 or 4 bedroom houses. Singlies are given a fully furnished 2 bedroom flat for the duration of their tour and there have been no complaints so far! There is education (British School) for children from the age five up to the age of 11.5 years. There is also an International School run along US lines that caters for education up to the age of 18. On the down side the opportunities for wives and children to work are very limited but not impossible, Norwegian language skills are advantageous. The cost of living is high and the culture is markedly different from other overseas tours. Transport to and from the UK is either by ferry from Newcastle or flights in and out of Stavanger and can prove to be expensive. There are however compensating factors such as LOA! Enough of the sales pitch if you want to know more then you can always ring!

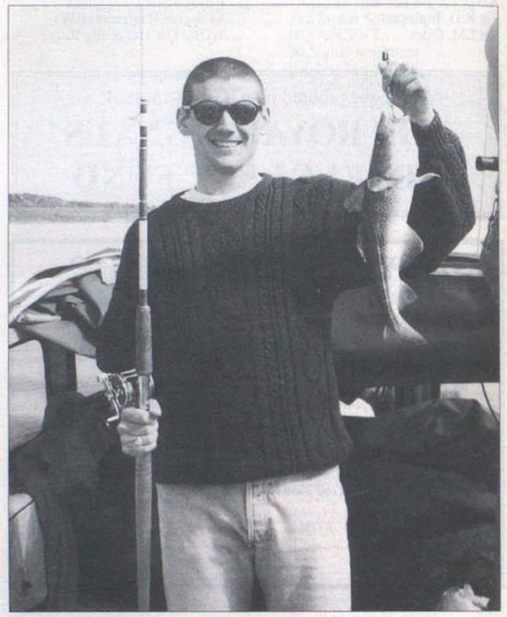
Again, the SRSON decided that all R Signal personnel should get together every few weeks to compare notes and see how things were progressing elsewhere in the HQ. To this end a few excursions were organised and run with the express intent of getting together and having a bit of a laugh. The first of these 'japes' was an 'Off site seminar' (very popular in NATO) to allow the new SRSON to interview the troops and find out what was going on.

This involved getting into the 14' motor boat or 'Snekke' (Weekend Boat) that the HQ runs and going sea fishing. The trip started early one sunny morning from the marina at Hundvåg. Everything boded well for a fine day and the party of hunter-gatherers left the harbour in search of some Norwegian Cod. Initially the trip started rather badly for some of the fishermen with **Maj Tony Burgin** and **Cpl Rod Hood** failing miserably to catch anything. **Cpl Graham Deller** proved to be the 'expert' by catching two small cod. He obviously peaked too early as this was all he was to catch for the next five hours! **Sgt Eddie Palmer**, a complete novice, started rather badly by catching **Maj Burgin**'s jumper and **SSgt Martin Bain**'s glasses. He was however to have the last laugh by ending the day having caught a total of 12 Fish. **Cpl Rod Hood** and **Maj Burgin** started slowly and maintained a steady pace throughout the day, catching five and seven fish respectively.

It was in the latter stages of the afternoon that **Cpl Deller** caught what could have been the largest cod of the day, but unfortunately (?) **SSgt Bain** was unable to get it inside the boat before attempting to club it to death, so not surprisingly it got away! Then **Maj Burgin** did a fine impression of how NOT to juggle a large cod on the side of a very small boat. This one to 'Got away', **Sgt Palmer** has now just about forgiven him. The day passed all too quickly and having landed on a small island to barbecue some of our catch we headed back into Hundvåg with a total of 42 Cod and pollock, a successful day.

Postscript–Inter service rivalry has raised its ugly head here in the HQ with the RAF and the Navy attempting to beat the total, suffice to say that the Corps is maintaining its position at the top of the fishing league!

Following rapidly on the heels of this successful day a second jaunt was planned. This time it would involve a low level trek and overnight camping trip for 3-4 days. Unfortunately this had to be postponed due to the absence in UK of two individuals on courses. It was then decided by the 'management' that we should not waste the opportunity and "Why don't



Cpl Rod Hood with his first (and biggest) catch

we cycle from here to Lysebotn? To the uninitiated this involved a cycle of 150kms to catch a ferry back down one of the more scenic Fjords. As many of you know Norway is not renowned for its rolling plains and the route was to involve a bit of uphill cycling. Preparations were made and the day dawned bright and sunny (and early) and off we went. The plan was to stop every 20km or so for a quick drink and food stop.

This went well for the first 35km when we left the main road and ventured off up the valleys. Here we started hitting a few small hills and the pace slowed somewhat. At the proposed breakfast stop, Bjerkdal, 50km into the route we had already lost one man to cramp and the weather was closing in. The next leg was up a fabulous glacial valley called Hunnedalen. When driving this 45km stretch the views are excellent and the waterfalls superb. When cycling this route the views are nice but it's all up-hill! Add to this that it now started to rain and the wind was in our faces meant that we now stopped every 10kms. It was halfway up this valley that we passed the 75km point and there was then no turning back. The final stretch was a stiff climb up a double hairpin bend followed by a 50-60km descent to the lunch stop.

After a quick lunch, due to the wind and rain, we set off again and had possibly the nicest leg of the journey. With the wind behind us we made good time down the 17km of valley and soon reached the turning over the top of the mountains for the Lysebotn valley. This stretch was only short 38km but included climbing from sea level up to 950m then down the other side with a few more climbs in the middle. The rain and wind persisted and it was now just a question of keeping the wheels going–if slowly! It was then an exhilarating ride down to the ferry through 17 hairpin bends and a particularly dark tunnel–with a hairpin in it! The end was reached in a total time of 10 and one half hour by four members of the original group. All who took part agreed that it had been a good day despite the weather!

As can be seen life within a NATO HQ is not all work and committees. The HQ managed to provide a NATO 7 a side rugby team for the Stavanger 7's competition, where the eventual winners Oslo beat us in the semi-final. At time of going to press the football team is also rather successful in the local league. We do also do some work as well, with a Partnership for Peace Exercise involving troops from several countries with whom we had a rather less friendly relationship a few years ago. As stated before life here is interesting and varied.

As a final note we would like to say farewell to **Kev Holland** who leaves us for the not so sunny climes of 39 Inf Bde and we wish him well.

EXERCISE STAFF SAUNTER–TA RESEARCH INTO STAFF OFFICERS

At enormous personal cost to your occasional correspondent the answer can now be given to the perennial questions: Why are there staff officers? What exactly is it that they do?

The occasion for this blinding insight into the ways of the great and good was Ex Staff Saunter, a Bde HQ look at high spot control in and about North Yorkshire.

High Spot Control

Think of Bellerby Ranges and the generally squalid sheep infested grandeur of the exercise area will spring to mind. The idea was to walk for miles and miles up (never down) endless hills carrying incredibly heavy weights. Some people of course didn't carry any weights: they were the ones in Ops. Ops Officers, generally, are so important that they cannot carry weights as to do so would disturb what they are pleased to call their brains and in any event the carrying of weights is what the RLC was invented to organise. The removal of the G2/3 element would have left the weight-bearing role to G1/4 had they not all been afflicted with gout or overcome with laziness. To them fell the task of map reading. Intrinsically there is nothing difficult about map reading and certainly once one has grasped this along the corridor and up the stairs business and has a map showing broadly the right area all can be plain sailing. Presumably having the wrong maps was all part of the team building process Staff Officers are so keen on. Another thing that Staff Officers do, apart that is from avoiding hard graft and getting lost, is have dogs. We had a dog, of sorts. On balance it wasn't a bad dog since it didn't do much on the pooping front but that presumably was because its owner didn't feed it. The dog came from Australia and on balance one couldn't help seeing why.

Drinking is something else that Staff Officers can do. How else do they get gout? Also that is presumably why after a Staff Officers' barbecue–claret, salad nicoise and something called beefburgers–everyone went to a pub to talk about how incredibly far they had walked carrying heavy weights and how incredibly far they were going to walk the next day. Drink does funny things to Staff Officers.

Day 2 of high spot control began slowly with a visit to a steam traction fair in a valley. The only high spot was a helter-skelter so all the Staff Officers without gout climbed to the top and slid all the way down on door mats tucking into Mr Whippy's offering as they went. Style is a word often associated with Staff Officers and one can see why.

Style

After that there was a lot of walking, cleverly avoiding footpaths towards ever receding summits. Heat fatigue, backstrain and gout all began to take their toll and a drink became necessary. Fortunately in Masham there are two breweries, Theakston's and Black Sheep, and thus it was that the answer to the question, 'What is it that Staff Officers do?' became blindingly obvious. Despite everything they can, with sufficient warning, organise a trip to a brewery.

EXERCISE LEMMINGS LEAP OR 'A LEAP OF FAITH'

It was decided at some meeting of the powers that be, that the staff from HQ 11 Sig Bde should take advantage of the excellent Adv Trg facilities offered by 14 Sig Regt. There was also some talk of experiencing the delights of the much raved about 'Cove Steering' that seems to have become all the rage in certain parts of Pembrokeshire. So it was that crammed into the two Defenders the staff were banished down to Wales for two days of fun and frolics, waved off by the Commander and Chief of Staff. The Commander missing this golden opportunity to throw himself off sea cliffs because he was being sent on an UEL course, the COS muttering something about pressures of work (or was it scared of heights?).

Following a dubious start where once more the officers' transport strangely took twice as long to arrive as the other ranks (no thanks to **Capt Allan** who remained comatose throughout the journey), the secrets of Cove Steering were revealed. The sport basically entails dressing in wetsuits, swimming around the coast, occasionally getting out in order to throw yourself back in and seeing who is going to get hypothermia first. So why was it that at some stage during the proceedings I thought I caught a glimpse of the entire group grinning like Cheshire cats? Maybe in my weakened state I imagined it. NO, they were grinning, the whole outing was barkingly good fun. We were all tough enough to jump off the 60ft wall, no refusals. (This may have had something to do with the group of eight year olds, shaming us by throwing themselves in with complete disregard to life or limb.)

More in than out!

A night of recovery at the local alehouse ensued, with half the group playing liar dice (why was DCOS so good?) and the other half Pub Bingo (**Cpl Cleathero** kept nearly winning).

The next day was spent with **Capt Brown** demonstrating how to capsize a canoe, again, and again, and again. The Chief Clerk demonstrated his prowess on the rock face–'Never **** again' was the quote after the first attempt–ten minutes later he was back–Saturday Night Fever mark 2 (he could feel the beat, but not hear the music).

Chief after his first climb–'NEVER AGAIN'

Many thanks must go to 14 Sig Regt, in particular **SSgt Roberts** and his staff for all their assistance and humour.

EXERCISE ABLE CONDOR

Ex Able Condor 1997 saw the 33, 35 and 40 Sig Regts (V) along with 55 Sig Sqn (V) deploy, with elements of 2 and 30 Sig Regts and the Bde HQ to Germany in order to practice 11 Sig Bde's ARRC role. Following traditional routes established by the TA of old, the Bde converged on Leuth training area in order to conduct pre exercise training and exchange stories about the journey. For example:

'Have–you heard about the soldier who was so keen to attempt his basic swimming test that the English channel at 1 o'clock in the morning was more attractive than the local swimming pool?'

Readers should be aware that 11 Sig Bde not only has the role of providing communications for the ARRC, it also has the role of supporting a JFHQ. It was in this latter scenario that the Brigade conducted its pre exercise training, cunningly devised by the Commander in the form of a mind map (either that or a serious attempt at Leonardo Di-Wills rendition of the Mona Lisa). The deployment of 40 Sig Regt with Euromux to support a fictional JFHQ and Land Component Commander, was followed by reinforcement with Ptarmigan provided by 33 and 35 Sig Regts. This practised many of the procedures established by the Brigade and proved an extremely useful exercise in confirming the TA's flexibility in adapting to unfamiliar roles and procedures. Trying not to confuse the soldiers too much, once pre training was completed, the Brigade reverted to its ARRC role and joined in with the rest of those units deployed on Ex Able Condor. This phase saw rapid movement of Trunk assets, interfacing with US Troposcatter detachments plus real life staff pressure at our Access Nodes, supplied by officers of HQ 143 (WM) Bde. The whole exercise was certainly challenging, not only for the staff but also to the soldiers and proved excellent training. We now look forward to the next time we can cross the water and raise the 11 Bde flag.

Note: In order to update our SOIs the following questions now need to be answered:

1. In the event of an electrical storm, do you really switch off your Trunk Node especially if it coincides with Chief CIS ARRC evening conference?
2. What do you do if Cpl Cleathero is unable to have a shower run every day?
3. Who is responsible for providing the slippers at BSG and what form do you indent for them on?
4. As the Commander gave his end of exercise conference via his SCRA(T) whilst moving from Bde HQ towards BSG, which of the conferees can answer the following question:

'What did he say?'

Answers should be directed to the originator of this piece whose name is being withheld pending a quick posting. Signed Bde YofS

263 (Harrogate) Signal Squadron
Army Apprentices College
Arborfield

OC **Maj C. S. K. Paterson R SIGNALS**
SSM **WO1 (SSM) D. Forteath**

The past few months have seen a continuing busy period at the College where we have continued to train Royal Signals Apprentices and have now sent two intakes, 96C and 97A to Blandford. Since the establishment of the new Army Apprentices' College at Arborfield over 300 Royal Signals soldiers have come through the gates. Currently training alongside two REME companies we look forward to the Royal Engineers and RLC Apprentices joining us early next year.

END OF TERM CELEBRATIONS FOR 96C APPRENTICES.

Rawson Tp Comd **2Lt Gibbs AGC (ETS)**
Tp Sgt **Sgt A. Burdus**

As part of the celebrations at the end of Intake 96C's time at the Army Apprentice College, Arborfield, all the ATs were taken for a day's paintballing at Skirmish Lasham, near Basingstoke. It was particularly important to mark the end of term, as these were the first Royal Signals Apprentices to complete the new two term Modern Apprenticeship at Arborfield.

Skirmish Lasham site is set in 180 acres of woodland that have been landscaped to include original World War II bunkers, slit trenches, bomb craters and air raid shelters. This meant that there was plenty of scope for daredevil acts of bravery! All ATs and Permanent Staff from the Senior Term, Rawson and Scott Tps attended and took part. The day was organised as an Inter-Tp competition with the PS changing 'sides' after each game, so that ATs had an equal opportunity of taking 'pot shots' against their favourite staff. We played a total of seven games in all. These included missions such as retrieving the opposing team's flag and returning it to your HQ, whilst defending your flag and preventing them from doing likewise. Each game had a different mission and was set in a slightly different area of woodland.

There was a welcome lunch break half way through the day's events, when the Paintball Organisers provided an excellent barbecue. This provided a good opportunity for the opposing teams to swap war stories and compare bruises, of which there were plenty of both! The momentum continued after lunch with a move to a slightly different area again. The end of the Troop Competition saw Scott Tp (Techs) victorious, whilst Rawson Tp (Ops) felt they had been robbed in the dying minutes of the final game. Everybody had had an excellent and exhausting day, just the beginning of a very memorable week at the end of training.

96C, Bruised Warriors

SENIOR TERM VISIT TO THE ROYAL TOURNAMENT
AT Alderson, Scott Tp

On Tuesday 15 July, myself and about thirty other Apprentices set off for an evening at the Royal Tournament that was being held at Earls Court in London.

We left Arborfield at about 1730 hours and drove into town. The trip didn't take long and once we arrived we separated down into groups and looked around the stands that were spread around the arena. There seemed to be plenty to see and learn. The actual show started at 1930 hours. We took our seats, and the show began. This year the Army was sponsoring the event with firepower as the theme. The first display showed us how the arrow had changed and evolved into the rocket over the centuries. After this came the musical ride displayed by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery. All of this was on horseback and pulling large guns–they showed a lot of skill. I thought this display was really quite impressive but it lasted just a bit too long. Next to appear were the Royal Artillery Motorcycle Display Team. This also involved a lot of skill with the motorbikes doing some extremely dangerous manoeuvres, both on the ground and in the air.

I think the next display was probably one of the best and one of my favourites. Again it was the Royal Artillery, their mission was to deploy a battery at night behind enemy lines. They then had to engage a target accurately in response to a call for fire support. All this was very impressive with men dropping down by parachute from the roof of the building and then quickly getting into position, setting up the gun with great speed and quickly taking out the target before rushing back to safety. Next came the Maoris from New Zealand. **Hunter** from the Gladiators came on to challenge a member of the Armed Forces to the Duel. Needless to say **Hunter** won after about three seconds. While this was going on children from the audience were invited to go down into the arena to meet **Hunter**. I could not resist so a couple of us made our way down into the arena–we got a good view of Hunter but didn't manage to speak to him.

There was a short interval for 25 minutes, this gave us an opportunity to get a quick bite to eat and then take a short tour around the various stands which was quite interesting. After the interval the Navy Field Gun competition was on. The teamwork and skill that was shown were amazing. This was followed by the Tug-of-war but unfortunately the Royal Signals lost in the final. The Essex Dog display was next which seemed to go on too long but it was a surprisingly good event. The show then ended with the RAF Motor Sports Association involving cars whizzing around the arena at great speeds. I enjoyed the Royal Tournament and I would definitely recommend people to go and see it. It is different to watching it on TV and you appreciate the difficulties and skills involved in putting on the biggest military tattoo in the world.

SQUADRON LADIES TRAINING DAY
SSgt (SQMS) T. Smith

On an overcast unsettled Saturday in Arborfield, 13 wives and partners arrived at the Squadron in good humour but a little apprehensive for an introduction to recruit training. The morning started with an opening address from the Squadron Commander, **Maj Chris Paterson** which fell on Essex girl like ears, but was to the point and even at times slightly humorous.

The initial equipment was issued and fitted with the help of the local saddle club which at times proved a little awkward as you cannot fit three horses into a NAAFI carrier bag. However, 40 minutes later they were

dressed, equipped and ready for their first lesson in fieldcraft taken by **Sgt Nige Back** and **Cpl Paul Lowe**. The fieldcraft covered basic cam and concealment with a little movement. Then to finish a small stalking exercise which left the girls a little blotchy from the cam cream and a fair amount of nettle rash. Hopefully they can now relate to their husbands' state when they appear on the doorstep at endex and make them undress before being allowed into the quarter. The girls were then marched away for coffee before being unleashed on the square for an introduction to Foot Drill by our resident Sergeant Major **WO2 Duncan Forteath** and **L/Sgt Hugh Weir** (Scots Guards).

The Squadron Wives enjoy some military training

This proved to be very entertaining, as co-ordination was not issued due to cut backs and the Squadron cattle prods were already signed out. By this stage a leader was coming to the front in the form of **Mrs Mickala Lowe** who was instantly promoted to LCpl. After numerous demonstrations the girls started to perform like a fine body of puppets with tangled strings, by now they were realising that those strange words 'left and right' really had a meaning.

The Drill was quickly followed by an introduction to Driving and Reversing with a big well done to **Tracie Back** and **Geanine Weir** who mastered the stand excellently. **SSgt (SQMS) Tom Smith** and **Cpl Martin Cowlard** conducted this and they should be equally congratulated for their patience and skill by ensuring the large buildings remained standing throughout.

First Aid was the next stand conducted by **Cpl Rob McCorkell**. This entailed a degree of humour mixed with a more serious side dealing with First Aid in the home relating to young children, that the majority found very useful. To finish off the morning **Sgt Paddy Townley** put the girls through their paces in the Small Arms Trainer with very good results. It was also noted that the girls, if possible, should be allowed to stand in for the men on the permenant staff APWT. To round off the morning a Squadron barbecue was organised in the Cpl's Mess with a grand display of culinary delights prepared by **Cpl Paul Johnstone**. This turned out to be a much enjoyed afternoon social. Special thanks to **AT Croft** and **AT Crutchley** who provided an excellent crèche facility that allowed the day to go unhindered.

EXERCISE SIGNAL DEFENDER
THE FINAL EXERCISE FOR INTAKE 97A, 21-25 JULY 1997
Capt G. P. Newell R SIGNALS

The final exercise for intake 97A took place over the period 21-25 July 1997. It was an opportunity for the Apprentices to show off the skills that they had learnt at the College and also introduce them to a few new skills which would be heading their way in the future once they have left Blandford. The exercise was split into 3 phases, the first being a visit to the Royal Signals units based at Tidworth and Bulford. The Apprentices had ample opportunity to ask questions and see 'real' soldiers at 1 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and 202 Sig Sqn. The visits were extremely productive from both the Apprentices and Permanent Staffs perspectives.

The second phase of the exercise began that evening with a full deployment onto Salisbury Plain Training Area. The Troops role was primarily defensive dwelling on Key Point defensive skills. This lasted for 48 hours and practised the soldiers in the majority of their CMS(R) skills with a Royal Signals flavour. An attack on the final morning brought this phase to a successful conclusion.

The final phase was based back at Hawley Training Area. A short turn-around in camp was followed by a swift redeployment. The phase had a light-hearted but exciting scenario with the objective of escaping from the make-believe island they had become stranded on. Dwelling primarily on leadership and initiative based training and practice this part of the exercise proved to be both popular and successful. Culminating in a final log race on the Friday morning, the Apprentices returned to camp especially tired but thoroughly pleased with the weeks training. A final note should be made to the Permanent Staff who were tested to the extreme in order to produce a well planned and flowing exercise which benefited the Apprentices tremendously.

FINAL EXERCISE AT THE ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE
AT Croft and **AT Crutchley**, 97A

The whole of the seniors in the Squadron were looking forward to the final exercise here at the College. It would be our last chance to get out in the field and escape from the classrooms before the end of term. Only ever having been in the field for three nights before, the prospect of being out for a week was to be a totally new experience for us–and what an experience it was!

We left Arborfield early on Monday and headed down to Bulford and Tidworth. It was a really interesting day; we visited two Royal Signals working units, getting a taste of real life and a chance to take part in different activities. We all had the opportunity to speak to Royal Signals operators and technicians asking all the stupid questions that had been playing on our minds. It seemed strange to imagine us doing their jobs in just a few years time, but at the same time it gave a much clearer picture and secured our ideas of what our trades really were. It was fabulous to know exactly what was waiting for us after Blandford. Monday evening was when the real military exercise started. We moved out of Bulford and headed into our locations on Salisbury Plain, setting up our harbour. Our role was to defend a communications site on Sidbury Hill. The RLC Apprentice Caterers were also there and so in effect we had an on site restaurant. They were on their final exercise too and we were their guinea pigs, they had to provide us with everything we needed to eat. The food was absolutely fabulous, better than in barracks. The location was an important communications site. It was the first time a lot of us had ever worked with field telephones or radios, as you can imagine we had quite a few laughs at the messages being passed.

Troop Commanders and Sergeants were nominated from the Apprentices. Both of us were to be Tp Sgts and we were looking forward to the experience but knew a lot of pressure would be on us to get things right. Instead of the Directing Staff being in charge of us, it was up to us what happened and we had to deal with the consequences. As Sgts we had to lead a recce patrol, one was in the day and the other at night. Orders had to be prepared and given, navigators, radio operators, Charlie and Delta fire-teams had to be detailed, it was really hard work and it made us realise just how much work the Directing Staff normally did on all of the other exercises that we'd done at the College.

Welton, Whatmough and Co enjoy a brief moment of relaxation out on recce

The exercise rotated around a variety of tasks that included a spell in the HQ, the QRF and in defence. The scenario was getting more and more intensive and by the final morning we knew an attack was imminent. Many of the patrols had come into contact and it was to be our turn to get our own back on the enemy. At 0400 hours all hell broke loose and we had an intense firefight with the enemy which lasted for about 20 minutes. We won the battle and on closer inspection of the enemy we discovered they were actually members of the troop who'd been covertly extracted through the night.

It had been 48 hours since any of us had had any sleep and so while we waited for the coaches we had a well-earned rest. It was now Wednesday morning and we were all glad to be going back into camp to have a shower and get changed for the next part of the exercise that was at Hawley. Upon a well-slept trip back to camp we had to re-pack our Bergens for the next phase of the exercise.

This phase was more relaxed, taking on a leadership style exercise rather than a military one, although it was still very hard work. The scenario was different: we were British Forces from the Army Apprentice College who had been in a plane crash and ended up stuck on a former Italian island called 'Sardo'. We were hiding from the enemy the awful 'Enjineerios' who lived in the town of 'Gibralto Baracsio' and looking for the more friendly 'Italianos' who could get us back to England. The 'Italianos' were willing to help us escape but first we had to win their trust and help their leader 'Armani Versace'. This was the mission of the exercise.

The tired retreat from Sidbury Hill–AT Saul leads the way . . .

Winning the Italianos trust was hard and we had to solve various problems (like on the crystal maze) and gain clues. We had to travel around the area solving one clue that would lead us to the next. All of Wednesday and Thursday was spent picking up clues and learning how we could please Armani Versace so we could get back home to England. This involved everything you can imagine from log runs, climbing, blind-folded Landrover driving, canoeing and river crossings were part of these activities. Eventually we made our way to the hideout of Armani Versace and were rewarded by a ceremonial barbecue to send us off the Italian island the next morning.

River crossings at Hawley Lake–Limbert and Green enjoy getting wet

The whole exercise was very hard work and tiring but it was amazing how high morale was throughout. We all enjoyed ourselves and that is what kept us all going. The exercise was very rewarding for us all, even the Directing Staff enjoyed themselves.

NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

The Royal School of Signals Blandford

SUBBIES WITHOUT A TROOP–TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE 38 by 2Lt Mike Wong

Troop Commanders Course 38
Back Row: 2Lt Newson, Chewbacka, 2Lt Chambers, 2Lt Thompson-Smith, 2 Lt Crapper, Imperial Storm Trooper 1, 2Lt Odling, 2Lt Bowdler, 2Lt Wong, Imperial Storm Trooper 2, Darthvader, 2Lt Ashton, 2Lt Todd, Bobafet, 2Lt Hawes
Front Row: 2Lt Murphy, R2D2, 2Lt Fraser, C3PO, 2Lt Tyndale, 2Lt Allen, 2Lt Fraser, 2Lt Murphy, 2Lt Prichett, Lt Gurung

A long time ago in a camp far, far away at the end of February, a group of Young Officers were about to embark on the course of a lifetime. They were to be known as Troop Commanders Course No. 38. This is their story. . .

2Lts Allan, Ashton, Crapper, Bowdler, Chambers, Gurung, Pritchett, Tyndale, Todd, Wong, Murphy, Neil, Newson, Sherry, Fraser, Hawes, Thomson-Smith and **Odling** knew little of what was to be expected of them over the next seventeen weeks, but under the guidance of **Capt Drinkall** and **Maj Russell** they would survive. The pressures of the academic work provided by the R Gp and the Trunk Group instructors along with the information that was required to be assimilated by the other departments, Command Group, CIS, EW, etc. had the potential to make even the brightest spirit dull. However, the combined energy of the course shone through and surmounted the obstacles that appeared before us.

Along the way the course managed to fit in several notable functions, the Gymkhana, PO visits, Ex Lightning Strike, Cocktail parties, and Dining in to name but a few. Many visitors to the Mess were introduced to the pond, following **2Lt Sherry**'s admirable example, and quite a few were treated to the smooth, heaven like dance moves of **2Lts Fraser** and **Hawes**. **2Lts** 'Baby Spice' **Sherry** and 'Wookie' **Newsons**' passion for furniture moving and picture arranging was well tolerated by the Mess staff once they realised it was nurtured by **Capt Barker**.

Over the 17 weeks that comprised Troop Commanders Course 38 there were times of great stress that were punctuated by moments of memorable significance. On behalf of TC 38 I would like to thank all of the Mess Staff and the Officers and Soldiers of the Royal School of Signals and Blandford Garrison including 11 Sig Regt who contributed so much to making our course so memorable.

11 Signal Regiment Blandford

ATHLETICS SEASON

The athletics season in Blandford began with a small but very professional group of amateurs huddled together in a small office in the gym, consisting of **Capts Wendy Kirby** and **Mal Shaw**, **WO2 (YofS) Kev Fowler**, and **SSgt Andy Slack**, organising the Blandford Garrison Athletics Meeting. The competition itself, was a resounding success. Not only was the weather good, but performances were of the very highest standard. In the end the Apprentices of 3 Sqn won a resounding victory in both the mens' and ladies' events, with the oldies from HQ Sqn tying for 2nd position along with 1 Sqn in the mens' competion, with 1 and 2 Sqns coming 2nd and 3rd respectively in the ladies. The scene was now set for the season ahead.

The 3 (UK) Div Athletics Championship took place the following week at Andover, with the team trialing some of our untested athletes in other events. Again a marvellous day produced some outstanding results, as divisional records were broken time and again. The result being that both the men's and women's teams won easily. Notable record breaking performances included: **Sig Karl Greenhill** in the High Jump, **Capt Terry Inman** in the Triple Jump, **Cpl Trev McSween** in the Discus, **AT Matt Howland** in the 400m, **Sig Chris Kelly-Rutherford** in the 800m and 1500m and **AT Ross Dourley** in the Long Jump. For the ladies, **AT Jodie Wood** (800m), **Sig** 'Sunny' **Hardy** (1500m) and **Capt Bobby Scott**.

The team now brimming with confidence saw a return to Andover, for the Army Team Unit Semi-Finals. The competition was getting tougher, and included last years runners up 7 RHA (Para) and RMA Sandhurst, whilst the ladies had to contend with Aldershot Garrison and RMA Sandhurst. Sterling performances by the sprint kings–**Cpl Bobby Sands**, **Cpl Tony Ramsay**, **AT Ross Dourley**, and also the throwing prowess of **Maj Graham Deans**, **WO2 Aidy Goudge**, **Sig** 'Tall Person' **Hart**, and **Cpl Trev McSween** ensured yet another close victory for the men. The women's team had a real battle on their hands, but gritty performances from **Sig Julie McKenzie** in the 200m, **Sig** 'Scouse' **O'Connell** in the Shot Putt and **Sig** 'Mags' **West** in the new event of the Triple Jump gained the team a 2nd place just behind Aldershot Garrison

Onwards and upwards, both teams had now qualified for the Army Finals to be held at the Portsmouth stadium belonging to the Royal Navy. The teams were now up against the 'big guns' in the form of 2 Sig Regt who were the Army Major Unit Champions and were firm favourites to retain their title. On a miserable day (Typical English Summer) both teams from 11 Sig Regt displayed outstanding team spirit, and consistently good performances throughout the day kept both teams in contention right up to the final relays. The eventual winners in the Women's cup were York Garrison, with our ladies just pipping Aldershot Garrison to 2nd place–the 4 x 100m team (**Sig Julie McKenzie, AT Marie McKenzie, Sig Kathy Hermitage, Sig** 'Mags' **West**) clinching the vital two points to take them into second place. **Capt Bobby Scott** in the Discus and Javelin and **2Lt George Tyndale** in the Long Jump and 110m Hurdles also collected vital points.

It was no surprise to anyone that 2 Sig Regt were the eventual overall Major Unit winners after shared points in the relays. However, there were some startled expressions when it was announced that the winning margin was only 7 points to a second placed 11 Sig Regt and that the Regiment had won the Field Events Cup. Special mention has to go to the jumpers **Cpl Trev McSween** and **Sig Karl Greenhill** (High Jump) and **Capt Terry Inman** and **Cpl Rog Doak** (Triple Jump) our resident javelin man, **WO2 QMSI** 'Gaz' **Easter** and the long distance men–**WO2 (YofS) Paul Sexby** and **AT Ian Bailey**.

It was an excellent day for Corps athletics, with The Royal Signals providing the Winners and Runners-Up. 1 (UK) ADSR just missed out on providing a clean sweep. Two rather big smiles could be seen on the faces of the SOinC(A), **Brig Wood** and Comd Comms Land, **Brig Griffin**.

The athletics season culminated for both teams with the Morrison Cup held for the first time on home soil here at Blandford Camp. Expectations were high, could we beat the Army Champions? The weather did it's best to ruin an excellent day. A final concerted effort by every member of the squad meant that it was neck and neck with 2 Sig Regt, again right through to the relays. The ladies just missed out, coming within four points of the 2 Sigs team. However, for the men it was a different story, the Army Champions were defeated and in the end by the comfortable margin of 12 points. It has been a outstanding season for the Royal School of Signals and 11 Signal Regiment with every member of the squad producing personal bests; a true team performance.

3 (PENNEY) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj D. J. Lumb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C. J. Udell**

Another busy period for the Apprentices of intake 95. The Squadron won the Regiment Athletics and apprentices went on to represent the Regiment in the Morrison Cup, Army Inter Unit and Army Individuals. We were represented in the Regiment swimming team, both male and female. The lads completed successfully the Lanyard Trophy and two females, **AT Sgt Amanda Verrall** and **AT LCpl Jodie Wood** were in the Regimental Ladies A and B team. The term ended with the graduation parade for 95B, ably commanded by **AT SSM Steven Pritchard**.

LANYARD TROPHY 1997
by AT 'Donk' **Berry**

The Apprentice Team:

2Lt Thomson-Smith	**2Lt Ashton**
AT Sgt Dunlop	**AT Cpl Dinsdale**
AT Cpl Williams	**AT LCpl Healey**
AT LCpl Yates	**AT Chorlton**
AT Berry	**AT Allen**
AT Sherrington	**AT Crossley 076**

I first heard of the Lanyard Trophy in January this year when a number of 'Apprentices' were pressed into action training for the event and I was persuaded into taking part by my so called friends. The first sign of things to come was the loss of sports afternoons and Saturdays as we entered preparatory training, which was steeply progressive, as we tabbed the length and breadth of Dorset over the next five months. The teams aim was to build up to marching a distance of 40 miles over rough terrain with 40lbs of weight on our backs whilst taking abuse from the team SNCO and Officer. As the team was made up of young Apprentices' we realised that it would be unlikely that we would win, so we set our sights on completing the course and hopefully beating a regular unit. The task of winning the glory for the Regiment was left to the 'A' Team who's intent was quite clear as they were being trained by the RSM and he obviously wanted to win. As the five months of training drew to an end our trainers, the Sqn Comd, **Maj Dave Lumb** and the SSM, **WO2 Eric Udell** handed the team over to two young subalterns, **2Lt Craig Thomson-Smith** and **2Lt Dan Ashton**. To all of whom we owe our gratitude for dragging us through this ordeal. We finished the course in a very respectable time seventh out of 18 Regular Army Teams.

LANYARD TROPHY 1997 LADIES 'B' TEAM
by AT Sgt Amanda Verrall

The Lanyard Trophy was something that 11th Sig Regt took very seriously. The RSM had a team, as did the apprentices, and the females. Due to the number of females wanting to take part in the competition, it was decided that we could enter two teams. The months leading up to the competition showed the determination of all those wishing to compete. It would also determine who were the fitter girls amongst us. The end result was a girls' 'A' team, who without a doubt were a very, very fit team. Then we had the 'B' team, fit enough to complete the competition, however in a time that suited us.

The distance to complete was 30 miles, carrying 25lbs of weight, with food and water this totalled around 30lbs. The 'B' team set off at 0636hrs on a dull morning. Having got up at 0400hrs, it was surprising how high

our spirits were. The team consisted of 8 completely mad females, ranging from an apprentice (me) up to an officer, **Capt Wendy Kirby**. Having been over the route during training weekends, we knew exactly where we were going and just aimed for the checkpoints. Arriving at each checkpoint was an achievement, and this would keep our spirits up. Asking after our 'A' Team was something we did at each checkpoint, as they had started six minutes before us. Arriving at Checkpoint 6 we were greeted by numerous high ranking officers, our support team, and many other support teams. There was also a helicopter sweeping around us with a television camera. Our Bergen's were weighed, and we were given a pie before setting off along the five miles of road around the reservoir to Checkpoint 7. Asking after the 'A' team gave us a great shock, as they hadn't come through the checkpoint. Although this was bad news, it did lift our spirits, as there was a small thought saying that we could win the event for the females. The five miles of road seemed to go on forever although the helicopter kept a watch on us, making us laugh and show off for the cameras. Getting to Checkpoint 7 was a relief, as we knew we were halfway there.

At this time, the male teams started to overtake us, having started 10 miles behind us. The first team to pass us was 11 Sig Regt followed by 216 Para Sig Sqn. The journey to Checkpoint 9 proved to be very difficult, having to lift your legs very high over the heather was tedious, as was the journey to Checkpoint 10. However our team still had high spirits, we'd found out the 'A' team had gone wrong on the route and had to drop two members of their team. This news meant we'd won the competition (if we finished) for the females, as the third female team had got lost right at the start. The route to the last checkpoint was very hard, a lot of teams by this time had passed us, including the 'A' team and the apprentice team. The last 3 miles were very difficult, although it was commented on, how happy our team seemed, by passing teams. We were still having a laugh, and chatting to other teams as they passed, which I think, cheered them up. It took us a very long time to complete the last part of the course and it was extremely difficult. Getting to the FINISH line was one of the biggest relief's ever. We were greeted by a lot of people and a bottle of champagne. Starting with eight girls and finishing with eight girls meant we were the Lanyard Trophy 'female team' winners 1997. The first year the competition was opened for an all female team. Unfortunately the 'A' team finished with only five people meaning they were disqualified as a team. After 14 hours and 35 minutes of walking, we just collapsed into bed, vowing we wouldn't be there next year.

RAWSON TROOP WEEKEND

On the morning of Friday 13 June, an advance party was sent down to Newquay to take over the accommodation for the Rawson Tp weekend. Prior to this was the packing of essential equipment for the activities that were to take place, this included cookhouse rations and various sporting items. At 0700hrs we started our journey to Newquay, the weather wasn't exactly perfect, but we were praying! After three hours of travelling we eventually arrived at our location, a small cadet camp on the coast at Holywell, North Cornwall. On our arrival **Sgt Kev Innes** and **Lt Gareth Oliver** managed to get the keys to the accommodation and then we were set too sorting the place out for the arrival of the rest of the Troop. There were lots to sort out, all the rations needed unpacking and the sports equipment to be sent down to the stores. In the afternoon we were allowed to go into Newquay to carry out sight seeing and shopping, followed by a trip back to camp for the evening meal. The final task of the day was to welcome the remainder of the Troop to this lovely little camp! So at 2000hrs two people were sent to the guardroom to welcome them, two hrs later they eventually arrived!!!

Saturday was a busy day, we were all up early to have breakfast, and get ready to go abseiling. Most enjoyed a good dangle off a cliff whilst some were still trying to recover from the final operators exercise, Radex. Lunch was put on for us at 1200hrs and after this everyone went to their chosen activity for the remainder of the afternoon. Activities ranged from horse riding, deep-sea fishing, surfing, sunbathing, golf, clay pigeon shooting and cycling with a member of permanent staff supervising, or a least trying to supervise. The weather improved greatly throughout the early afternoon with little cloud and plenty of hot sunshine. Most people, male and female alike got their kit off, the most popular activity was sunbathing, hardly surprising due to the intensity of the heat, looks as though this will be another sport we can win at, on an inter-troop level that is. The Tp Comd, **Lt Gareth Oliver**, was supervising clay pigeon shooting, while the Sqn Comd, **Maj Dave Lumb**, enjoyed a round of golf with some members of the Troop, as well as **Sgt** 'Dangerous' **Kev Innes**, who seemed to be aiming for the local houses!! On our arrival back at camp a cold buffet was put on for us in the cookhouse, and after this people prepared to go into Newquay for a few quiet drinks. At 1930hrs the buses departed to Newquay and the night commenced with a lot of lads ogling the barmaids at the local Newquay Arms. After this we all went our separate ways to other bars and clubs in the area, namely Berties and Sailors Night Club. Overall it was a very successful night–or at least what we can remember about it!!!

On Sunday morning we crawled out of our nice warm beds to face breakfast, and at 0930hrs we began a 6 mile journey out of the camp, just to walk back! Not everyone was ecstatic about the idea of walking so using the skive to survive method we made good use of public transport, by 1500hrs everybody had arrived back at camp and a barbecue was put on for us with other essentials . . . need I say more. It wasn't only us who enjoyed the meal, but the local seagulls/pterodactyls decided to join us for a short while, luckily there was no bicarbonate of soda, otherwise it would have been used. After the barbecue all except the advance party packed to return to Blandford. Lots of people were sore from sunburn, but that didn't stop them enjoying the weekend. Thanks to the permanent staff, the troop weekend was a great success and a lot of hard work was put in by all concerned.

95B GRADUATION DINNER

by Sig Thorn (Ex Apprentice)

On 6 August 1997 Rawson Tp descended on Humphrey's Restaurant and Bar for our Graduation Dinner. A last minute drill session beforehand made things a bit hectic but somehow most of us managed to arrive in good time, dressed in our evening wear. Guests were greeted at the door by their hosts of the evening; **AT SSM Steve Pritchard**, **AT Sgt Bradley Fox**, **AT Drum Major James Samuel** and **AT Sgt Amanda Verrall**, who later joined them on the top table for the dinner. At 2000 hrs everyone was called forward into the restaurant and seated at their various place names. After the SSM **WO2 Eric Udell** had said grace the first course arrived. Several bottles of wine (and trips to the bar) later the meal had almost finished. At this point **Sgt Wringe** acquired most of the place name cards and set about trying to embarrass everybody by adorning them with suggestive comments and distributing them to various members of the PS. Needless to say there were a few red faces by the end of the evening. The meal was a success and greatly enjoyed by all. Glasses were once again filled ready for the after dinner speeches. Led by **AT SSM Steve Pritchard** who after a few words introduced **AT Postlethwaite**'s witty composition, thanking **Sgt Kev Innes** and other members of the Squadron staff for all their support over the last two years. This was concluded by a presentation of a crystal decanter to **Sgt Innes** from all of Rawson Tp, to thank him for everything he had done for us during the apprenticeship. **Sgt Innes** then thanked us and reminisced for a while over past memorable events. Emotions were high after this point, as it finally began to sink in that in just three days time we would all be graduating and going our separate ways. Needless to say a few tears were shed, (and not just by the lasses!!) but as the evening's festivities continued with a disco and bar extension the mood was soon lifted. After the speeches everyone moved through into the bar to end the evening.

The evening was a great success, thanks to the effort put in by all the apprentices, especially the AT seniors, in organising the evening. On a final note, a special thanks to all of the three Squadron staff for all their support and encouragement over the last two years.

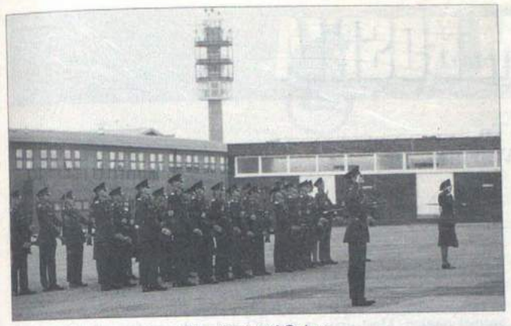
95B GRADUATION DAY

by Sig Torode (Ex Apprentice)

Saturday 9 August saw the final parade that the apprentices of 95B would ever perform together. Early that morning a PT session was scheduled, of course nobody was looking forward to it, but faces were soon lifted when we were informed it was to be a quick run around camp picking up litter before the arrival of our parents. Upon collection of rifles, people were beginning to realise this might be the last time they would be seeing their friends, and emotions were running high. After some running around, the time came for us to be on parade. A quick inspection of our uniform, rifles and bayonets, to ensure a high standard, was completed. We then waited while **Sgt Kev Innes** gave us a debrief on the past 2 years that we had spent as a Troop, this was very emotional for some. At 1012 hrs our final drill order was given by our Tp Sgt, **Sgt Kev Innes** 'Parade, by the left quick march', the band began to play and we marched on to Hawke Square. The general feeling at this point was a great sense of pride, seeing all our parents watching us on our final parade as apprentices. They had watched us from day one, growing into mature, adult soldiers. It seemed to take a long time to get the parade underway, but when it did, **AT SSM Steve Pritchard** and the apprentices, not forgetting the members of 2 Sqn who supplied the supporting troops, put a lot of effort into it. The guests and VIP's then arrived, followed by the Reviewing Officer, **Maj Gen J. D. Stokoe CBE** and **Col C. L. Le Gallais OBE**.

An inspection of all those involved in the parade then took place, this also seemed to take a long time. The band gave an impressive performance throughout the inspection and parade as a whole, which helped in keeping the parents and children interested. The march past in slow and quick time was outstanding, all the rehearsals before this day certainly had improved our standards. We put some effort into the marching, and it showed, with proud parents smiling as their sons and daughters marched past and the faces of all those who helped us to get through the past two years looking somewhat amazed. After the general salute, a speech by **Maj Gen Stokoe** was given, stating his interest in the apprenticeship and those who were graduating that day. Finally, intake 95B was marched off the square in slow time under the control of **AT SSM Steve Pritchard** to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne'. Emotions were certainly showing at this point–who says men don't cry!

This was the end of the parade and we were led down to the gymnasium for the presentation of prizes. The prizes were being presented to those people who had achieved high standards throughout their apprenticeship and sporting 'careers'–they were obviously well deserved. A speech was given by the Commander, **Col C. L. Le Gallais OBE** and then we were allowed to leave. All the parents were waiting outside for their sons and daughters and from there people went for lunch and others for a quick beverage in the Semaphore Arms. Members of the permanent staff met up with some of our parents and chatted to them for a while about how their 'young soldiers' had improved throughout the two years. By 1400 hrs, people were going their separate ways, it was a very emotional ending to the time we had spent together. Hopefully we will be meeting up some time in the near future and reminiscing on our past as apprentices.



The General Salute

AT Drum Major Jimmy Samuels receiving his award for the 'best contribution in the Band'

AT SSM Steven Pritchard receiving the SOinC's Prize and Master of Signals Award for the 'most outstanding tradesman' and the 'best all round Apprentice'

AT LCpl Jodi Wood receiving her award for the 'Apprentice considered to have achieved the most on an Adventure Training Exercise'

The Reviewing Officer, Maj Gen J. D. Stokoe CBE closely followed by AT Sgt Amanda Verrall, with (*L-R*) AT Cpl Richardson, AT Crossley, AT Dawson, AT Hill

NEWS FROM BOSNIA

14 Sig Tp
(Electronic Warfare)

OPERATION LODESTAR–BANJA LUKA

Sqn Comd/SO3 EW — **Capt Katrina Reynolds**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt** 'Geordie' **Usher**

14 Sig Tp (EW) is the Theatre Electronic Warfare Troop, tasked with providing EW support to the Commander. We currently man the Divisional Electronic Warfare Coordination Cell (DEWCC) and the Troop CP (TCP), both at Banja Luka Metal Factory, HQ MND (SW). We have two static hill top sites at Lisina East and Sjenokosic both Barracuda equipped. The Troop also have two Mobile EW Teams (MEWTS) to give mobile EW support as required.

The Troop arrived in theatre on 21 May, after a gruelling journey of some 23 hrs from Cawdor Bks, Brawdy (with one small diversion–thanks to **LCpl** 'I think I've forgotten my passport' **Lawson**) to the Metal Factory, Banja Luka via RAF Brize Norton, Hannover and Split. The advance party of the incumbent 14 Sigs Tp (EW) were met by the 'smiling' face of **SSgt** 'Dick' **Malt**, briefed and sent off to bed.

The next few days were a hectic blur of handover/takeover of sites, detachments and equipment. On 27 May the outgoing Troop departed for a well-earned break (or was it a sponsored run? People will do anything to get out of theatre two weeks early!). Left to our own devices we started to shape the Troop in our own likeness. In our first weeks in the driving seat, highlights have included:

Sgt Kit Clement and his MEWT taking part in a 20 day joint operation with EW specialists from 102 (NL) EW Coy.

LCpl Craig Dodge's MEWT doing daily deployments in support of the ongoing SFOR operations.

Sig 'Willy' **Rayes** volunteering for a retour after only three days in theatre!

The Tp Sgt, **Sgt Vince Key**, got RSI from playing Minesweeper and Solitaire.

Winning the BLAS six-a-side rugby competition.

The movement of one of the Troops AFV436 from Sjenokosic, after eight months static service on a hilltop . . . to BLMF and not to the Corps museum.

LCpl Phil Farrar (ED), who thought that Crypto was the stuff that killed Superman . . .

All in all we have had an interesting and enjoyable first month and if the next five and a half are as good, then this will be a very satisfying tour for us all.

BLMF RUGBY SIXES COMPETITION

On a delightfully warm Sunday afternoon, it was decided to have a morale boosting six-a-side touch rugby competition, as a break from the normal routine. Most units in the HQ and a chosen few guests entered teams. 207 Sig Sqn entered teams from their MT, Comms Tp and the QM's depts, (with this much manpower how come 14 Sig Tp (EW) get so many duties we ask?) After much deliberation we managed to put together a scratch team from the Troop consisting of, **WO2** 'Mo' **Fisher**, **Sgts** 'Jez' **Clarke**, 'Ben' **Batley**, 'Vince First op' **Key**, 'Sandy the gwar' **Sanderson**, **LCpls** 'Thomo' **Thomas**, 'Smudge' **Smith**, and our secret weapon **Sig** 'Willy' **Hayes**, who was made Captain elect for the competition.

After struggling through the pool stage of the competition by winning all three matches, we were glad of the two hour enforced rest allowed us by the organisers in the blazing sun, before embarking on the knock out stage. Our first match was against a team called "The Four Aces," a team made up of officers. Brushing them aside in a three one victory, scaring a few of the teams who fancied themselves by our silky smooth ball handling, electrifying pace and unpenetrable defence. Our next victims were a bunch of Antipodean officers. They put up one hell of a fight in probably the best and closest match of the afternoon, but lost out in extra time to a superb try by **Sgt** 'Ben the handgrenade' **Batley**. The final was us against an outside unit calling themselves, 'Slip in a ditch' an LAD unit from Sipovo. They quite fancied their chances, but try as they might (even with the help of the Referee) they were always second best and went down two tries to one. Thus allowing a bunch of no-hopers brought together on the day to walk away with the much appreciated winning plaque and the even more important phone cards. (I wonder how the Corps Team is fairing up with some of its members deployed on Op LODESTAR?)

On the whole it was an extremely enjoyable and well organised competition, with the best team coming out on top, 14 Sig Tp (EW) of course!!!!!

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
(Fwd)

Chief Ops & Maint — **Capt F. E. Hargreaves**

Having just returned to sunny Sarajevo after two months I've certainly noticed plenty of changes here in theatre. To start with it's HOT–give me a wet British summer any day–although those that tan and worship King Nutella would probably beg to differ. There are also mossies which seem to find my delicate Celtic skin very desirable. Work in the SFOR HQ is geared towards the forthcoming Municipal Elections and the changeover of COMSFOR (where we had another multinational parade where every nationality's drill is completely different and out of synch).

For those of you who remember Ice Station Zetra the lease has run out (we actually paid to stay there?!?). Occupants now live at Butmir (that is a recently de-mined site next to the civilian airfield). The French are still at Mostar and the 'powers that be have agreed that the French food is that bad that we now have a chef to feed the Brits and Americans (just as an Echos was opening there). The Americans have actually chilled out at Tuzla and they no longer have to walk about camp and shower in helmets and flak jackets and the Banja Luka det are practising their infantry skills by patrolling with the RAF Regt.

Back in the multinational environment of Sarajevo the Brits seem to be the only nationality trying to reduce manning–the Irish have even arrived now. There is still a healthy banter between all the different nations especially with the Americans (probably because they nearly speak the same language) and the Dutch whom we work alongside (probably because the lads feel that they need to be reminded on occasions how a professional Army operates). Now that our second rotation is over, I would like to welcome all those old faces back in Bosnia and I will be seeing those that have just left back in camp soon.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt G. B. Lamb**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt A. Barker**

As usual, most of the Troop is moving between St Tonis and Sarajevo, but we also have a large number of hellos and goodbye's to announce. Goodbye and thanks to the outgoing **SSgt Melotte** who has made a lateral move to the QM's stationary cupboard, and hello to **SSgt Barker** who is trying to extract as much as possible from **SSgt Melotte's** head before he takes over. Goodbye and congratulations on top student at RSCC go to **LCpl Cochran** who leaves for 216 (Para) Sig Sqn. Goodbye and good luck to the following Troop members who are leaving the Army altogether: **LCpl Howarth**, **Cpl Willis**, **Sig Spurgeon**, **Sig Stanwix** and **Sig Jervis**. Welcome to **Sig Styles**, **Sig Thompson**, and **Sig Lowe** who are beginning to realise just what they have let themselves in for. Welcome also to **Sgt Duffy**, who may one day be forgiven for being so fit, and finally, welcome to **Lt Todd** who will take over command of this fine band of men and women as soon as he has been treated for shock!

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207)
BFPO 30

OP LODESTAR

Sqn Comd — **Maj I. Cameron-Mowat**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) P. Atkinson**

SQUADRON HQ

If the title, 'Commander CIS (Balkans)' was not enough for the OC, Lt Col, will be the next one to add to his name. Congratulations! **Capt Matt Graham** left us with a smile on his face as he completed his half-tour and was then promptly posted to Sarajevo for another six months! He was replaced by **Capt Keith Mannings** who will also be buying 'slabs' on his promotion.

The RSM gives the thumbs up to the newly elected Secretary of State for Defence (General Guthrie looks on)

Comms Ops officer orbat is becoming slightly confusing but, in short, we bid farewell to **Capt Bob Strawbridge** who goes to teach army students, **Lt Caroline Woodbridge** who becomes a student and say hello to **2Lt Helen Murphy**, who was a student. Goodbye **Capt** 'JC' **Caesar** to 14 Sig Regt and hello to **Capt Richard Moir** from 14 Sig Regt. Fortunately, **WO2 (YofS) Graham Pardew** and **SSgt (FofS) Andy Garret** remain at the helm alongside **Lt** 'Chimney' **McDowell**. The FofS has made the gym his second home but his new bulging biceps were not enough when he tried to remove his bergen from under the skids of a Gazelle on the Vitorog. **SSgt Gary Roddy**, **SSgt Karl Daniels**, **LCpl Lisa Hudson** and **Pte Lisa Mangan** of the UAO have never been mentioned in *The Wire* before. **WO2 Neil Roome**, the Split LO, is not forgotten. His 42nd positioning in the British Triathlon Championships is a testament to the work he is doing down in Split.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt R. J. Carter**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt S. Ferris**

What with grenades, shootings, bombings, PIFWIC arrests (dead or alive) and presidential protection, things were getting a little boring until first lines, PREs and Board of Officers were all completed within the same couple of weeks. Not being able to run outside the Metal Factory Base is taking its toll and some fitness fanatics were seen running around the camp circuit whilst rounds were flying overhead! In their defence, they would quote you the definition of 'effective fire'. The Troop soon found that the best way of finding out what was going on was to watch Sky News, or better still, CNN, where one could see Comms Tp 'on ops'.

NEWS FROM THE FACTORY

The Troop has had a few hellos and farewells that would take too long to mention due to the turnover of TA and Reservists that we have. However, the newest arrival, **LCpl** 'Brummie' **Brant**, yet another West Midlander, was drafted in, it is rumoured, by **Lt Rich** 'Brummie' **Carter** and **Sgt Adam** 'Brummie' **Yafai**. She seems to have settled in quite well into Brummie Troop. **LCpl** 'Brummie' **Meakin** is very impressed with her trade skills. She arrived with **Sig** 'Scouse' **Stoddart** (not from Birmingham), who is crazy enough to be doing his second NATO tour.

LCpl 'Mac' **McCormack** left us after having the SOP barbecue to the backdrop scenery of Apaches and Black Hawks. The event was made all the more special by 'An evening with **Sig** "Barnie" **Beavers**' as he gave us song after song of the all-time greats. It was enough to bring a tear to many a battle-weary eye. **SSgt Paul Boughey**, SQMS aka Alpha Tp Sgt has left us for 30 Sig Regt and we all hope to see him out here soon! Best wishes to him and his family.

LCpl 'Jonno' **Johnson** continues to run Profitable RSM Investments and made a quick fortune whilst elements of 2RRF were based at the factory. Apparently, after seeing the troop on CNN, the Fusiliers bought all the Squadron T-shirts, leaving none for the Squadron itself. Signed merchandise, such as **LCpl Swayne** and **Sig Plunkett** Work Out videos, are making their way down to their BG HQ as we go to press. **SSgt Steve Ferris**, with the help of **LCpl Lee Cox** have been running a driver training package on the panzers and have slowly been wearing out the track up to Lisina Hill Top Site. **Cpl Kerry Webb**, **Sig** 'Rusty' **Zimmerman** and **Sig** '14 Sigs' **John** were the first to go through the 'Ferris Four-Three Factory' turning them into expert track-bashers.

NEWS FROM THE REBROS

Cpl 'Mad Dog' **Hatton** left Sjenokosic and the Squadron and **Cpl Adam Harvey** takes over the det. **Cpl Hatton** and family leave Hohne behind for sunny Cyprus. We wish them the very best of luck. The place will be very different without **Cpl Hatton** sitting in the stores next to **LCpl** 'sticky' **Allardyce** reminiscing about how The Corps had been 50 years ago when they joined. At Lisina, **Cpl J. C. Cordery** (congratulations on promotion) will go to Sipovo to see how 2 Bn REME operate (or is it to get POHR as Sgt?). Meanwhile, **Sig Jase Court**, when asked by GOC MND(SW) what his name was, replied 'Jase'! **Sig** 'No Mail' **Doughty** made an international plea on BFBS for anyone out there to write to him. As expected, no blueys were forthcoming and so he made his way to the mountain retreat known as Gola P. **LCpl Ross Gleave** and **Sig** 'Jock' **Devenay** remain at Radalijce and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Woolley** spends his time giving CNR lessons to **LCpl Dunc Rodgers** and **Sig H. Griffiths**, Tele Op (Radio Relay) wallahs up on Ivovik.

NEWS FROM THE REAR-LINKS

Sig Rob Gittins thought he had comms problems and went fault-finding on his EVHF kit on top of the building housing the Canadian BG HQ. He could not find any faults. In fact, he could not find his mast, antenna, pineapple etc. We await the theft report. **Sig** 'Scouse' **Tran** used his Merseyside charm and 'gift of the gab' down in Livno to purchase a can of shaving cream for just DM 54. At least it gave the Malaysian BG something to laugh about after losing all their money to the Sqn PRI and the bearded entrepreneur, **Cpl** 'Impetigo' **Tharby**.

Fwd (Lt) HQ deploying to Glamoc Ranges by Chinook

QM DEPARTMENT

QM — **Maj (QM) W. J. Drain**
RQMS — **WO2 (RQMS) Catchpole**

'**Sgt English**, I have a PRIORITY ONE tasking for you. Draft a set of *Wire* notes!' said **Maj Wally** 'Priority 1' **Drain**.

Over the last three months, life in the Banja Luka Metal Factory has entirely consisted of priority one taskings for the busy QM's Dept. However, all has not been doom and gloom with some lighter moments along the way. Entertainment has been provided by **Cpl** 'Percy' **Percival**, the Bosnian veteran and tour guide who breaks into a tall story at any opportunity. **Sig** 'Bart the Stud' **Simpson** is now not so shy and has been heard saying more than three words in one go and **Sig** 'Its not my fault I'm Welsh and I didn't know they sold jeans in the PX' **Davies** have kept everyone on their toes.

RQMS's Dining-out
The Officers, WOs and SNCOs of MND (SW) HQ & Sig Sqn (207)

During the tour we have seen the departure of **WO2 (RQMS) Dave** 'I'm going out the window' **Catchpole**, who leaves us on promotion to join 216 Para Sig Sqn (yes, you know! The unit we beat at boxing) as the RSM. We wish **Dave**, **Jane** and the family all the best for the future and extend our thanks to **Dave** for all his hard work and guidance over the last two years. Welcome to the Squadron, **WO2 (RQMS) Geoff Hodgeson** and family on their arrival from 15 Sig Regt and to **Sig** 'Robbo' **Robinson** and his wife, **Karen**. Congratulations on the birth of baby daughter, **Francesca**.

Last, but not least, thanks go to the rear party for all their hard work. **Cpl Jim** 'the attitude' **Green** and **LCpl** 'Cas' **Castano**.

TECH WORKSHOPS

Life is hard in the Tech workshops based in Banja Luka with the techs stretched to breaking point. We are solving problems such as, 'My SKY

WO2 (RQMS) Dave Cathpole en-route to his dining out

doesn't work!' to a crash move to install a base station in the presidential palace at 0200hrs. **Sigs Mark Strevens**, 'Taffman' **Elston**, **Danny Richardson** and **Lt McDowel** deployed to Novi Grad to monitor the transit of a train from Croatia into Bosnia which, for two days, never arrived. The lads made good use of the spare time to get some numbers for their 'Techs Spotters Handbook', BFBS (another thorn in our side) needed some alterations. **SSgt** 'Si' **Murray** traveled all-round theatre to remove, install and repair transmitters all in one day. The following day, **Sgt** 'Titch' **McGiffen** led a party (and by all accounts it was a party) to Zagreb to realign a satellite dish and enjoy their first bath in months. **Cpl** 'Geordie Bloke' **Hession** managed to extend his R and R from two to three weeks by getting his wife pregnant nine months ago. Excellent forward planning!

Do you want to help the Corps to recruit more soldiers?

SATISFIED SOLDIER SCHEME

- Are you a satisfied soldier?
- Would you like to be attached to your home town AC10 for 5-10 days?
- Would you like to visit your old school or ACF and tell them about Royal Signals?

YES?

THEN CONTACT YOUR SQUADRON OFFICE FOR DETAILS

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HQNI and 15 Sig Regt
BFPO 801

CO — **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson R Signals**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) S. J. Pellant**

The Regiment has been busy in preparation leading up to the Marching Season, but fortunately the escalation that occurred last year has not happened and the current 'ceasefire' allows some room for optimism.

On the sports field, the Tug-of-War team has gone from strength to strength, while other gladiatorial successes have been achieved on (and beside) the athletics track and in the Welsh Mountains. The Lanyard Trophy team came a creditable 8th on the day, despite having finally met as one for the first time that morning! The athletics team came second in the NI Championships and performed well in the Zone event at Colchester. The football team too was narrowly robbed of victory in the NI League, but seem sure to take the cup next year.

After some deft changes were made to Comms Branch, 233 Sig Sqn have been busy on their own restructuring plan and their new Control Centre has now 'gone live', while 225 Sig Sqn are celebrating their return to full strength after a couple of 'lean years'!

HQ SQUADRON

Farewells: Good luck to **Maj (QM) J. Aspinall MBE** on your posting to 71 Signal Regiment (V).

Arrivals: Welcome to **Maj J. Hegarty** in his dual appointment as QM/OC HQ Sqn. Also welcome to **Sig Clair Dawson** from 233 Sig Sqn.

Congratulations: The Quartermasters Department would like to send our warm congratulations to **Sgt** 'Spike' **Hughes** and wife **Sarah**, on the birth of their daughter **Emily**, also **Cpl Brian Robson** on his marriage to **Denise**, all the best for the future.

Summer Camp: Well done to the QM's Admin party especially to **SSgt Graham Gray** I/C Admin, who managed to complete four weeks at Halton T/C without losing NI pay, by returning for a week in the middle. This was a successful Summer Camp and enjoyed by all who participated.

Tug-of-War: Well done to **WO2 (RQMS) Pete Huzzey** and **Sgt** 'Spike' **Hughes** in the Tug-of-War in achieving silver at the Royal Tournament in the 620kg and 640kg classes.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

ALPHA TROOP

Over the last month things have been relatively quiet, despite it being the marching season. Some members of the Troop have taken advantage of this quiet period, and have been missing the fight against terrorism by getting back across the water for a jolly and a bit of 'tug of war' (no names mentioned but who exactly are **WO2 (SSM) Hymas** and **Sgt Concepcion**?).

Congratulations to the OC, **Maj David Whimpenny** on actually bumping into **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Lord Lucan' **Sartorius**, apparently they are arranging to meet and talk re-build on a daily basis, or is that rugby? Further congratulations are extended to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Brown**, who whilst out on the lash watching the British Lions in South Africa, was selected for promotion to Sergeant. Well done 'Taff'–216 awaits you, Ha Ha Ha!!!

Finally the usual hello's and goodbyes, the Troop welcomes **Capt Dave Worden** from 210 Sqn to take up the illustrious position of 2IC, and **Capt Rees-Deacon** and his wife **Debbie** from 33 Sig Regt to take up the position of heartache as Tech Adjt. Sadly the Troop bids a farewell to **Capt** 'Charlie' **Cooper** off to sunny 34 Regt and **Cpl** 'Luscious' **Lindy Lawrence** on her on/off/on/off posting to SHAPE. All the best for the future.

ECHO TROOP (BRAVO WATCH)

A very big Bravo watch welcome to **Sgt Dave White** and his wife **Anita**, who have joined us for a two year (nobody's got that long!) tour. Leaving the watch and going off to pastures new are **Sgt Paul Rowlands** and his family, **Ruth**, **Rebecca** and baby **Peter**, who are going off to where the grass is definitely greener–14 Sig Regt (E.W.O.) at Brawdy, we will surely miss them. A big farewell to **LCpl Nicky** 'cabbage patch' **Snelling** who after five years of Army life has decided to join the rat race and go civ div. Last but definitely not least is **WO1 Mick Hartley**, **Corinne** and the kids who are also returning to 9-5 style of life after 22 years in greens. The Squadron wishes them all the very best for the future. A big well done to **Sgt Paul Rowlands** who successfully passed his RSSC and also to **LCpl Jay Owens** who passed the RSCC and enjoyed it so much he went onto complete the Lanyard Trophy as well (is he totally nuts?). Well done lads.

Even with the restricted way of life in NI Bravo Watch still manage to get out and about and try to organise as many outings as possible. One of the more regular features is the B watch sea fishing trips (see photo) which have been organised by **Sgt Paul Rowlands** and **Cpl Adie Russell**. Fishing off the coast of Bangor, Co Down, a variety of fish are caught, anything from cod, mackerel and whiting etc and possibly the most obscure fishy thing–an octopus, was caught by **LCpl Phil Crocker**. Not to be outdone **Sgt** 'it was this BIG' **Rowlands** landed a fine dogfish which landed him the 'catch of the day', which did not impress our most successful lady fisher **LCpl Angie Cassidy**. The fine haul of fish was promptly cleaned and gutted and then stuck on the barbecue to end a perfect day's fishing.

Bravo Watch with their array of fish of course the really big one got away!

GOLF TROOP

Golf 'Men in Black' Tp would like to welcome **Cpls Ian Kingsbury**, **Chris Warren**, **Tony Lythgoe** and **Matt Quirke** and to say a fond farewell to **Sgts Carl McNulty** and **Lee Linton**. **Cpls Angie Setchfield** and **Tam Ewart**. Good luck for the future and thanks for all your hard work. Another hard working period where it seems most of our Tp members are away on courses, most notably Malone Golf Course. The day started off well once **Sgt Keith** 'I'm not Tiger Woods' **Muggleton** received some basic golf tuition and terms such as club, ball swing and hold. For all 'Muggies' height advantage he displayed the manual dexterity of a pink flamingo on acid. It was left to **Sgt Don** 'I am Tiger Woods' **Anderson** to save the day playing an outstanding eighteen holes his only handicap dragging 'Muggie' around the course.

Our thanks go out to **Sgt Dave Evans**, his contribution to Summer Camp amazed everyone especially **Cpls Dave Brown** and **Matt Quirke**. The two JNCO's were convinced **Sgt Evans** was trying to kill them by walking them off the edge of a cliff. His words, 'Trust me lads Chris Bonnington is one of my best mates,' inspired nothing but the urge to turn and run. His attempts to redeem himself by organising the mountain biking did not endear himself to the junior ranks. The comment 'It's a shame to waste a good hill,' did nothing for morale. At this point we should mention **WO2** 'Tommy' **Steel** who was last heard screaming 'Help, my brakes are failing,' his only method of stopping was to take advantage of an ancient dry stone wall. 'Tommy' stick to what you are good at–Chris Boardman you are not!!

Finally to finish about Summer Camp we have to mention **Sgt Keith Muggleton** who while out canoeing received amorous advances from a swan, can that boy paddle when he has to. To end this month's contribution we would like to thank the operators for nearly poisoning the whole of the tech/mechs, we do appreciate a good barbecue but please cook the chicken next time–salmonella we do not need!

BIRGELEN TROPHY HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

For the first time since its inauguration 15 Sig Regt entered a team in this years Birgelen Trophy held at RAF Digby in Lincolnshire on the 19/20 June 97. 225 Sig Sqn formed the majority of the team with the following personnel representing the unit. **Capt Lynn Burrell**, **Sgt Paul Amies**, **Sue Jackson** and **Dave White**. **Cpls Graham Campbell**, 'Dunc' **McBain**, 'Scouse' **Meehan** and **LCpl Dean Lenton**. One person sorely missed from our starting line up was our spiritual (and drinking) leader **Capt Dave Dolling** who had to unfortunately drop out at the last minute. The tournament started in earnest and after plenty of 'Carbo' loading the

night before, the team made a good start with wins against DSSS and 14 Sig Regt. There were suspicions that our keeper **Graham Campbell** had been paid off by the opposition after some of the soft goals he let in during that game. The next day saw the team get back to winning ways to end the tournament with victories over RAF North Luffenham and 9 Sig Regt.

The unit finished a commendable second place just two points behind RAF Digby. The standard of hockey the whole way through the tournament was excellent, but it was clear from the start that RAF Digby would be the eventual winners (that was probably why the first place prizes were so good and there was nothing for second place–nice one guys!). Thanks must go to our hosts and organisers, in particular **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Brown** and **Cpl** 'Gaz' **King** who laid on an excellent tournament–Thanks guys next year the trophy will be ours.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

SHQ

On behalf of the whole Squadron a big thanks and good luck to **SSM Geoff Hodgson** who wends his merry way from here to 7 Armd Bde and from there to Bosnia and congratulations to his wife **Sharon** on achieving first class honours on her recent graduation. All the very best to you both. Congratulations also to **Capt Martin Bever** and his wife **Millie** on the recent birth of their second son **Harvey**.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt Nick Massey**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt (RD) Paul Brown**

Busy times in Province cannot stop the constant round of postings in and out of Romeo Tp. Starting off the hellos and goodbyes is the sad farewell to **Capt Rich Rumsey**, off to 249 Sig Sqn as 2IC and winter frolics in Norway, and the Troop welcomes **Capt Nick Massey** in his place. We are also pleased to welcome **Cpl Steve** 'Monty Burns' **Simpson**, **Cpl** 'Del-boy' **Trotter**, **Cpl** 'Selly' **Selkirk** and **Sgt Dave Mudway**. Hello!

Something has obviously been in the water here in Province, as fertility is enjoying a high spot. Congratulations to **Cpl Ian Galloway** and his wife **Sue**, **Sgt** 'Monty' **Farrow** and his wife **Josephine** and **Sgt Mick Payne** and wife **Miriam**, all on the birth of their new arrivals. Welcome to the youngest members of the Troop. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Pete Lawn** on his successful selection on the recent Cpl to Sgt board and good luck to those members of the Troop on the way to Yeoman's selection, you know who you are!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS) Ian Rutherford**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ged Keane**

The Troop welcomes the following into the ranks; **Sgt Martin Ind**, **Cpl Richard Webb** both straight from their T1. **Sgt Pete Kelly** has arrived from 11 Sig Regt and **Sgt Buckingham** from RSIT and finally **Cpl Bob Bowden**–we welcome you all. We also have to say goodbye to **Sgt Les Crowther** and his wife **Marlene** who are posted to 11 Sig Regt, **Dean Davis** who is going to join the ranks of the unemployed in civvy street, **Cpl Alan** 'where is the golf course' **Costello** who is doing hard labour in AFCENT and finally to **Cpl Mark Stanbury** who is posted to Aldershot. Hope you all enjoy your new postings and careers.

TM Tp is now undergoing dramatic changes, with both its manpower and procedures. A lot of time and effort has gone into the planning of the new TM Tp and we all hope it goes well. One final note, TM Tp have announced a beer call which has caused the disappearance of **Sgt Dave Kilgallon**. Can people please check their lockers for any signs of him.

INDIA TROOP

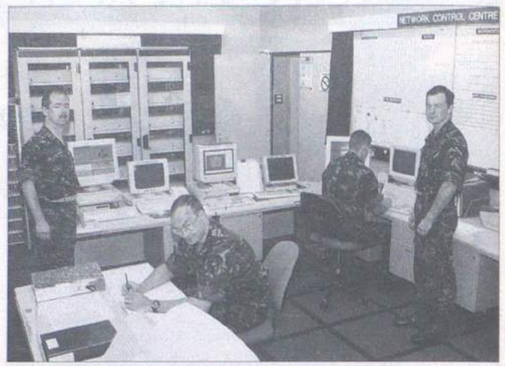
Tp Comd — **Capt Rich Newhouse**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Frank Corrigan**

This has been a busy time in India Tp for comings and goings. Welcome and congratulations to **Sgts Al Newman** and **Billy Fagan** fresh from their T1s at Blandford. Welcome also to **Cpls Paul Hughes**, **Adrian** 'the Fish' **Fisher**, **Richard** 'Willie' **Wilson** and **Sigs Jase Whitehead**, **Stu McCluskie**, 'Daz' **King**, **Des** 'Bart' **Simpson**, **Steve Massey** and **Andy Adam**. Goodbyes to **Sgt** 'Dinger' **Bell**, **Cpl Vince Saunders** and **Sig Tom McLoughlin**, off to Germany, and **Paul Currie** off to the real world outside along with **Tony Byrne**.

Congratulations to **WO2 Sinderberry** and **SSgt Dave Williams** who have been promoted on the tough ADP roster–don't worry **Andy Forbes**, yours will come through in the end. Congratulations must go to **Sgts Mike** 'Mac' **McNeill** and **Dave** 'Taz' **Alderson** on passing the **Sgts Course**. Well done to **Capt Rich Newhouse** and **LCpl Phil Callaway** on completing the Lanyard Trophy, coming a very creditable eighth (in front of 216!). Finally thanks to **Sig Jimmy Cunningham** for an excellent Troop barbecue.This is a time of change for India Tp, formerly Victor Tp and Whiskey Section. The Troop is going into the Squadron melting pot next month to re-emerge as part of the Province Network Control Centre, Insh'allah. Watch this space.

STOP PRESS!!–THE NETWORK CONTROL CENTRE

That revolution in Northern Ireland fixed communications, the Network Control Centre, went live at 8am on Friday 1 August 1997. Opened by **Maj Nick Keen**, OC 233 Sig Sqn, the NCC brings together operators and technicians from India Tp and TM Tp into one Ops Room. From there all the fixed secure communications and computer systems across the Province can be monitored, and most faults can be fixed over the telephone. The performance over the first weekend indicated that the NCC gave a much better service than was possible before. The other benefit is that less people will be needed to man 24 hour duties, that is as soon as **Capt Martin Bever** gets round to putting a secure door on the Brinton switch room!



The new NCC awash with terminals
Looking in to the camera are Maj Nick Keen, OC 233 Sig Sqn, Sgt 'Skippy' Stevens and the new NCC Ops Offr, Capt Richard Newhouse

COMMCEN TROOP

Tp Comd/Sqn 2IC — **Capt Martin Bever**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Lindsay Manktelow**

Yes the manning is finally getting sorted. A warm welcome goes out to **WO2 (YofS) Russ Darlington** who will not be working in the Troop but pops across for the occasional brew. Also arriving were **Sgt** 'Robbo' **Robson**, **Cpls** 'Rentboy' **Hanbridge**, **Dave Greenstreet**, **LCpls Sam Bowman**, **Gloria Fagan**, **Rod Rouchy**, **AJ Peters** and **Martin** 'I've only been here a week but already I have an extra' **Campion**. Finally **Sigs Carrie Whitworth**, **Alvin Black**, **Tanya Webb** and last but not least 'Tommo' **Thompson**. Farewells go to **WO2 (YofS) Andy Drummond** posted to sunny Catterick, **Sigs Clare Davies**, **Jeff** 'look at my muscles' **Hyland**, **Carol** 'Sun Queen' **Watson**, **Jimmy Mathieson** and **Anton Psaila** to Civ Div, **Martin** 'Scally' **Perkin** to 30 Sig Regt and **Pete** 'New Age Traveller' **McMahon** to 16 Sig Regt.

Congratulations to **Sig Chris Bradford** on his marriage to **Sophie** and **Cpl Wayne Robson** who took **LCpl Sharon Rogers** all the way to the Empire State Building to propose–luckily she said YES!

The Troop recently had a barbecue although normally the weather in Northern Ireland is wet, we did have some sun. It was an occasion to kick back and let your hair down with the other shifts. A special mention must go **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow** who, although she had just found out she was pregnant, came up with the idea of a few games and of course made it lads against lasses with those immortal words–'we'll beat them easy'–better luck next time girls. The chefs for the day were **Cpl Wayne Robson** and **Sig** 'Porno' **Allen** so naturally all major food groups were present–there was FAT, BLACK CRUNCHY BITS AND WHITE BLOBBY BITS. Amazingly enough no-one went down with salmonella. The whole day and night was a success thanks to **Cpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** who arranged it. Well done, hopefully with all these good ideas flooding in for theme nights there will be more good times ahead.

EXERCISE MERCURY FINN 97

Between 18 May and 14 June the Regiment deployed on its annual Summer Camp to the Lake District based at Halton Camp near Lancaster. The following contributions are from personnel who attended on one of the four weeks:

Capt Dave Dolling and Capt Martin Bever (*above*), Sgt Clark, LCpl Hamilton and Cpl White (*below*) on the top of Scafell Pike

WEEK 1–BY SGT JACOBS (ADP SPEC)

'Ah **Sgt Jacobs** I am looking for a UEL instructor. I have seen your Unicom printout and you seem to fit the bill'. A look at the calendar confirmed my worst fears–it was confidential season. Mustering a sickly smile I accepted the single honour of two weeks hill walking in the Lake District.

It all started rather badly with half the students and instructors forced to cancel due to operational reasons. The trip to Halton was uneventful, but not so our arrival. Guard? But I am an instructor–six people per day to guard the camp–a quick head count of one instructor and seven students and the idea of camping out seemed very attractive. Scafell Pike seemed taller than the last time I climbed it–perhaps I have shrunk. The weather remained clement for the whole of the week, much to the relief of the students and the instructor. I can't think of anything worse than climbing up a mountain in zero visibility, whilst being pelted by horizontal rain. Glorious sunshine, fresh air and scrumpy, what more could an ADP Spec desire? A quick mention must go to **Sgt Alderson** who kindly provided the sprinkler system for the lads accommodation and also thanks for the late night entertainment he laid on.

WEEK 2 BY CAPT BURRELL

A strange phenomenon called sunshine greeted the second week of Summer Camp and many anaemic bodies were displayed in the Lancashire countryside. The taskmasters were **Maj David** 'I will make the beer festival' **Whimpenny**, **SSgt Graham** 'What no water' **Weavers** and **SSgt John** 'let's pitch our tents by the chicks' **Greenwood**.

The venue for the climbing was Shepherds Crag in Borrowdale. **LCpl Sandra Thompson** decided that the bottom of the climb was not a sunny enough spot so scaled the dizzy heights for a quick sunbathe. **Sgt Nigel** 'Father' **Francis** decided that abseiling backwards was for wimps but after a successful head first dive, the antiseptic spray on the blistered hands was too much to bear. Wasdale Head lived up to its romantic reputation and the 'Legends' will live on! A point learnt from the nights out camping was that it is essential to be correctly prepared and dressed for every eventuality. The weather encouraged everyone to top up on liquids and ensure that the essentials for life were replaced at the end of the day. A top night spot in Lancaster offered a suitable eight pint challenge to encourage still further. **SSgt Graham Weavers** found very little water by day but plenty of the brown fizzy stuff at night.

Blackpool was a popular place for a visit for all but **Maj Whimpenny** and **Capt Burrell** who were both offended by the poor likenesses of the Coronation Street Stars Illuminations to the real thing. Blackpool may you forever sell chips and rock.

WEEK 3 BY LCPL HAMILTON

The hillwalking phase was open to all, however a clique of mountain goats were present throughout. Walks included the ascent of Scafell Pike and traversing the Bowfell and Langdale Ridges. **Capt Bever** (Our glorious leader) also threw in a 'nostalgia' walk from his childhood that must have been some time ago as the trail was doubtful in places. **LCpl** 'Rock hopping' **Hamilton** and **Sgt** 'Scree sliding' **Clark** peeled off to finish the week with an arduous climb. Suffice to say it looked easier on the map and there were definitely some hair-raising moments on the rock ledges just below the summit of Pillar. Respect must also go to **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Brown** who was still smiling on return to Lisburn despite having been wounded in battle. Also to **Capt Dave** 'One for the road' **Dolling** who should definitely donate his body to medical science when he no longer has a use for it. Well done to everyone for a cracking week.

WEEK 4 BY SGT JACOBS (ADP SPEC AND EX GUNNER)

Horror. The Officer in charge of week four is none other than my OC, **Maj Keen** who calmly mentioned on his arrival that hill walking is a favourite pastime of his. Doom. Time to rethink my plans for the next six days. This week managed to improve in all respects on the first. Guards were mentioned and then forgotten about, there were more students and a full complement of instructors. **SSgt Graham** 'Fish' **Weavers** was on hand to teach canoeing, though after day 1 the wisdom of this was called into question. His pupils were exhausted after a day on the water, come to think of it some were so exhausted that they could not even walk straight - read into that what you will. The weather held out until the last day and then visibility dropped to 10 feet. Time to put the map away and rely on instinct. Unfortunately the OC did not like the way my instincts were leading me and vetoed us spending the whole day in the Wasdale Head Hotel. Oh well, worth a try I suppose. Special thanks must go to **SSgt Grey** and the boys from the QMs dept and MT for their special help all the way through the exercise and to all the instructors and camp leaders.

3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (203)
BFPO 809

Sqn Comd — **Maj C. R. Owen**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) K. R. Winkles**

TM TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS) S. Steven**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt I. Pennell**

After a few hectic weeks with the marching season (pat on your back lads for all your hard work!) the Troop adults decided to organise some morale boosting entertainment, including a boating trip to the lakes, a Brigade barbecue and not forgetting one or two block inspections!

Now a big welcome from the 'happy days' Troop to **Cpl Billy Boston**, **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Watson**, **Cpl Tony** 'I'm a bit helpful' **Raby** and last but not least big **Sgt Ian** 'nice to be back' **Noble**. As ever there are a few goodbyes, **LCpl Stu** 'the streaker' **Street** to Cyprus, **Cpl Yorkie** 'can't climb, won't climb' **Sowden** to Gibraltar and **LCpl Matt Eades** to Chelsea barracks. Good luck to the soon to be civvies: **Mr Graham** 'porridge stirrer' **Wood**, **Mr Justin Searle** and **Mr James Boon**. Good luck guys!

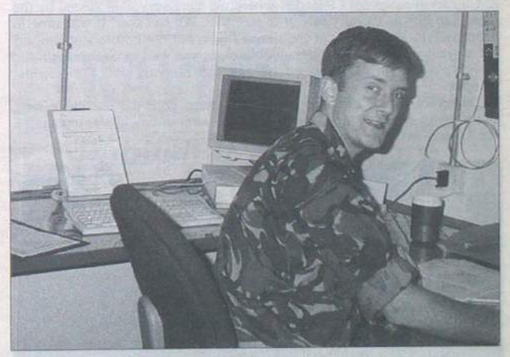
Finally a message for **Sgt** 'megaphone' **Sherwood**, 'Why isn't that mast rigged yet?'

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt L. Launders**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt S. Parke**

The personnel in Comms Tp continue to ebb and flow on a regular basis. Over the last two months we have said goodbye to **Sgt Rob Fogg** on promotion to 1 Para, **LCpl Steve Whitehead** to 30 Sig Regt, **Sig Rob Mastin** to 21 Sig Regt to get a taste of the field army, and **Sig** 'Thomo' **Thompson** who is going to 16 Sig Regt. **LCpl Scott Harriman** will leave us shortly for a highly paid job in civvy street, (so he tells us).

As usual there are fewer welcomes than goodbyes but **LCpl** 'Beaker' **Philips**, **LCpl** 'Taff' **Davies** and **Sig Chris Moore** are welcome nonetheless. The rest of the Troop have not been idle: **Sig Karen French** was thrilled at the opportunity to escape from the COMMCEN for a week to help on the Youth Services Summer Camp in Ballykinler. Naturally she led from the front in seeing that the little darlings had a good time rock climbing, hill walking, canoeing and body boarding. Having enjoyed 5 star tented accommodation for the period of the Drumcree march the Troop are now well settled into their newly refurbished SYSCON, COMMCEN and Crypto Cell. The made to measure offices come complete with air conditioning but no sauna yet.



Cpl Lee Johns showing what a pleasure it is to work in the newly refurbished COMMCEN

SQUADRON SPORTS REPORT

Contrary to popular belief a posting to NI does not mean that your sporting career is put on hold. At the beginning of another busy sports season we thought that it was time that the rest of the Corps was aware of the Squadron's sporting prowess:

Football: Winners of NI Minor Units Championships with a devastating end of season push leaving both 8 and 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqns in our wake. Star of the season was the top scorer **WO2 Harvey**.

Rugby: Continuing in the tradition of excellence the Sqn XV won both the NI Minor Units League Championships and the NI Minor Unit Challenge Cup. They reached the quarterfinals of the Army Challenge Cup. No one player makes the team but **LCpl** 'Woody' **Woods** at prop deserves a special mention as most improved and because the backs always get the glory.

Squash: Another successful side despite some uneven playing surfaces, the team managed to win the NI Minor Units Championships and reached the quarterfinals of the Army Challenge Cup.

Athletics: Winners of the NI Minor Units Championships, the talented but untrained team recorded 3rd places in both the Mercury Cup and Land Comd semi-finals competition. To be congratulated are **WO2 (RQMS) Dave Meggitt** for his pole-vaulting prowess and **LCpl Stan** 'Spikes are for poofs' **Martin**.

Cross Country: Despite only having a 1½ mile circuit round camp on which to train, the cross country team won the NI Minor Units Championships and achieved 2nd place in the cross country relay championships.

Golf: Another arduous season produced few trophies but a great deal of enjoyment!

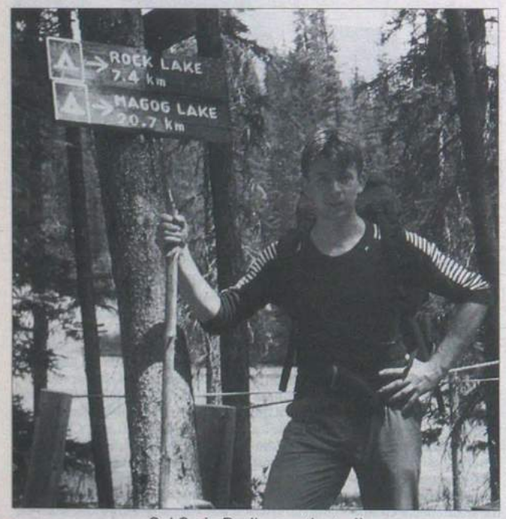
EXERCISE RADIUM FINN–OR TEN GO MAD IN CANADA
by Cpl Craig Dudley

H Hour, 0800 on 27 May 1997, after nine months of planning and a lot of hair pulling the time had arrived for 10 adventurers to jet off to the Canadian Rockies for a spot of adventure training. After a most memorable nine hour flight courtesy of BA the expedition arrived in Vancouver. The next morning everyone was up bright and early and after a visit to Denny's for breakfast (one of many visits to Denny's!) we were raring to go. The vehicles were collected and we set off Eastwards. After a brief visit to the town of hope, the town made famous by Sly Stallone in the film 'First Blood', and a night under the stars next to the trans Canadian railway we arrived at Canyon Campground in Radium Hot Springs. This would be home for the next two days during which some of us visited the hotsprings. The remainder, **Sgt Bob Fogg**, **Cpl** 'JB' **Butler** and **LCpls** 'Tiger Woods' **Fisher** and **Matt Eades** headed off to the local golf course. We also visited Lake Louise with the intention of hiring some boats only to find it frozen over!

Now acclimatised the expedition began. We did some final kit prep before heading into the mountains for five days. The word on the street was, 'Keep talking and make plenty of noise and the bears will stay away–keep your eyes open!' Fine in theory but not in practice. After only 5km we were no longer able to talk–all was silent apart from the obvious panting with everyone just keeping their eyes on the boots of the person ahead. After six hours and 18kms we finally arrived at our campsite at Dog Lake. The last 2km were somewhat hard going with snow up to 4ft deep, almost over **Cpl Butler**'s head! Camp was eventually struck and everyone settled down for some well deserved hot food, apart from **LCpls Fisher** and **Eades** who had a small technical hitch with their stove. The next four days saw us move down from the snow line and continue with the route on more low level trails. We spent nights at the exotic sounding Porcupine Camp, Scout Camp and Surprise Creek Cabin.

On return to civilisation we spent two days in Banff, mostly in the launderette but with some time for white water rafting on the Kicking Horse River. This was a day that will be remembered by everyone on the Expedition as the river was almost the highest it has ever been and the rapids were graded as 4+. The day was rounded off with a classic performance by **Sgt Bob Fogg** singing in one of the local bars, something else that will be remembered by everyone–I wonder why? We then moved to Calgary for two days R and R where we were very well hosted by the Canadian Forces Cavalry at Currie barracks. All too soon it was time to head back to Vancouver for the return flight, but not before stopping off for a night in the USA. A memorable night was had in Seattle with the night's entertainment organised by **Sig Bri Stewart** and **Pte** 'Coops' **Cooper**.

On return to the Province we were greeted with the inevitable rain, some things never change. Heads are now deep in brochures, planning a similar adventure next year.



Cpl Craig Dudley on the trail

The expedition at Lake Louise
Standing (*L-R*): Cpl Eades, LCpl Thomas, LCpl Whitehead, Cpl Dudley, Sig Stewart, Sgt Fogg, Pte Cooper, (*kneeling*): Sgt Woodray, Cpl Butler, LCpl Fisher

DRUMCREE MARCH–A POTTED HISTORY

The Loyal Orange Lodge was formed in 1795. Soon after it held the first commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne which took place on 12th July 1690. There has been a tradition of marches on or around the 'glorious twelfth' ever since. Parades are very much part of the Orange tradition and heritage which they believes an appropriate medium to express their faith and culture. The first parade to Drumcree, the original parish church for the Portadown area, was held in 1807. This is the oldest recorded service in the history of the Orange Institution and Portadown District Lodge is the oldest Orange Lodge. The Orangemen believe that this parade, which takes place on the Sunday before 12 July, is one of the greatest in their tradition.

As seen over the past three years this is now one of the most contentious parades in the marching calender. After many years of marching the traditional route along Obins Street, which was a predominantly Nationalist area a decision was made by the Chief Constable in 1985 to re-route the parade onto the Garvachy Road. This was a major thoroughfare passing through a mainly Protestant area. This decision was welcomed by both communities and the Irish government. By 1995 the Garvachy Road was a predominantly Nationalist area and the residents called for the parade to be rerouted again. The RUC decided that to allow the parade to pass would result in serious public disorder and so began the first Drumcree standoff. Since then the march has remained contentious making the beginning of the marching season a busy time for the Squadron.

ROVER GROUP–1997

IC Rover Gp	**Sgt Craig Wrath**	Top Covers **Cpl John Butler**
Comd's Radio Op	**Cpl Craig Dudley**	**Cpl John Bithell**
Comd's Bodyguard	**Cpl Neil Bott**	**LCpl Chris Thomas**
Comd's Driver	**LCpl Jez Lomas**	**Sig Chris Hoggard**
Veh 2 Driver	**Cpl Ian Homer**	

Having no Rover Group established, the elite band chosen to safely transport the Bde Comd during the marching season came from across the Squadron. As those remaining in the Troops spread themselves even more thinly the chosen few spent many arduous days at Ballykinler Training Camp in the months before the summer marching season. Training included ranges, FRG firing, car drills and many incident scenarios using the snatch vehicles. Training finally culminated in arrest and restraint techniques and dealing with minor aggro. This was ably demonstrated by **Capt Fred Payet** who, after turning the Rover Group into Bruce Lees, eventually came off worse for wear after tackling **Sgt Craig Wrath**'s combat jacket. As a final preparation the group deployed with 22 Regt RA and 3 R Irish in and around Lurgan and Portadown. Now operational and armed with television and kettle the Rover Group quickly commandeered the OC's and Comms Tp offices for accommodation and settled down to await whatever the Drumcree period may bring.

As the day of the Drumcree march approached the atmosphere became very tense as no decision had yet been made as to whether the march should be allowed to go ahead or not. In the lead up to the parade the Brigade Comd deployed with the rover group to various checkpoints around the Nationalist areas and the Drumcree church. **WO1 (RSM) Winkles** was always in attendance with his trusty Kodak instamatic. Word somehow got around that there was a spare seat in the rear snatch vehicle. This led to a mad rush of Japanese tourists emerging from Sig Ops cunningly disguised as **WO2 (YofS) Dick Rutherford** and **WO2 (FofS) Scott Stevens**, 'Yes Foreman you do need those heavy plates for your INIBA vest!' Sig Ops will never be the same again. Deployments until now had been largely incident free. The only exceptions being the RSM doing a swallow dive out of the rear vehicle in his eagerness to catch up with the Bde Comd and **LCpl** 'Thomo' **Thompson** deciding to let his magazine fall off in the middle of a Nationalist estate.

Finally the big day came and news was out that the parade would go down the Garvaghy Road. The Rover Group deployed at 0500hrs so that the Bde Comd could assess the situation. After parking at the northern end

of the road, the Comd, Bodyguard, RSM and two of the top covers went for what is known as a gazelle trot down the road - the Commander is not known for walking anywhere slowly. The RUC had taken up positions along with the Grenadier Guards on both sides of the road, to try and quell the sporadic rioting. As the Commander stopped to talk to members of the security forces a crowd of approximately 30 Nationalists started to gather close to where the RSM and **Cpl Butler** were positioned. As the RUC were busy with other things they informed **Cpl Butler** that he might wish to disperse the crowd. Luckily for him his 5'2" frame must have made the crowd think twice as they moved on to try elsewhere.

Due to the large media coverage of the event members of the Rover Group keenly watched all the local and national news broadcasts. Several claimed Hollywood status but **Cpl Craig Dudley** and **LCpl** 'Thomo' **Thomas** were the only confirmed sightings. After the march the Rover Group was deployed on many more, but less exotic details and were finally stood down on 14 July. All members showed great professionalism at all times and were a credit to the Bde and Sig Sqn. The selection process is now beginning for next year.

The Rover Group 1997
(*L-R*): Cpl Homer, Sig Hoggard, Sgt Wrath, LCpl Thomas, WO1 (RSM) Winkles, Cpl Butler, Cpl Bithell, Cpl Dudley, LCpl Lomas.

The RSM inspects the Orangemen's drill–clearly not up to standard

LCpl Jez Lomas wonders why he can't look as smart and soldier like as Cpl John Butler.

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39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213)
BFPO 801

Sqn Comd **Maj R. J. Healey R Signals**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) G. Hawkins BEM**

COMMS TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Fraser**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev O'Neill**

Once again this has been a very busy period for the Troop, with the preparations for the marching season taking up a huge chunk of our resources. All the members of SYSCON and the COMMCEN continue to perform stalwart service to the Signal Squadron and all the Brigade units within our TAOR. **Cpl Mark Holden** has admirably worn the two hats of NCO IC SYSCON and the Trials NCO. Well done for all the hard work that continues to be achieved by these unsung heroes of the Troop. Rover Gp have as usual been kept busy carrying out training for the Marching Season. **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Cain** and the lads all performed admirably and kept the Commander very happy during the Marches. They also managed to send their first contact report and get their first non-accident entry onto the NIREP.

On the Sports and Social front, **Cpl Marie** 'You're Out' **McChesney** ran the Inter Troop Rounders competition, which Comms Tp excelled in coming last. **SSgt O'Neill** assisted all the other teams, by not catching a ball or scoring any rounders, well done Staff, they all appreciated it. SHQ Tp eventually won the competition.

The Troop has said a sad farewell to the following people. **Lt** 'Courses' **Merry**, on promotion to Captain, posted to Cyprus, along with **Cpl Matt Pryme**, who wasn't complaining when his posting to Bulford was changed. **LCpl** 'Jonah' **Jones** off to 7 Bde, along with **Michelle** and **Ryan**, and finally **Sig Janet Edwards** who is finishing off her last few months in the Army, with a posting to 36 Sig Regt (V). We wish them all the best for the future. The Troop is now under the new management of **2Lt John Fraser**, who takes over the Troop after finishing his Tp Comds Course at Blandford. SYSCON has also been infused with new blood in the shape of **LCpl Kev Brown** and **LCpl Kim Leonard**, welcome to the Troop, hope you have a good tour. Congratulations are in order for **Pte Martin Walsh** on his promotion to LCpl, and **LCpl Jason Spencer** and **LCpl Dean Jenkins** on being selected for promotion to Cpl.

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Steve Hodgson**

I'll start with the Troop farewells. We have lost four members of the Troop and they will all be missed, well almost all of them. First to go was **Cpl Billy** 'Man from Atlantis, 58 pattern, mittens only' **Evans** who leaves us to go on his T1 at Blandford. Next to go was **Cpl Pete Sorrell** who has also left us to go on his T1. Since his departure some of the Troop have received Star Trek mementoes from **Cpl Sorrell**'s personal collection and they would like to thank him for these. Everybody here wishes them all the best and hope they are successful in their studies.We have also lost **Sgt** 'Tiny' **Tindale** who has joined our exchange scheme with 7 Sigs, we're sure he will enjoy his time there. Finally a goodbye to **SSgt Penny Lansbury** who has left us to join AFCENT. How she got away with that nobody knows, thanks go to **Penny** on her organisation of the Caribbean night which was a great success.

There are also a few welcomes to take care of. First to arrive was **Sgt** 'Tex' **Avery** who has arrived straight from his T1. Since arriving he has settled down well and some of the Troop were glad to help him with his problem of trying to work out what rank a Brigadier is. Next to come was **Cpl Andy Ward** who also arrived care of our exchange scheme with 7 Sigs. He caused a lot of problems since arriving as we have had to make all the doorways a foot higher. Finally we welcome **SSgt** 'Si' **Jones** from 11 Sig Regt. He takes over from **SSgt Lansbury** and I am sure he will enjoy his time here.

LCpl Tonks, LCpl Murcott and LCpl Wedge negotiate the 'Its a Knockout' Course

The last month has been one of the busiest times of the year and a lot of late nights have been put in by all members of the Troop. After all the work that has been going on we must praise the rigging section for totally redecorating the shack. They have spent a lot of time in the shack and it now looks like all members of the Troop will be able to go in there without contracting a lethal disease.

The Troop had a team in the 'Its a Knockout' competition which was captained by **LCpl** 'Studley' **Murcott**. The team dressed as workman and did well to finish third. Congratulations must go to **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Tonks** on getting in every photo taken on the day and oh yes on his promotion to LCpl.

RQMS DEPT BIG BREW

On 11 June 1997 at 1530 hrs the Squadron did its bit for charity, in assisting in the organisation of a world record attempt of how many cups of tea could be drunk at the same time. The idea being that, similar events would be held all over the world in aid of SSAFA. The event was a hectic affair logistically supported by the RQMS Dept. The event was put together by **Sgt Gunny Hyland**, (apparently helped by **2Lt** 'Flash' **Hutchinson**). All in all the afternoon went well and once the wet weather plan kicked in, **Lt** 'Flash' **Hutchinson** had covered the whole Airhall in a very pretty blue leatherette supplied by Brummie & Gunny Ltd. The whole Squadron sat down to enjoy their cups of tea with anyone who cared to turn up. Point to note at this time, in the great and varied celebration, Brummie & Gunny Ltd were not to be seen anywhere, probably because they were manning the Squadron!! Well at the end of the day once the teabags had cooled and the leatherette had stopped shining, Flash had achieved his mission and had made the whole of Lisburn Garrison want to go to the toilet, thanks Flash!!

EXERCISE KILTY FINN
by Sgt Stu Vernon RLC

Ex Kilty Finn was a Hillwalking Exercise across the Highlands of Scotland between 9-16 June 1997. Seven members of the Squadron, Royal Signals and Royal Logistic Corps alike participated and conquered such feats as Ben Nevis and Ben Macdui. After a long drive from Northern Ireland to Inverness, we arrived at Inverness Training Camp at Cameron Barracks. Once settled and briefed on the oncoming weeks' events (about five minutes) we set about Inverness Town for refreshments. Myself, **SSgt Rick Hughes**, **Cpl** 'Dav' **Davidge (UEL)**, **LCpl** 'Johno' **Johnston**, **LCpl Paul Henry**, **LCpl** 'Charlie' **Brown** and **LCpl John Quigley** felt thoroughly refreshed about five hours later and awoke the following morning just slightly less than eager to set off for the Cairngorms for our first challenge, Ben Macdui. We set off from the Ski Centre at Aviemore and trekked into the Highlands. The route we selected was challenging and offered about the best scenery in the area, it was a good start to the week. We even cheated a little on the last leg down from Cairngorm Mountain when we found the Ski Lift up and running but it was a nice way to finish the walk.

We walked a variety of mountains around the Lochs of the Highlands and on the fourth day we were joined by the Sqn Comd, **Maj Healey** and **WO1 (RSM) McCluskey**, when we walked Ben Nevis. We paced up to the peak in four hours and cruised down in two hours. That evening we did a pizza tour of Inverness town and slept for NATO that night. We had a recreational day during the week. We started with a couple of hours in a swimming pool, then drove to Aviemore where we tried our hand at Go Karting. We also visited Culloden Battlefield before hitting the nightclubs of Inverness town. Everyone enjoyed the week in Scotland and it was a welcome break from work in Northern Ireland. Highlight of the week: **LCpl** 'Charlie' **Brown** walking across a field of heather then suddenly disappearing up to his chest in a swamp.

Ben Nevis – A welcome break at the half way point
Maj Healey and WO1 (RSM) McCluskey pretending not to be tired. (*L-R*): SSgt Hughes, LCpl Brown, Maj Healey, LCpl Johnston, Cpl Davidge, WO1 (RSM) McCluskey, LCpl Henry, Sgt Vernon

CHARITY WEEKEND 19-20 JULY 1997
SATURDAY–IT'S A KNOCKOUT COMPETITION

As well as its Operational Tasks the Bde spends a great deal of time focusing on raising money for its chosen charity. The charity is Friends of 80 Malone Road, which cares for mentally and physically handicapped people. **Maj Healey** tasked his SNCO's with the Charity Weekend and in turn they passed the jobs down the chain to the fodder, so along with the usual commitments the Squadron became a regular little beehive of activity.

The weekend kicked off with the 'It's A Knockout' Competition organised by **SSgt Rick Hughes**. It's been noted that **Rick** must have carried out special favours to a higher being, as the week before had given us nothing but rain, but come Saturday morning it was the hottest day of the year. The competition hosted nine teams, some from outside the Bde & Sig Sqn such as 15 Sig Regt and 2LI. The fancy dress was interesting if not sometimes puzzling. Some of the teams had entries like: The Spice Girls (yeurgh!), The Page 7 Fellas (chunky hunkies), St.Trinians and not forgetting Tm Tp who spent a lot of time thinking about it to wear their 'Original' Road Gang look (third year going). However, **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Tonks** did look as though he should have been on a Road Gang.

There were four games during the day in which only one didn't involve the large water tank although the teams looked just as stupid trying to ride a bike with flippers and coveralls on. **Capt Rennie** now speaks with a higher voice due to his 'One size fits all' coveralls. During the intermission the children took part in some races expertly laid on by **Sig Rick Hartley**. There was then the unofficial Wet T-shirt competition as everyone who wasn't wet, got wet. Throughout the day our expert bar staff (**Sgt Pete Barber** and **Cpl Andy Ward**) and chefs persuaded us all to part with our money and as a result copious amounts of alcohol and food were consumed (All in the name of charity of course!). At the end of the competition the Deputy Commander presented the Asti to the Winning Team, The Best Fancy Dress and the team who raised the most sponsorship money.

SATURDAY NIGHT–CARIBBEAN NIGHT

After lots of running around and getting wet it was time to relax and party. This was left with **SSgt Penny Lansbury** and the Horseshoe Club Committee, who all worked like Trojans to transform the bar into a Caribbean paradise. As you entered the bar you were greeted by **Cpl Mark** 'Big Momma' **Holden** and **Cpl Roy** 'Big Momma's Momma' **Davies**. This would have been enough to put even the most hardened drinker off but they were handing out a complimentary free beer or punch. As the evening progressed a number of the Squadron began cross-dressing (Namely TM Tp members) and funnily enough they didn't look out of place. Everybody noticed the RSM had shaved some shoulder hair and made a splendid Rasta wig with it. The party was organised and decorated exceptionally well and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone that went along.

SUNDAY–CHARITY CAR BOOT SALE

Sgt Stu Vernon (RLC) and his MT squad arranged the Car Boot Sale and managed to raise a great deal of money for charity. Despite the fact almost all the people that turned up had been at the party the night before and a few never turned up because of the same reason.

Overall the weekend was not only a great deal of fun, it raised over £1500 for charities in the Province. The Squadron would like to thank the organisers and all agencies who have contributed to the success of the event.

Footnote: Why is it when the Brigade lads wear a female outfit it always fits them perfectly?

VISIT OF BRIGADIER J. H. T. SHORT OBE

On 16 June 1997 **Brig J. H. T. Short OBE**, Commander 39 Inf Bde visited TM Tp for a spot of rapid descent training with the Rigging Section. After being assured by **Sgt Andy Maylett** that all would be okay, and that the ropes being used were still within their safe working life (by all of three hours!) the Brigadier was promptly issued with a climbing harness.

The procedure for a rapid descent was rather straight forward, all the Brigadier had to do was climb to the top of the mast and then throw himself off. The Brigadier agreed that this would be quite a simple task and after a few moments of nervous hesitation began his ascent of the mast. On reaching the disembarkation platform roughly 35 metres above the ground, the Brigadier was greeted by **Sig Jim** 'Remington Farquar Browning' **Dryden**. **Sig Dryden** reassured the Brigadier that all was OK and that he could begin rapidly descending as soon as **LCpl** 'Sem' **Silcock** had sorted out the stitch plate at the bottom of the mast. On the count of three the Brigadier was to begin his descent, it went as follows:-

ONE: plenty of bravado.
TWO: a slight nervousness.
THREE: 'AAAaaaaaaarrrgghhh'!!!!!

On leaving the platform the Brigadier reached terminal velocity before having his fall arrested by the capable hands of **LCpl** 'Sem' **Silcock** who managed to reduce the Brigadier's speed by smashing him into a metal storage hut under the mast! The Brigadier left TM Tp after thanking all involved and showed interest in repeating the process again some other time (not).

Brig Short OBE being shown the ropes by Sgt Andy Maylett

8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
BFPO 807

Sqn Comd **Maj M. J. Perry MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fisher MBE**

The Squadron has had an especially busy two months supporting the military involvement with the Drumcree and Apprentice Boys Marches. Despite the ceasefire, the workload on the Squadron has if any thing increased and the personnel continue to put in long hours. As usual, the Squadron not only works hard but plays hard, with personnel having taken part in a triathlon in Jersey, sailing around the Scottish Isles, coming second in the Lanyard Trophy, refurbishing the Junior Ranks Club and three members of the Squadron attending a Royal Garden Party. With the outlook in the Province still uncertain, the Squadron continues to look forward to an interesting few months.

THE LANYARD TROPHY–'A STROLL IN THE PARK?'
by LCpl Sean McIlroy

After dozens of people fell at the feet of **SSgt** 'O.A.P.' **Griffiths**, begging to do the Lanyard Trophy he finally got his team, but only after several lengthy career chats with the people he wanted to 'volunteer'. Prior to the competition the enthusiastic and happy team set off for several days training, consisting of a spot of hill walking around the 3 Peaks in North Yorkshire. The training entailed plenty of picnicking and sight seeing as **SSgt** 'Good Bloke' **Griffiths** provided a gentle yet stimulating training programme i.e. up at 0600 with the dulcet tones, 'Good morning gentlemen, the hills await'. **LCpl** 'Nicotine' **Burke RLC** agreed each morning that he was indeed lucky to have been given the chance to represent the 'Royal Corps' in such a prestigious event. Mercifully the driving rain, wind and snow kept us cool all day as we strolled around the hills.

After training, the evenings were constructively spent in the building of team morale with 'Uncle Toby' and the company of 'Fosters', chief brick layers being **Sgt** 'Throat' **O'Hanlon**, **Sgt** 'Jaws' **Eldridge** and **LCpl** 'Foghorn' **Smithurst**, astounding the team with nightly displays of their drinking prowess. The conversation was riveting, kept alive by our Welsh contingent comprising of **Capt** 'Taff' **Watts**, **Sgt Steve Brown**, **LCpl Matt Williams** and our driver **Pte Besley RLC**. The team was captivated with the fascinating facts and yarns about Wales' really interesting towns, and not forgetting their world class rugby team. Alas there was one team member AWOL from this training, **Sig Sharon Barrs** who was unable to join us due to prior commitments involving an apron and a big thumb.

D-Day finally arrived (The D naturally standing for DEATH). The 12 June dawned and 40 miles awaited us. As the alarms sounded at 0300hrs, everybody leapt out of bed in the anticipation of the day's festivities. The team set off at 0620 hrs (fifth from last), with a spring in our stride, a house

on our back and with what seemed like K2 and Everest waiting for us. As we progressed through the course and passed other teams it slowly became apparent that we were doing well, which gave an added injection of morale and speed. With **LCpl** 'Legs' **McIlroy** moving the pace along, the team kept the momentum going, driving through the last few remaining checkpoints and managing to take several teams in the dying stages. After completing the final checkpoint the team charged on to the end, knowing a strong finish could put us up with the leaders. At just under 12 hours we finished and the whole team had put in 110% over the full distance. So when we were told our final finishing position was second, all the blisters and cramp were forgotten. That evening was spent eating accompanied by several quiet beverages and everybody commenting on how much they enjoyed it and couldn't wait until next year!

The Runners Up In The 1997 Lanyard Trophy Competition
(*L-R*): SSgt Griffiths, Capt Watts, Sgt O'Hanlon, LCpl McIlroy, LCpl Smithurst, Sig Barrs, LCpl Burke, LCpl Williams, Sgt Eldridge, Sgt Brown

WATERSIDE CLUB RENOVATION AND RE-OPENING
by LCpl Andy 'Bodgit and Scarper' **Carr**

The Waterside Club committee was allocated a budget of several thousand pounds to be spent on renovations and upgrading of the interior of the club. Work commenced on 20 April 1997 and the grand re-opening was planned for 12 May 1997. The first phase began on a warm Saturday morning, when the committee began to gut the interior to the bar. We built two walls to make a powder room for the Ladies and a cloakroom for the Gentlemen. As you can see the club is definitely going up market. The existing partition between the bar and disco area was a curtain, which we removed and replaced with a wall with sliding doors.

On Phase two we got to work in the disco area, by firstly removing and re-positioning the stage. We then artexed all the walls and put up timber beams on the walls to give it that authentic Tudor look. Once the club was finished it was officially opened, by some miracle on schedule, by the Bde Comd, **Brig S. D. Young CBE** Late D & D.

The Grand Re-Opening of The Waterside Club
(*L-R*): Brig S.D. Young CBE, Pte Canning, LCpl Utley, Pte Pearson, LCpl Carr, Pte Priestly

WELCOMES AND DEPARTURES

Cpl 'Mac' **MacGibbon** and family from 11 EOD, **LCpl** 'Fozzy' **Foster** from 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Sig Jas Kent** from 21 Sig Regt AS, (welcome back to the real world), and **Sig Kelly Mcculloch** straight from Blandford (don't forget the test on Unit Standing orders). It goes without saying that we welcome you all with open arms and wish you all a safe and happy tour with the unit.

Finally the sad farewells, **Cpl Rob Atherton** and wife **Maggie**, who 'reluctantly' gave up his post as RLD Ballykelly to go on promotion to 7 Sig Regt. Any nice golf courses in Krefeld? **Cpl Neil Hunt**, on promotion, takes **Rob**'s place just down the road. No doubt we'll be seeing you again, if you can drag yourself away from the greens. **LCpl** 'Sumo' **Mcwha** finally finished his escape tunnel but found he couldn't fit down it, but is posted anyway to 16 Sig Regt. Watch out for those killer schnitzels! **Sig** 'Legionnaire' **Archibald** who, should he do any more time here, will become part of the L.E.T., 'Archie's' dream came true with his posting to 19 Mech Bde who are off to Boz shortly. Even volunteering for P Coy couldn't get you out of that one! Lastly, au revoir to our attachments, **Sig Vicky Moran**, **Sig** 'OJ' **Olejnik** and **Sig Tony Richardson**, from 24 Airmob Bde Sig Sqn (Nr France?), who helped us send so many of our manpower away on other vital missions. Apparently they enjoyed themselves so much in Londonderry they wanted to stay. (Sad, sad people!)

SQUADRON FAMILIES DAY 1997

The Squadron recently ran a families day at Ballykelly Airfield. The QM's Dept was responsible for the day, or at least that was how **WO2 (RQMS) Higgins** put it when he was individually told to arrange it by the OC. The weather was kind to us and a good day was had by all. There were the usual types of stalls, an excellent display by the Corps Band, displays by the RUC and the Fire Brigade and finally human table top football, won of course by the QM's Dept. All these festivities were accompanied by a barbecue and gallons of Pimms and Beer. A superb day all round and the Squadron's thanks go to the RQMS and his team.

LCpl Mick 'Fat Controller' King and Two Passengers on The Thomas The Tank Engine Ride

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Griffiths**

The past several months within the Squadron have been busy to say the least, and this has been reflected in all areas of the Troop. All section supervisors have applied for accreditation to the Magic Circle for the amount of conjuring they've had to perform with the shift rosters. The end results were worth it as the Troop managed to enter more teams than the Premier League as can be seen from the various other articles in this edition of *The Wire*. We produced good results across the board. The proliferation of Shakespearean articles this month only leaves room for a mention of the incoming and outgoing personnel. (See Welcomes and Departures).

INTER TROOP BFT COMPETITION

When the QMs Dept suggested an Inter Troop BFT competition it came as quite a shock, as the QMs are believed to be far too busy for such trivia as BFTs. However it seemed like a good idea at the time! The competition comprised of a team of five runners completing 2.4 kms each on the Squadrons' running machine. The team with the lowest total time was, not surprisingly, the winners. **Cpl** 'Cav' **Baber** was nominated as the team manager, and promptly picked five runners, anybody would do as long as their name wasn't **Baber**. After months of hard physical training (honest), the Comms Tp Dream Team was finally ready. The team put in five good solid yet not particularly fast times. The Trophy was down the swanny. But no, wait, it's not all over until **Cpl** 'Cav' **Baber** sings. Fortunately for us the other teams had greater slugs than us running, and the Trophy was ours, Surprise, Surprise.

The Comms Troop Dream Team
(*L-R*): Cpl 'Cav' Baber (Team Manager), SSgt 'OAP' Griffiths, Sig 'Sharon' Barrs, LCpl Matt Williams, LCpl Sean Mcilroy. Absent On Duty Cpl Rob Atherton

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes**

The Troop have taken on a couple of FNG's recently. First to arrive was **LCpl Trev Stamford** from Oznatraz. He joins the rigging section so is bound to have some high points on his tour. **Cpl Martin Coles** has arrived straight from having a frontal lobotomy and his legs worn down by several inches thanks to Blandford and Hereford. Welcome, bienvenue, willkommen.

Cpl Martin Dixon has finally left after a long tour back to 21Sigs from whence he came. His tour was so long that the AS role involved Sopwith Camels when he was last there. We also say goodbye to the gruesome twosome **Sig Paul Allan** and **Sig** 'Pip' **Roberts**. **Sig Allan** left us plastered (leg), nothing new there then! **Sig Roberts** finally took the plunge (thankfully on ground level) and has opted for life in civvy street. Good luck to all of you in the future.

SHAKE IT ALL ABOUT

One of the more ancient masts within our TAOR was well due an overhaul and so a crack team was assembled to blitz the site. The journey out proved very tiring with **LCpl Steve McBride** particularly out of it. The next day rigging started in earnest and the majority of it was cracked before a well earned rest. Whilst sampling some of the areas finest cuisine, **Sgt Andy Craig** demonstrated his diplomatic skills while **Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick** stunned everyone with his amazing conjuring, managing to make the six largest naan breads on the planet disappear before everyone's eyes during the meal whilst **Capt Percy Broad** and **SSgt Stan Standaloft** were off administrating . . . something or other?

SARTORIAL ELOQUENCE

Sig 'Noo Noo' **Mier** landed back in Province, however his luggage decided to go on its own excursion to Zimbabwe. **Cpl** 'Mouse' **Lever** was willing to help out, offering the use of his extensive wardrobe, but **Sig Mier** declined afraid that he may be arrested for vagrancy should he accept.

WORK, REST AND PLAY

The marching season is upon us at time of writing and the change in nets has kept the Troop extremely busy for the last fortnight. Luckily enough many of the new radio locations are sighted within bases where Egon Ronay would be proud to eat. This has caused a slight problem with waistline measurements but is being controlled by regular football matches against Comms Tp. Contrary to what might be written elsewhere TM Tp are currently unbeaten, winning the last match 94–6 (ish).

HARD AS...

The Troop recently held an inter section 'nails' competition. Outstanding performances were from **Sig** 'Noonoo' **Mier** who won best self mutilation and **Cpl Martin Coles** who failed to finish even with the aid of the sledgehammer.

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

The Troop staffies, **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** and **SSgt Keith Williams** volunteered to look after the Comms Officers dogs in exchange for crashing at a pad for a fortnight. After a few days it was obvious who had got the better of the deal. After several more days they were no longer seen flitting off work to walk the dogs but looked very dapper in Alsatian jacket with matching Labrador cross trousers

BEST OF THE REST

Other Troop personalities who deserve a mention are **Sig** 'Setch' **Setchfield** who has broken with tradition and actually gone on leave. **Cpl Stu Crossman** on his new long division concept. **LCpl Rob Pointer** who finally passed his T2 upgrading and **Cpl Josey** 'Chesh' **Wales** who has finally come out of the closet and admitted that he is really from England, strange accent, 'Chesh'!

MT DEPARTMENT
MTWO **WO2 (MTWO) Kemp RLC**

It's out with the old and in with the new at the MT, as we say goodbye to **WO2 (MTWO)** 'Geordie' **Simpson** who makes way for the new Boss, **WO2 (MTWO) Kemp**. This is the MTWO's second tour with the Squadron so it's a fond welcome home. The Dept also welcomes the new Squadron Barman, **Pte Chris** 'I Need A Calculator' **Heathcote**. The Dept would like to congratulate **Cpl Stevie Page** on his selection for promotion to Sgt and **Pte John Hankey** soon to be made up to LCpl.

We have to say farewell to **Sgt John** 'Wingnut' **O'Hanlon** who is posted on promotion to 2 Armd Field Ambulance in Osnabruck. **Cpl Page** who is off to collect his LOA at SHAPE and **LCpl** 'The Dingles' **Utley** off to Rheindahlen. Despite the various postings in and out the Dept has managed to maintain it's operational commitment to the Brigade and the Squadron with our drivers covering over 70,000 miles per month. The driver training team of **Cpl Roberts** and **LCpl Utley** managed to get three drivers away for a week to Scotland. After an intensive driving course all three passed their motorbike tests, congratulations.

QM'S DEPARTMENT
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Higgins**

We start this edition by welcoming home the Boss, **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Send More Money, Not Coming Back, Even Played A Game Of Footy' **Higgins** from Australia, where he spent 16 days as part of the Combined Services football team. Moving on to some real football, the Dept recently won the Inter Tp six-a-side football (again), the team consisted of **LCpl** 'Lanky' **Minns RLC**, **Cpl Eddie Porter RLC**, **LCpl** 'Geordie Shearer' **Knott RLC**, **LCpl** 'Beckham' **Steen RLC**, **LCpl** 'Paddy' **McGreechan RLC**, **Pte** 'Killer' **Kilpatrick RLC** and **Sgt** 'Rain Man' **Bromley RLC**. This might seem difficult to believe but we do have some Royal Signallers in the Troop but to give the Squadron a chance we fielded our second team. Staying on the sporting front, **Sgt Mark Chivers** deployed to Jersey with his bike boxes in tow to participate in the Jersey Triathlon. The Squadron Team consisted of **Cpl Martin Coles**, **Cpl Stu Crossman**, **LCpl Si Burke RLC**, **Pte O'Keeefe RLC** and **Sig Kent**. Some very good performances were put in and a special note must go to **Sgt Mark Chivers** on his excellent result.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
BFPO 15

CO **Lt Col P. A. Pratley MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M. A. Schofield**

It came as quite a shock to the new RSM, **WO1 Mark Schofield**, who took over from **WO1 (RSM) Trevor Keates** when he left us en route to the relaxed, easy life of an officer, just how involved he was to become in our diverse Regimental life. The Regiment hosted the Corps Regatta at Kiel Yacht Club and rather unfairly went on to win all honours.

The GOC presented his own and the Joint Comds Commendations for Bosnia to some of the individuals who really shone in Bosnia during our last tour. Then amidst a flurry of adventure training expeditions the Regiment held its Summer Fayre, a Summer Camp and hosted a visit of the 4th Battalion the Welch Fusiliers (Army Cadet Force). Additionally the BFBS summer road-show entertained many of the Echelon party on a particularly nasty day in Herford, whilst the remainder of the Squadrons exercised hard in the Div's first major field exercise for two years on Ex Rhino Spear.

Both Lister School and Prince Rupert School have celebrated their 50th Anniversaries and the new Nursery School Scheme was confirmed in Herford Station and finally a new Interactive Learning Centre and an Interactive Learning Facility were established in Hammersmith Barracks. It is no surprise that as soon as new arrivals, straight out of training, reach Herford they are swept away to Rumania, the Falkland Islands, the Mohnesee or Sennelager within minutes of finding their feet in 1 ADSR.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

In a little over two weeks about 200 soldiers enjoyed, despite what was supposed to be glorious weather (booked with the appropriate authority but the QM(T), **Maj** 'Butch' **Maycock** is obviously out of favour), turning out miserable and thundery, canoeing, windsurfing, climbing, sailing, hill walking and numerous other activities based on or around the Mohnesee on the Regiment Summer Camp Ex Mercury Diamond and a variety of other expeditions. The Trg Wing bolstered by instructors in the form of **Cpl** 'Windy' **Gale** and **Sigs** 'Daz' **Kirby**, **Sean Adams**, **Michael Holt** and **Lee Gough** pulled together a remarkably tiring amount of activity that culminated in a Quadrathlon organised by **WO2 (SSM) Alan Balsdon**. In a five mile run, a 300m swim, a five mile bike ride, and finally a half mile canoe paddle **Pte Norman Straw RLC**, narrowly beat **Cpl Kev Cooney** and **LCpl Ivan Muckle** for the winner's trophy. It was just a shame that in the improvised raft race only one raft survived it's launching, and then only just long enough for everyone else not on it to destroy it in a fit of jealousy. As everyone staggered back onto the coaches, damp, stuffed from numerous barbecues, and pleasantly aching from all the activities many were heard to utter a thank you to the Trg Wing for the whole exercise although many were also heard to utter a few other choice phrases. Probably the best Summer Camp organised for a while.

As the places on the Summer Camp were hard to get, other expeditions left Herford for parts foreign. The LAD set off for Bavaria and managed to

get there without breaking down, but only just, does anyone know a good mechanic? 208 Sig Sqn based themselves in the Keans Lodge, Garmisch for a week hill walking, white water rafting and mountain biking. **Sig** 'Mac' **McCulloch** had great difficulty on the steep slopes of Mount Kramer and now having lost a few pounds looks definitely like passing his BFT and getting into his Levi's again. **Pte Emma Fuller** proved time and again that her culinary skills can support her claim of being a Garmisch 'Master Chef' and didn't food poison anyone not even during the barbecue. Whilst **Sig Nicki Needham**, proved that gentle persuasion can overcome an aversion to cold water during the white water rafting (if you can call being bodily thrown in gentle persuasion). Even **Sgt Chris Symonds** learnt that rank doesn't have its privileges and losing at rafting games means an instant dunking. So woe betide **Sig Lance Buckle** if he is ever again caught cheating on the same games or even **Sig Paul Lomas**, who reputedly eats as much as **2Lt Nigel Francis McGann** (212 Sig Sqn), because the raft isn't big enough for all of you! Another great expedition enjoyed by all.

More spectacularly **SSgt Andy Brown** took 13 members of 201 Sig Sqn paragliding at the Army's Centre in Kranzegg, Southern Germany. All beginners achieved their aim of earning their elementary pilots licence whilst **SSgt Brown** and **Sig Frank Nash** won their pilots grades despite bad weather. **Sig Mark Raynes** had to be almost surgically removed from a barbed wire fence whilst descending into the wrong field. Close by **Sig Ricky Curran** also missed the DZ but not the cows he landed on, who then chased him rapidly from pasture. All the new paragliders learnt the nature of fear as they took their first steps and launched themselves into the air. However, **LCpl** 'Bobby' **Ball** and **Sigs Chris Mark**, 'Shifty' **Barker** and the rest of the expedition all achieved their goals. Whether it be as **Sig Frank Nash** had to prove, that he could still do it (after a very nasty accident last year) or simply to see what it was like. So if you haven't para-glided before–get to it.

INTER SQUADRON SIX-A-SIDE CRICKET COMPETITION

After two false starts the much anticipated Inter Sqn Six-A-Side finally kicked off (if that's the correct term) with the league phase on a sunny Wednesday morning in Herford. A number of hitherto unknown cricketers had appeared from the woodwork–the lure of leather on willow perhaps? Or the chance of a couple of hours away from work? The six teams were organised into two leagues for the first phase, with the plate final, semi-finals, and finals taking place on the Friday of the same week. HQ Sqn; the favourites, made an impressive start. **Cpl Mick Botha** and **Pte Simon Bickinson** overhauling 201 Sig Sqn's total in the first match with four overs to spare. There was plenty of good if unorthodox cricket during the league matches. Notable performances included: **SSgt Bob Breheney**'s 39 not out and **2Lt Nigel Francis-McGann**'s 29 not out against 201 Sqn. The Plate Play Off was contested between 201 and 208 Sig Sqns, with 208 batting first. Their total of 116 included an unorthodox 30 from **SSgt Steve Swithenbank** and a rapid 38 from **Cpl Steve Pengelly**. Despite an excellent 50 from **Sgt Dave Mitchell** the total proved just too large and 208 Sqn won the Plate. 211 Sqn's excellent batting performance in their semi final against 212 Sqn ensured their place in the final against HQ Sqn, who beat the Div HQ team. Their score of 133–the highest of the tournament included 60 not out from **SSgt Dean Richardson**, and 61 not out from **Sig Lee Goodwin**.

211 Sqn set HQ Sqn a target of 70 to win the final, which included a solid 32 from **SSgt Dean Richardson**. But HQ Sqn proved equal to the task, and **Pte Simon Bickinson**'s unbeaten 50 saw them safely home with two overs to spare. The CO was there to witness the final overs and to present the prizes. The Competition was a great success, although the suggestion that next year's should take place in Antigua may take a bit more organisation.

HERFORD STATION SUMMER FAYRE

The Training Officer, **Capt Dave Wilson** earned his title of 'Rain God' when he managed to have the most glorious weather for the Station Summer Fayre after almost a month's torrential rain before the event and a fortnight's continuous storms afterwards. The fayre in a fever of activity was pulled together as bunting, stalls, lighting, power and various pieces of gym equipment were transformed into Raffles, Tombolas, a Steam Train, a Carousel, Pimms Stall, Beat the Goalie, Pony Riding, Throw a Wellie, the Stocks and a superb arena display. **Sgt Dougie Wood** feverishly ran as many children through his mini range as he could (and still probably had to turn adults away). **WO2 (QMSI) Gary Roderick** and his gym staff got decked out as the 'Village People' (we query their affiliations). This so they could avoid the RAF police dog display team to throw each squadron's 'Its a Knockout' team around water filled swimming pools, greasy poles, trampolining goal kicking and tummy sliding bar bungees in a great finale to the days events. The fancy dress was easily won by 212 Sig Sqn as **Cpl** 'Daz' **Bailey**, **LCpl** 'Slim' **Scott** and **Sigs Jo Neal** and 'Shacks' **Shackleton** petrified children (and not a few adults) all over Wentworth Barracks with their pirate outfits and cries of 'Ah Ha Shiver Me Timbers'. The Tug of War again ended in a 212 Sqn victory as **Cpl Justin Carter**, **LCpls Paul Walledge** and **Andrew Lay** helped drive the team to an overwhelming victory over allcomers. Fortunately the overall prize for the 'Its a Knockout' went to 201 Sig Sqn. The celebrations in the rubber water tanks by **Cpl Mark Tench**, **LCpls Shirley Mountain**, **Steve Reilly** and **Sigs Dave Sinclaire**, **Mickey Kiers**, **Bob Bartlett** and **Mark Raines** must surely bring into question the potability of our exercise water for the foreseeable future.

Winners (minus the drag fancy dress) in a tub
201 Sig Sqn's team–Herford Summer Fayre

YPRES SALIENT BATTLEFIELD TOUR
by LCpl Whipp

Led by **2Lt Nat Baker** our intrepid party of 13 members of 1 (UK) ADSR arrived at Talbot House in Poppergee to be warmly welcomed by the warden, who gave us an insight into the vast history of the building. During the First World War the house was named after **Gilbert Talbot** who was killed in July 1915 and was set up as a short rest from the terrors of war in a totally rank free environment. This it did with great success mainly due to its first warden, **Chaplain Philip Clayton**, who due to his slightly rotund stature was nicknamed Tubby. Talbot House, which was shortened to TH (Toc-H), and Tubby's are still names we all know and love.

After a hearty breakfast, cooked for us by **Karen** 'Blondes have more fun' **Henderson** we departed for the first stand in the exquisite town of Ypres in the blazing summer sun. The Cloth Hall Museum is widely credited with being one of the best wartime museums and certainly lived up to its reputation. With a greater understanding of the brutality of war we moved on to the Menin gate memorial and met the CO. The huge arch itself is impressive enough but when we saw how many names of the fallen and unrecovered dead it became even more awe inspiring. The monument holds the names of 54,000 of the fallen and there are many more recorded on other monuments in the Ypres area.

Throughout the day we visited many sites of historical battles but none had a larger impact on the group than the Tyne Cot Cemetery. It is the largest Commonwealth War Cemetery in the world. More shocking than the number of the dead was their ages, as many were even younger than the baby of the group **Sig Kirsten Thompson**.

Sanctuary Wood CWGC
80 years on a peaceful spot, but bitterly contested 1914 - 18

In the evening we returned to the Menin gate to witness the last post ceremony which occurs every evening. Almost 200 people turned out to see the local fire brigade pay this most poignant homage to the dead of all countries in World War 1.

After a delicious restaurant meal we decided to indulge in the local hospitality and found the locals to be incredibly warm and friendly when they discovered that we were soldiers. On returning to Herford, I believe that we were left with a whole new outlook on the battles that took place in those dark years. 'Lest we forget'.

EXERCISE RHINO SPEAR

The Div's first major exercise for nearly two years saw 4 and 20 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn usually playing the roles of Divisional Main and Alternate HQ (212 being on JCUFI pre-tour leave) and 211 Sig Sqn playing HQ DSG. That they survived was a testament to their resourcefulness, versatility and in no small part sense of humour. It isn't every day DCOS throws away his HQ admin tables and is caught eating all his food whilst sitting on his webbing. Nor is it usual for a single HQ to be a step up for both Main and HQ DSG simultaneously although 200 Sig Sqn was given the option (tactful advice from **Maj Jim Richardson** soon put paid to that idea).

HQ DSG makes an inaugural appearance
211 Sig Sqn and the chicken factory near Steinheim

Nor do 33 soldiers normally play five different Bde Sig Sqns as the EXCON crew were expected to do. So when faced with building an EXCON for HQ ARRC and HQ 4th Armd Bde consisting of 74 Ptarmigan subsets, 12 radio nets, 6km of line and an inexperienced staff (made up of infantry battalions); they responded to cries of there being communications problems with the following answers:

Minor communications problems are when a Bde Staff Officer is complaining that he has no Ptarmigan subset, his cells are not fitted out correctly and anyway his whole organisation is in the wrong part of the building. Simply orientate his EXCON layout map the right way and point to his subset correctly labelled in 4" high letters;

Major communications problems are when another nation's officer decides to initiate his own exercise serial for jamming by playing music down a secure radio net–simply removing the coax from the rear of the set allows only the CRA to hear the music and all unauthorised fiddling with comms ceases;

Real communications problems are when an Infantry CO is on another phone when he's supposed to be on the GOC's Ptarmigan conference and the General's asking for him–solve it or 'your arse is grass'.

And representative of the Trunk network–well under the careful guidance of **Capt Al Long**, **FofS Bob Nichol** backed OSC 141 into a convenient wet spot in Augustdorf Bus Depot. It bore more than a passing resemblance to a disused brick works–part of the Deception Plan apparently. After four attempts she was safely positioned–the ENPROT lecture was still fresh in the mind, and no one was quite sure how much cover their kit insurance gave. How much does an OSC cost?–answers on a postcard please. There was a pile of what looked liked coffins underneath the little wriggly tin shelter that was to be our home for the next 10 or so days. Someone had obviously missed ENDEX on the last exercise–no wonder the Army's shrinking! A quick investigation revealed that the coffins were empty–sounds like a job for Mulder and Scully to me. Following a brief discussion on the virtues of Gillian Anderson, the team sprang into action. **SSgt Bob Squires** carefully calculated the spot where the earth spike would cause the most lower limb injuries, and cemented it in. Half of the OSC crew now have one leg shorter than the other and walk around in circles - nothing unusual there some might say.

After a brief honeymoon period when OSC 131 were in command, the responsibility came OSC 141's way. **YofS** 'Geordie' **Bartlett** commented 'There's more to Ptarmigan then meets the eye'–amazing what they teach you on the Yeomans' Course! A few problems came to light–the map being too short being one of them. There were two solutions to this–remove the map from the board and reposition it, or cut a hole in the floor of the OSC and unroll a bit of map to poke through underneath the vehicle. Needless to say common sense prevailed, the only snag was having to crawl on the wet floor outside the vehicle to see where EXCON was. We soon settled into a routine of day and night shifts. **LCpl Sarah Pickford** the Sqn Clerk made a key contribution to clearing the Brazilian National Debt by purchasing half of their coffee exports, at the expense of biscuits. Concerned that the YofS was looking a bit emaciated **Capt Long** unselfishly bought some more, which were promptly eaten by the night shift. Revenge was extracted by changing all the stateboards just prior to the shift changeover, and then telling them a pack of lies about the state of the network–can't have people getting bored. The late arrival of **Cpl Al Nottingham** provided welcome reinforcement to the team; not only does he make an excellent brew and, unlike **SSgt Bob Squires**, he can update the stateboards without the need for a resupply of Lumicolours.

As a new OSC team we returned to barracks pleased with our efforts–having coped well with an exponential learning curve in some cases. As a final note the 'White Fist' may feature heavily now on some of our panzers but the Rhino will have the last laugh!

Sig Michael Hepworth–Cheetah Troop.
Ex Rhino Spear, aligning the trunk network in a farmyard near Werther

4 BATTALION THE WELCH FUSILIERS (ACF)

Being hosted by a Signals Regiment is not normally the done thing for an Infantry Battalion's Army Cadet Force Unit. However, when one of that units own officers is the Division's Chief of Staff (who shares a barracks with you), who from 1st (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt is going to argue. To the 17 lads and lasses from the Denby Region of North Wales who descended on Herford in early July the R Signals were also a bit of an unknown commodity. Now that they have gone, and a Maj Gen, amongst others has written letters of thanks. More importantly 13 of the 17 are vehemently exclaiming that they want to join the Corps. The visit can be judged a success (although probably an ex RWF Chief of Staff would wish a slight change to that criterion).

ACF

The cadets spent a few days on the Mohnesee adventure training with the rest of the Regiment joining in with the canoeing, climbing and hill walking with a gusto before returning to Herford and a military skills package laid on by **SSgt James Burns** of the Training Wing. A range day on Schwarzen moor ranges saw **Cdt** 'Compo' **Compton** trying to fire his pistol two handed like a rifle but was swiftly corrected before he shot his fingers off. Whilst all were amazed with **Cadet LCpl** 'Ginger' **Hughes** knocking down 9 of his 10 tiles in the pistol falling plate. **Cadet LCpl** 'Tank' **Morris** tried to impress everyone with his leopard crawling, although probably over did it during the patrol competition as he covered 400m in a single go. In all the whole team seemed to enjoy everything they did, even the disaster prone **Cadet** 'Calamity' **Jones** who on top of numerous accidents, split her lip on a piece of wood–well at least the shoulder of **Sgt Dougie Wood**.

It was a privilege to host everyone, who never once strayed from the careful eye of **Sgt Joy Davis** and who tackled everything thrown at them with enthusiasm and spirit. 17 smiling faces and a few sad goodbyes can't be wrong. And a potential bonus for Corps recruiting.

2 Sig Regt
York

2 SIG REGT SAY FAREWELL TO LT COL J. L. FLETCHER
by Capt Jon Badger AGC (SPS)

The formal goodbyes to **Col Jo** started at lunchtime on Friday 1st August and he was escorted, ejected from Imphal Barracks in a manner that he appreciated, on a trailer borne wind surfer. The Regiment lined the route to applaud him as he sailed down the road, whilst the officers busied themselves preparing water bombs to throw at him from the Officers' Mess pagoda–his pride and joy. (This lot must be Gunners at heart because nearly all the bombs dropped short). However, the dripping wet former commanding officer was allowed to return to his old mess to change and have his final 2 Sig Regt curry lunch.

Lt Col Fletcher relinquishes command of 2 Sig Regt and his windsurfer

We are assured by the RSM that **Col Jo** was dined out of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess in a loud and expensive manner. As for the Officers' Mess dine out, whatever happened there was his own fault–after all he did permit the entertainments member to go on a psychological operations course.

RSM: 'Sir, there's no need for a speech–just buy us a round.'

2 Sig Regt wish **Jenni** and **Lt Col Jo Fletcher** well in their next posting to SANGCOM, Saudi Arabia. Send us a picture of your sand castles Colonel !

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT AT TRAIL WALKER
by Capt J. Badger AGC (SPS)

Currently 2 Sig Regt has 13 soldiers and one officer from The Queen's Gurkha Sigs. It was **Capt Santa Pun**'s predecessor **Capt Bikram Jang** that I blame entirely for our involvement in the tortuous Trail Walker.

Quoting direct from 30 Sigs' leaflets:

> Trail Walker was established in Hong Kong in 1981. Annually since then competitors have enjoyed the team spirit and camaraderie in completing the 100km Maclehose Trail. (This I seriously doubt.) Following the move of the Queen's Gurkha Signals Regiment to UK, Trail Walker will be run along the scenic rolling countryside of the South Downs Way. (Running 100km of countryside is not beautiful I assure you.) However beautiful the scenery, the event is a daunting challenge that requires competitors to travel through the night to complete the course within the time. (Two teams finished in daylight this year!)

2 Sig Regt's team consisted of **Capt Billy Badger** AGC (SPS), **Lt Bob Seymour** R Signals, **LCpl Mani Man** QG Sigs and **LCpl Belf Holmes**. **Bob** is keen to let everyone know that he is a Tp Comd in 219 Sig Sqn and not in HQ Sqn like the the others–so were the rest of the team by the end of the race !

We based ourselves at Thorney Island, home of 47 Regt RA, for four days of extremely useful recce's and training runs. Almost all the hills, major road junctions and admin areas were checked out. Those few days proved to be invaluable as throughout the race we always knew exactly where we were heading for with virtually no need to refer to the map, this was a massive psychological advantage over other teams who'd turned up for the event the night before. Another important asset is a full admin team consisting of one admin man for each runner. This may seem excessive but by the time you've run 30 miles with another 30 to go you begin to get tetchy and demand total attention from the chap bringing you oranges and foot powder.

Capt Bikram pretends to be part of the running team

Throughout the training period the weather had been awful, at times too cold and wet to run, however on the day of the event the weather was perfect–gentle breezes and plenty of sun. The start of the race was, as with all large events, total mayhem as everyone jostled for positions. We were not chuffed to realise that our clever recce had been on the wrong track for 2km however, after this everything came together as planned. At check point one **Bikram** informed us we were 2nd out of the military teams, at check point 3 we had dropped to 3rd place but somehow after that point we only briefly slipped down to 4th only to return to 3rd again soon after. The team now had two aims; finish by dusk and stay in the top 3 at all costs. Somehow we achieved both these aims–at a cost. **LCpl Holmes** got himself posted to 15 Sigs after the race. **Lt Bob Seymour** is now trying for a tour with the Army Air Corps and **LCpl Man** wants to do it next year! (F Med 8 is on the way for him). The final tip for any future competitors is REMAIN AS A TEAM AT ALL TIMES. Those who do not do this and fail to finish as a 4 will not get any team points and remain unplaced. You need to stay within sight of each other at all times for points, morale and safety.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Ian Bucklow**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Bob Forshaw**

It has been another period of change as the two trunk squadrons have amalgamated to form one four-troop squadron, this being due to a general shortage of manpower. 217 Sig Sqn will one day resurrect itself, we are told. In the meantime we have been busy sorting out all the necessary administration and taking a breather before our five-week jaunt on Ex Ulan Eagle after leave. The Squadron's Yeoman has changed (again) so farewell **SSgt** 'Stu' **Jackson** and hello to **SSgt John Wright**, straight from his Yeomans course, ditto the Sqn Foreman. Bye to **SSgt Dave Jones** and welcome to **SSgt Mick Oliver**. Also 2IC, **Capt** 'Ciao' **Phil Abram**. Hi to **Capt Ian Ellis**. What was that flash? The Squadron Ops Officer, **Capt Colin Russell** who did not even get into the Regiment before going to Bosnia (witness sighs of relief from the 2IC).

EXERCISE DRAGOON DROP 16-26 JUNE 1997
by Sig Rhodes and **Sig Johns**

219 Sig Sqn was tasked to play hunter force for 216 Para Sig Sqn on their annual Battle Camp. As they needed a bunch of hardened mercenaries they tasked Eagle Tp led by **Lt Bob Seymour**, **SSgt Andy Allan** and **Sgt Danny Fielding**. The exercise was run on the Isle's of Skye, Coll and Tiree in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland. The Troop was split into two groups, one to stay in RAF Machrihanish to do PoW handling techniques and the other group took the ferry over to the Isle of Coll.

The task of the men on Coll was to set up a fictitious HQ to be observed by OPs purely as an information gathering exercise. As they weren't due to carry out their serials for three days, and the HQ took a few hours to build, many days were spent supplementing the profits of the Coll Hotel's bar. Once things got underway patrols were deployed and subsequently several OP's were discovered. In one such instance a patrol was taken by **Sgt Danny Fielding** on Gemini inflatables to investigate a pinnacle overlooking the HQ. A group of two, four-man OPs were found and as expected **Danny** had emptied a full magazine before anyone else had taken off their safety catches! Another serial involved building some kind of structure and a children's playground was needed on the Island. Somebody put two and two together and decided we could kill two birds with one stone, so the Troop set to work sawing and lashing wood in a cloud of midges. The end product wasn't quite the Krypton Factor Assault course but it was ok.

The next stage consisted of the Troop being transported to the Isle of Skye to act as the Hunter Force for the E+E phase. Convincing the runners to leave their transport to begin the E+E phase was no easy task, fortunately we possessed the talents of **Sig** 'Boom-Boom' **Brown** whose persuasive talents convinced many to leave. The next few days went without hiccup and a small percentage were caught and duly experienced a few hours in 'The Pen'. When the exercise was drawing to a close it was noted that a certain runner had not made the last few RV's. Fears for his safety were soon dashed when a search party found he had been taking refuge in a posh Skye hotel. This individual shall not be named but his story made several national newspapers. In conclusion the exercise was a success and a good time was had by all. The personnel of Eagle Tp would like to extend their thanks to the locals who made our stay very enjoyable.

EXERCISE FIRST VENTURE 6-13 JULY 1997
by Sgt 'Ollie' **Oldroyd**

Ex First Venture took place at Otterburn Training Area, Northumberland over the period 6-13 July 1997. The aim of the exercise was to give 42 bewildered cadets from Hulme Grammar School (CCF); insight into the many varied roles of a Royal Signals soldier.

Early Sunday morning the long drive from York took place with **Lt Wilson** a little worse for wear after the Officers Mess Summer Ball. The cadets were greeted with knowing smiles from the staff. They were then shown their accommodation and given a general outline of the week ahead. The week started off well with a plethora of weapon training from the 'Wet Rifles Team' to enable the cadets to pass the weapon handling test with the pistol, rifle and LSW. The pistol range came first with the only heart murmur being produced by **Cpl Burt**, by falling over backwards whilst acting as a safety supervisor. I thought at the time, how was I going to explain this one. 'NCO SHOT BY CADET', but luckily on my part and sadly not on the part of **Cpl Burt**, he had twisted his knee and had to return back to York (more sick leave Burty)? The remainder of the exercise enabled the staff to instruct the cadets in minor tactics and map reading, thus allowing the staff to don partisan attire and go back to their youth. The staff acted as the enemy in a 24-hour field training exercise, in which the cadets could not understand why we stayed out in the field all night.

Overall the exercise seemed a success, due to the hard work and diligence of each cadet. The exercise was closed by **Lt Col Fletcher**, who completed an excellent week by promoting **Cpl O'Connor** to the rank of Sgt.

Exercise First Venture
CO, Lt Col Fletcher to the Cadets –
'Look how well the grass is camouflaged as grass!'

SAA CAMP–ALTCAR TRAINING CAMP 21 APRIL-2 MAY

In preparation for the forthcoming Corps and Div SAAM the Regt Team, made up completely of volunteers (okay only a few where press-ganged) deployed to Altcar in Liverpool for a comprehensive training package. The fledgling team soon got into a hectic routine learning the rudiments of Competition shooting. **Sig** 'RSPB' **Rennie** was reminded several times not to shoot the pheasant next to his 300m target, after rounds began to fall suspiciously close. **Cpl** 'Old & Bold' **Shepley** taught everyone the tricks of the trade before shooting badly on the Roupell only beating **Lt** 'Bam Door' **Seymour**. Slowly the washouts became scores and the atmosphere and morale of the team rose, maybe we did have a chance. **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Williams** being a local lad introduced the team in the evenings to The Grapes pub which quickly became our local and eventually we dragged the chef down there after he had set fire to the kitchen. After a hard two weeks training it was time to see if the training had paid dividends.

CORPS SAAM 5-9 MAY 1997

With some trepidation the team went to Pirbright hoping to hold our own and to see if we could win any individual prizes. **LCpl** 'Dead Eye' **Warnes** was our great white hope. The Corps SAAM was a definite step up in level but the team thrived in the competitive atmosphere and it was great to meet familiar faces from other Signals units. With good shooting from **LCpl Warnes**, **Cpl Cumberland** and **Sig Rennie**, the 2 Sig Regt Team got a creditable mid table place just missing out on the best young soldier medal. For the entire team it was their first experience of Competition shooting and with the Div SAAM coming up we were determined to collect some silverware this season.

DIV SAAM 24-25 MAY 1997

With a new addition to the team **LCpl Farnes** who reckoned he was a dead shot with the LSW the team went into the Competion in a buoyant mood. **Sig** 'Linford' **Christie** amazed everyone by being the first onto the point on the falling-plate and then failing to knock anything down. **LCpl Warnes** and **Lt Seymour** shot well and the competition was tight with 36 RA at Catterick, but with great tenacity and a few substitutions (Thankyou **Cpl Un** and **Sig Tham**) the team won the Major Units Other Arms Trophy and qualified three people for Bisley. This Season proved to be a steep learning curve for all involved but the team will bounce back even stronger next year.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT & HQ YORK GARRISON LADIES ARMY ATHLETICS CHAMPIONS–AGAIN!!
by Lt Harvey OIC Athletics

1997 was another highly successful year for the athletics team. Training began early with the Army standard athletes jetting off to California for warm weather training while the remaining mere mortals made do with a fortnight of the same in Cyprus. Tanned and toned the athletes returned to England and began their pursuit to repeat our 1996 win in the Army Championships. The Divisional Championships clashed with Ex Lion Sword and the team stole away from Salisbury Plain just as Saxonia was dealing a final blow to Mercia. Despite 10 days on the finest compo the victory was decisive–Saxonia didn't do too badly either. The Semi finals in Colchester two weeks later proved more difficult but not insurmountable and our place in the finals was assured . . . And so to Portsmouth and our stiffest competition yet.

Rumours were rife that 11 Sig Regt were looking strong and were hot contenders not to mention 7 Para RHA who had proved problematic in the past. So much for warm weather training–the day began with me plodding around the 5000m in torrential rain desperately trying not to get lapped, the echoes of **Lt Col Fletcher**'s voice, '. . . surely we have somebody better to run the 5000m.' still ringing in my ears. As the day progressed our performance improved **Sig Michalska** won the 200m, **Sig Jones** won the 400m, **Sig Hawley** won the 800m, **Sig Morris** won the 1500m and **Sig Read** won the Discus. The men made a reasonable effort as **Sgt Dobson** and **SSgt Killen** won the Discus and Shot with **Sgt Curtis** second in the Hammer. **Sgt Vincent** and **LCpl Nolan** won the 100m and 200m A and B strings and **Cpl Tomkinson** and **SSgt Killen** won the 110m Hurdles A and B strings. Despite the monsoon **Sgt Davey** secured an admirable second place in the 3000m Steeplechase A string whilst **Sig Smith** stormed to victory in the B string. As the relay teams took to the track late in the afternoon the points difference between ourselves and 11 Sig Regt was still dangerously close. I shifted nervously from foot to foot at each handover dreading a red disqualification flag. Fortunately it didn't appear and the result was sealed at 194 points, 7 points clear of our closest rival on the day. I could breathe again . . . well at least until next year.

ROMAN TROOP RACING DAY

Following a very busy period of exercises 1st and 2nd line inspections (just for a change) the Tp Comd, **Lt Ned Caddy**, decided it was time that we spent some of our hard earnt money on a day out of a competitive nature.

With the aim established the task of organising the event was given to **LCpl Wilf Warnes** who organised a day's dune buggy racing. This consisted of each competitor taking part in four heats, with the fastest four competitors taking part in the final.

After many 'flying hours' and many non fatal prangs had been logged, the chosen men were **LCpl** 'Colin-the-Bullet' **Nealey**, **Sgt** 'Wilf' **Wilford**, **LCpl Wilf Warnes** and **Sig** 'Hoppy' **Hopkins**. Due to the dubious standard of driving set by the 4 Radio Relay Operators the organisers of the event decided to add an extra twist to the final race to really test the skill of the drivers–change the direction of the course and

build a few more mounds. This however did not deter the four finalists who managed to spend more time flying through the air than on the ground. When the chequered flag finally came down and, most of the mud had been scraped from their faces, the winners were announced. In first place, thanks to an interesting blocking move by **Col Nealey** on **Sgt Wilford** and to cries of 'fix', was **LCpl** 'Honest Wilf' **Warnes**. Second place went to **Sgt** 'Wilf' **Wilford** then **LCpl** 'Col-the-bullet' **Nealey** and last but by no means least came **Sig** 'Hoppy' **Hopkins**. All in all a good day was had by all and it made a definite change to the norm.

The overall winner–LCpl 'Honest Wilf' Warnes–complete with mud

LCpl 'Honest Wilf' Warnes trying a near fatal (for the cameraman) overtaking manoeuvre which failed due to Cpl Craig Stevens pulling rank and claiming all of the track

Sgt 'Wilf' Wilford logging in a few more flying hours whilst passing Sig 'Odie' Odling

EXERCISE STEELY EYES
by 2Lt R. A. Wilson

Emphasis for this year's Battlecamp was on the revision of soldiers' knowledge of tactics and to introduce them to combat survival skills (Sleep Deprivation and Starvation). Deployment was at early o'clock on Monday 7 July. The buses were full of everyone trying to force that last item of food down their throats, before the ever so friendly searchers got familiar with you. The Regiment split into two, Group A, the Starvers and Group B the Insomniacs. The Starvers went to the clutches of **WO2 (SSM)** 'The Chef' **McGinley**, who regularly rustled up surprises. Rabbit, chicken, and fish all provided free and still living dinners. **Sig Rhodes** a member of the chicken preservation society displayed an extremely humane method of putting the bird to sleep. During the survival phase the soldiers were given tasks to carry out such as build shelters and make clothes. The latter provided the soldiers with numerous pairs of hessian underpants (slightly itchy for those who have not tried them). As the days progressed the skills to scrounge and hunt improved although **Cpl Birendra Rai** had no trouble surviving and putting weight on through the delicacy of rabbit brains. As normal, those with the skills to hide their contraband items were able to create a black market ensuring vast beers awaited them on return to camp! Classes were taken at irregular intervals, one of which was about evasive skills. This meant the use of police tracker dogs. Their display involved the demonstration of a dog chasing down a runner. **LCpl** 'RSPCA' **Dorking** tried to impersonate a hammer thrower with the dog, unfortunately the dog changed it's point of hold and went for his . . . ankle, lucky man could have affected the family allowance! The last day of the survival phase was in the form of an E+E exercise. The friendly agents provided one map and rabbit for the night and the teams split to the four corners of the training area to hide. Each team employed it's various skills to feed themselves, some ate more than others. On return from the survival phase the groups swapped around. However, not until after a quick meal and shower were enjoyed. The tactics phase started with a night navigation exercise where **Cpl** 'Superman' **Middleton** and **Sgt** 'Pathfinder' **Hough**, took their teams on the scenic route of the Pennines, One Hill too Far! Scout **Cpl** 'Sharon Davies' **Stevens** displayed pinpoint accuracy in his ability to locate streams. On hearing the question of, 'Can you see the stream?' he replied in actions rather than words, by falling in it. The following couple of days consisted of instruction and numerous impersonations of Capt Mannering style assaults. On the conversion to free play the 'Zulus' displayed the effective Beirut unload drill as they joy rode around the countryside. The tactics of the enemy varied from group A to B, **Lt** 'Balaclava' **Carroll** chose to be proactive in his war and managed to attack a stash of bergens with great stealth and cunning.

During this phase the soldiers had the opportunity to go through the night patrol range. In the range many obstacles are hidden to trip up the patrollers, unfortunately for **Sig** 'Salmon' **Bennett** one of these means flying from a bridge into the water. During this phase there were three main battles, a find, fix and destroy, a bridge assault and a house assault. The bridge assault was watched by a Member of Parliament who nearly jumped out of his skin as **Maj** 'Stormin Norman' **Jenkins** accidentally dropped a thunder flash under the bridge.

Cpl 'Taff' McTavish to Hugh Bailey MP
'You put your right arm in . . .'

On the house assault the 'Zulus' had tightly secured their area and the friendly forces formed up in line and charged. Although the assault was a success, we managed to 'kill' **Lt** 'Ginger Warrior' **Harvey**. Telegrams are still being written to the parents of all the friendly forces soldiers. After the final assault just like in the war we all came together and played football, drank beer and swapped chocolate!

Battlecamp provided the environment where the soldiers were able to test themselves and improve their skills, it also helped those who could not fit into their swimming costumes look slim in preparation for summer leave.

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

RHQ
CO — **Lt Col G. R. Leach**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) K. Fitzpatrick**

All members of the Regiment hope that the CO makes a speedy recovery following the accident in which his Right Index Finger was injured during the Regiment Fete. Needless to say the cruel military sense of humour in the Regiment has brought a full hand of finger jokes which **Col Leach** has tolerated with good grace. More recently our congratulations go to him for having worked his finger to the bone at Regiment duty he has been selected for promotion to Colonel where he will have to knuckle down to some more hard staff work.

EXERCISE IRONMAN TREK–CALIFORNIA
by 2Lt Joe Harvey

Early on the morning of Sunday 15 June 1997 a motley crew of 19–all from 202 Sig Sqn bar two, were standing outside the guardroom bergens and bags packed ready to set off. We flew from Heathrow on three different flights, due to the size of the group, and met up again at Los Angeles ten hours later (but eight hours behind) without any difficulties. **Capt John Harrington**, **SSgt (SQMS) Tony Manktelow** and **Sgt Bob Dillet** collected the three hire vehicles and we all climbed aboard and set off down the Los Angeles freeway. After final confirmation of the trail at the ranger station, we moved on to base camp. This was situated at the bottom of the trail leading up to Mt Whitney, in an area called Whitney Portal (elevation 8300 ft). The drivers then left for Los Angeles with the vehicles, as only one was required to act as a support vehicle for the duration of the trekking phase of the expedition. Those of us left behind sorted out our kit ready to begin the trek the next day, having divided-up and distributed the rations, medical kit and fuel for the stoves. We were also enlightened about wilderness etiquette and food and rubbish disposal when dealing with the native wildlife and the local bear population. By the time the drivers returned it was the early afternoon, so we set off straight away in order to get to the campsite before dark.

On arriving at the campsite it was nearing dark, so we quickly erected our tents and had some food, before getting to bed. The next day we were woken bright and early by the dulcet tones of **Sgt Bob Dillet** (an ear piercing 'Wakey, Wakey' at 0645 hrs) which was to become the one thing that the group would learn to hate. Our task ahead was to continue along the trail and ascend Mt. Whitney itself. Even at this time there was still a fair amount of snow to be found on the trail, hindering our progress. By the time we reached the pass where the trail split (to continue on the John Muir Trail or climb the last two miles to the peak of Mt. Whitney), most of the group were very tired and feeling it all the more as a result of the altitude. However, a small number, including **Capt Harrington**, **Sgt Dillet**, **Sig Galliford**, **Sig Watts** and myself wanted to get to the summit (at 14,495 ft it is the highest peak in the contiguous United States). We left our bergens with the others and taking just water and jackets we set off. The final climb was hard work. All of us were suffering from the altitude with extremely bad headaches and exhaustion, but it was most definitely worth it for the sense of achievement and the spectacular views. We could not stay for long as it was getting late and the other group was waiting below. The day finished having left the mountain and finding a suitable site for camping overnight. The next few days were spent following the trail to Kearsage Pass, and then on to Onion Valley, where we met up with **SSgt Manktelow**, **Sig McGinnis** and the support vehicle to resupply us for the next period of walking. Over the final five days trekking we covered a further 60 miles or so of the John Muir Trail, taking our total distance covered to over 110 miles out of the 220 mile length of the trail. The trek was blessed with glorious weather all the way with our only problems being sunburn and mosquitoes. Everyone survived the trek unscathed until the third day of the second stage. I managed to slip down the side of a mountain, breaking nothing but my pride and causing a delay to the group. I could not continue much further that day and so we stopped at the first suitable site after the accident. We remained on schedule and on the fourth day met up again with **SSgt Manktelow** and the injured. The sense of achievement (and even more so relief) that was felt by everyone on reaching the car park on the final day was considerable. We then knew that we no longer had to carry our heavy loads day in, day out, and had some more 'enjoyable' activities planned. The following day we drove up to Mammoth Lakes 60 miles further north along the Sierras and found a campsite near to one of the lakes. Mammoth Lakes itself is a ski resort during the winter, but in the summer it transforms into a mountain biking resort. The ski lifts allow you an effortless ride to the top with your bike before you hurl yourself down some of the slopes as fast as your nerve will allow. **LCpl Flintham** had much trouble staying on his bike even on the flat! After that exertion it was good to participate in some horse riding, even with saddle sore backsides. We managed to fit in a lot in the little time we had left, visiting a theme and water park complex, Universal Studios and taking advantage of the bargains to be had in some of the discount factory outlet stores. On the final day we arranged to spend a few hours soaking up the sun on Venice Beach, before flying home late that afternoon. All in all the expedition was a great success. Even though many whined and whinged at the time, especially on some of the steeper trekking, everyone will doubtless look back on it as an experience never to be forgotten.

Ex Ironman Trek
(*L to R*): Sig Hills, LCpl Kemp, Capt Harrington, Sig Lancaster, Sig Westerman, Sig Shackleton and Sig Knights

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Tim Carmichael**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM)** 'Dougie' **Tait**

At last the time has come to say a fond farewell to **Maj Graham Complin**, **WO2 (SSM) Geoff Hawkins** and **WO2 (YofS) Nick Hawley**. We wish them and their families the best of luck in their new postings to Canada, N. Ireland and Blandford respectively. It was a marathon farewell session and everyone breathed a sigh of relief when it was finally over and the hangovers subsided. In their place we welcome **Maj Tim Carmichael** and his wife **Kate**, **WO2 (SSM)** 'Dougie' **Tait** and his wife **Lynn** and **WO2 (YofS) Phil Anderson** and his wife **Tracey**.

It has been yet another hectic three months for 202 Sig Sqn starting with Ex Lion Sword and culminating with the Regiment Weekend. In between times we have squeezed in a couple of additional exercises (Ex First Crusade and Ex Pegasus Strike), the Morrison Cup, an expedition to California, the Nijmegan Marches and some seriously hard graft in the garages preparing for second line inspections. Block leave now looms ever closer and will certainly prove a welcome break.

Ex Iron Sword
Reversing Panzers on a moving platform requires nerves of steel

OVERLOON TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Alan Garrett**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Jim Stillie**

The Troop has just returned from Ex Lion Sword, otherwise known as 'Pork'. Although it was the Regiment's main effort, it was actually quite easy with the staff. They were being exercised by Land so they were more interested in keeping themselves afloat than giving us a hard time. Just give them a cup of warm cocoa and they're happy. We must pass on our appreciation to Waterloo Tp for turning up. They are now to be known as the Irish Vampires–coz they're scared of the dark. Overloon became Owl Tp with the amount of night moves that we made. They did a fair job of giving the staff somewhere to lay their hats while we were out being brave doing beach landings, getting filmed by the BBC, and generally being the stars of the show. Special mention must be made of the beer won by the Tp Comd from **Yeoman Hawley**. The bet was that the Tp Comd would take off his specs for the BBC camera crew. Of course he did, and promptly turned round and walked into a bush. For part of the exercise, the

Regiment practised landing its assets in support of a friendly country. This resulted in Overloon going for a 'trip around the bay', starting from Marchwood and landing at Lulworth. The boat trip was a lovely and welcome pause in the normal routine of the HQ tearing down and setting up. Some of us were luckier than others and got on the British vessel, with its beds, showers and liquid refreshment. The rest were carried just like slaves on an American craft and were subjected to rather strange food and an open deck to sleep on. We had just started a nice game of volleyball when the ship's tannoy said, 'Stop messing about.' The beach landings were good fun, although we had a bit of a scare. We started engines five minutes from the beach–all, that is, except for G2 Int at the front (**LCpls** 'Eddie' **Edwards** and 'Stoddy' **Stothard**). **Lt Garrett** saw what was left of his career slipping away as every man and his camera were waiting on the beach. We had a vision of the ramp going down to reveal a stationary panzer covered in blokes with its insides on view. As it was, we all rolled off with rather a dashing bow wave and everything went swimmingly. Recently, we have said goodbye to **Sig Rose** who has gone to more armour at 19 Bde and **LCpl Bri Owen** who, after many fine years of skiving, has left for civilian life. We all wish him the very best and say thanks for his help. Oh, and **Lt Alan Garrett** is off, to civilian university for a year the lucky b****r. A big welcome to **Lt Duncan Parkinson** from Bassingbourn–enjoy those 436s in winter.

Ex Iron Sword
Overloon Tp carrying out a beach landing at Arishmel Gap

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt John Hanington**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Crawford**

The Troop at last is up to full strength after the return of the Bowman Trial personnel and some additional postings. The armoured vehicles have been brought back to life and the acid test for the Troop came on 22 May 1997 with a trio of exercises running concurrently. Ex Red Tricorn 3 was the Regiment exercise designed to hone our skills, followed by the Divisional Staff 'plug up' of Ex Second Foray. During this time the Troop were 'bounced' around Salisbury Plain with amazingly few breakdowns! We also had a brief spell at Bovington for which we had to be transported by Low Loader. **Sig Fildes** gave everyone a shock when his loading procedure nearly went horribly wrong. The final week was HQ Land's test for the Division with Ex Lion Sword and as far as the Troop was concerned it was a thorough success.

On 16 July the Troop embarked on a Damage Repair Course at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth. Nineteen budding Navy recruits were thrown into a large metal container (resembling the inside of a ship) which then proceeded to fill with water through large holes in the side. We then had to 'plug' the holes with anything we could lay our hands on. **SSgt Andy Crawford** used his head a few times much to the crew's amusement. **Sgt** 'Mo' **Morris** had to remove his glasses for the event which is always a dangerous move! Everyone survived the trauma and actually enjoyed themselves, so the other half of the Troop will be going at the end of July.

Finally, some farewells and greetings to old and new–**LCpl Russell** leaves for 24 Bde (**LCpl Rogers** is missing you already) and **LCpl Measey** leaves for civvy street. **Sig Johnston** has now left for N. Ireland. A warm welcome extends to **Sig Greenwood** and **Sig Brakewell**.

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Katy Caie**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Jon Clarke**

Not unlike the other Troops in the Squadron, Busacco Tp has had its fair share of exercise commitments including Ex Lion Sword and Ex First Crusade. During Ex Lion Sword DCOS's planning cell was yet again used to its maximum; moving nine times and supplying the DCOS with his cell for a whole two hours! During one of the moves, due to **LCpl Nikkie Wilkie**'s excellent map reading we took a good look at the FIBUA village, regardless of the fact that the location we were heading for was in the opposite direction by about 15km. **Sig Graham Brown** and **Sig Joey Collins** had a really hard exercise, doing 8 hrs on and 8 hrs off in camp, with showers every day and the comfort of their own beds (hard life). Whilst the rest of the LO drivers were over-dosing on Pro Plus, (three cheers to **Sig Anne Wilson**). A big thank you to the wonderful 'Liney's'for keeping the girls sane over the duration, and we can't forget the smashing ED's who kept the DCOS crew in brews all exercise. (Well **LCpl Wilkie** anyway).

A quick turn around was followed by another deployment, this time in support of 1 (Mech) Bde on Ex First Crusade. On completion people were detailed off to their new jobs for the next 10 days. A guard force was set up, the operators were detailed and everyone started getting into the swing of a non-tac exercise making maximum use of the NAAFI bar. **SSgt Andy Crawford** ran the reception (CP) in between helping his wife look after his new born son **Troy** (Congratulations from all of us). It was a non-tac exercise so you can imagine **LCpl Kenny** 'where is my posting' **Purdie** had a shock when sent home for his kit to play real soldiers for two days to the amusement of the rest of us.

Goodbye's go to **Cpls Clive Evison** (after 22 yrs service) and **Martin Hunt**, **LCpl Tony Darkes**, **Sigs** 'Paddy' **Maxwell** and **Dave Wynne**. A hello goes to **Sig Ian Blowes** who has just arrived from the factory.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Paul Glibbery**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry Crane**

SQUADRON CAMP

During the third week in June the Squadron embarked on Ex Rhino's Relief, an Adventure Training Exercise at Tregantle Fort, Plymouth. Spirits were high for the first day's activities following a night of local familiarisation in Plymouth. Unfortunately all the activities weren't to everybody's liking, particularly the mountain biking, where after a hard 12 mile cycle to Looe **Sig Jackie Davies** and **Cpl Mark Jones** decided they had had enough after a hard day's sunbathing and took a taxi back to Tregantle Fort. Later both commented on how it was the best £10 they spent all week! The windsurfing was one of the more technical activities which demonstrated some people are more at home in the water rather than on it, **Sig James Kemp** leading the way (stick to tabbing **James**!). There were notable successes though, many Squadron members managed to surf around the lake by the end of the day and **Sig John Morton** gained his RYA Level 2 award. The two intrepid rock climbing instructors **Cpl** 'Daz' **Cattle** and **LCpl Ben Rigby** had set a rather challenging climb, which all attempted but sadly no-one completed. However, everyone did complete the reverse and forward abseil's (some with prompting admittedly). The hill walking also proved a popular day, led by **Capt** 'Bog' **Bruce**. It did not seem to matter what group led the navigation stage as they all seemed to take the same route through the bog. This added up to 10 times for the hill walking leader, who rescued the day by always finishing at the good old P.H. The 'Unluckiest Man Of The Exercise' award must go to **Sig** 'Parky' **Park** who, while windsurfing, fell in pulling the mast onto his head which left a scar for many weeks. Then the next day he fell rock climbing and badly bruised his thigh muscle, putting himself on crutches for the rest of the week. He is now fully recovered and claims he did enjoy the Exercise! After a frenzy of activity the Squadron returned to Bulford tired but happy having enjoyed an excellent week of training. Finally, a special thanks must go to **Sig Si Mullins** on the excellent way he ran the bar and with great opening times.

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Nick Bruce**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Richie Bell**

My baptism with Mons Tp has been to conduct a study in crisis management over the last eight weeks, with consecutive exercises (Iron Bar and Pegasus Strike), Second Line Inspections, Vehicle Servicing and PRE. The Tp Comd has continued to impress the troops with his ability to avoid any work, by going adventure training and carrying out a mess audit. He did manage to fit in six hours on Ex Pegasus Strike but then his mum called him in for tea (a medal in there somewhere Sir I'm sure). Sad farewells to be said to **Sig** 'Billy' **Bond** and **LCpl** 'Bottle' **Le Boutillier** both now serving in MacDonalds. Warm Hellos to **Sig** 'Trevor' **Carter** and **Sig** 'IQ Spice' **Wardley**, fresh from training.

CAMBRAI TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Liz Allan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Carlos Sinclair**

This month has seen a complete change of the Troop hierarchy. After only four months in the job **2Lt Alex Fennell** has moved across to Inkerman Troop to make way for **2Lt Liz Allan** who is fresh out of Blandford. Joining her from Blandford is **SSgt Carlos Sinclair** who takes over from **SSgt** 'Doz' **Day** who goes to 15 Sigs as the SSM of 233. Recently the Troop seems to have been on non stop exercise as we have seen men disappear to places ranging from the south coast of England to Southern Scotland. Fortunately the exercises were completed just in time for everyone to get into their glad rags for the Squadron 70's night disco. With the majority of the Squadron dressed up a good time was had by all with plenty of long wigs, wide collars and flares in evidence. The older members of the Squadron had a distinct advantage in terms of costume as they could simply pull out an old clubbing outfit! How **WO2 (FofS)** 'Wide boy' **Ball** ever went out in his defeats the imagination. Cambrai Tp's own **Sig Mark** 'Dancing Queen' **Smith** won the night's award for the 'most funky groover'.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Capt Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Campbell**

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Hay**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Allen**

Over the last few months Oman Tp has seen a big change in personalities with the arrival of **SSgt Allen** from 1 Div and the departure of SSgt 'Badger' **Hill** to the Div SQMS. Good luck. The Tp Comd continues on her mission to find 'Man Friday' on the round Britain yacht expedition. **Sgt** 'SHF' **Beel** successfully organised and led an expedition to conquer Mt Snowdon. Along with **Sig** 'Chubbs' **Claridge**'s amazing scouting skills the trip was a success and ten members of the Troop can say that they did it. With the usual busy time ahead this year we must say good luck to all those leaving and also welcome to those arriving. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Andy Hayler** on recent promotion to Sgt and also to **Cpl** 'Baldy' **Lester** on his recent good news.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt A. J. R. Stead**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Lang**

In an effort to stay out of camp as much as possible, not only do we have our own exercises but also we join in other peoples. So it was that we spent a semi non-tactical exercise on the plain supporting 1 Mech Bde. The highlight of the 10 days was a visit by the MGO **Lt Gen Sir Robert Hayman-Joyce**. After a tour of the Node he joined us for lunch. The Troop then left for Ex Iron Bar in Weymouth. After settling into the camp we set out for the first recce of the establishments in the surrounding environs. **Sig** 'Elvis' **Garret** and **Sigs** 'I'm too sexy' **McDougall** and **Lynn** showed why they should not give up their day jobs. Similarly, later in the week while walking the Coastal Path, **Sgts** 'It's my party' **Robertson** and 'so I'll cry if I want to' **Thomson**, stumbled upon and joined in a private party!

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt N. J. Morris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hogg**

With yet another glorious exercise under our belts Aden Tp are back in camp for the lull before summer block leave. The Regiment Weekend is looming and the Troop will provide an air rifle stand to entertain the locals, armour plated trousers required. Many of the Troop are away on various courses, both career and recreational as well as joining **Lt Hay** on her monumental voyage around the British Isles. All this adventure training, with India on the horizon as well will make 'Frank' wish he had never NTT'd. We must welcome **Cpl Punchard**, his wife and two boys. Congratulations go out to **Cpl Woods** for his recent promotion to Sergeant. Aden Tp bids a fond farewell to **Sgt** 'Weasel' **Emmerson**, **Cpl** 'Stevie' **Davis** and **Sigs** 'Heed' **Codling** and 'Marcellos' **Wallis** all going to found the fourth Trunk Node, 'Masirah' Troop.

257 (REAR) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. W. Hornby**
SQMS	**SSgt (SQMS) Piper**

EXERCISE WEYMOUTH SWORD 5/12 JULY 1997

Ex Weymouth Sword was a Sword Tp adventure training exercise that took place in and around the Weymouth area. The activities included Windsurfing, Diving, Abseiling and Hillwalking. The Windsurfing was run by **Cpl** 'Reg' **Varney** and assisted occasionally by **Cpl** 'Bumout' **Townsend** when he managed to drag himself away from the clubhouse. Although the winds for the period weren't ideal everybody managed to get on the water, and as normal some progressed more than others, one in the shape of **LCpl** 'Danni' **Boyle** who after a morning of instruction was heard discussing the finer points of sailing with **LCpl** 'Clown' **Dilling**. Next time 'Danni' make sure the board is in more than two inches of water, and the carrying handles are called Foot Straps. The Diving was done in and around the harbour by **SSgt** 'Crabs' **Piper** who took two people a day and tried in vain to drown them, a special thanks most also go to **Cpl** 'Hand-grenade' **Kerr** for his tips on buoyancy control, don't give up your day job 'Handgrenade'. Finally we must mention the entertainments committee, in the shape of **SSgt** 'Lion' **Haley**, **LCpl** 'Clown' **Dilling**, **LCpl** 'Whiplash' **Bulley**, **LCpl** 'Turtle' **Madgwick** and **LCpl** 'Miss Haven' **Pursglove** who's main task during the week was to increase the bar profits and entertain not only the campers but the permanent staff on the camp site.

LAD

OC	**Capt H. Harrison**
ASM	**WO1 (ASM) Tiffin**

During the past quarter the LAD have been involved in numerous Regt activities and several major exercises. We have had representatives at the Inter Squadron and Inter Unit Athletics as well as entering the Regt Shooting competition as one of two teams from HQ Sqn. The first day saw mixed fortunes for the team although we stood a good chance of winning the LSW shoot until our illustrious team leader, **SSgt Steve Foster** told the last competitor, **Craftsman Chris Miles**, that if he scored well we would win. Needless to say the said Craftsman, not used to the intense pressure of Inter Sqn shooting, did not achieve the required score. However, LAD honour was not completely lost as our clerk, **Cpl** 'Stan' **Matthews** came second in the LSW shoot. At least the team achieved the ASM's aim of not coming last! Shooting improved overall on the second day with a tight finish in the pistol shoot meaning that the LAD came 3rd helping HQ Sqn to an overall victory.

More recently 20 members of the LAD took part in HQ Sqn's Adventure Training in Capel Curig, North Wales. Despite normal Welsh weather (ie rain) during the first two weeks, we managed to climb, canoe, trek and drink as well as attempt some more unusual activities such as gorge walking and a huge death slide near Tywyn. The only person in the LAD who was unable to complete the death slide was **Cfn** 'Smudge' **Smith** although we hear he will be making up for it by an attempt on Mt Everest later this year. Fortunately the intrepid **SSgt Foster** made four descents on the death slide, two of them backwards, much to the delight of the local female population as he struggled to regain his shorts after hitting the water at Mach 2. Safely returned from the depths of North Wales, we are now finalising preparations for the Regimental Fete, then we're off for some well earned summer leave.

LCpl Barber–Gorge Walking

Cpl Shepard and Cfn Duke just returned from Ex Lions' Sword

TM TROOP

Regt FofS	**WO1 (FofS) R. Lifton**
	SSgt D. McKie

As we approach the summer leave period, TM Tp is beginning to settle down after a hierarchy reshuffle. We say goodbye to **Capt (TOT) Tony Sarginson** and **WO1 (FOS) Tony Mullen** and welcome in their places **Capt (TOT) Nigel Cullen** and **WO1 (FOS) Russ Lifton**. Thanks to **Cpl** 'Daz' **Cattle** for organising a memorable leaving function! **SSgts Dawn Mckie** and **Phil Mcmullan** also leave us and we await their replacements. **Sgt Jase Harvey** escapes for a twelve-month attachment to the School of Signals as an instructor. Congratulations go to the newly promoted **LCpl** 'Trotty' **Trotman** who wrangled an inter squadron posting to 257 Sig Sqn. Recently the Troop has been on adventure training to Capel Curig, where **Cpl Guy Padfield** led an expedition, codename certain death, along a rather precarious ledge. The ledge, Crib Goch, had a 1000m drop to either side and a ridge only two feet wide. It was at this point that one of the members of the group (no name mentioned-**Sig Goode** of the Regt MT) informed **Cpl Padfield** that he was scared of heights. A quick decision was required as **Cpl** 'Mountain Goat' **Hutchinson** was heading for the next summit leaving **Sig Goode** on all fours. Fortunately the tensions of the day were relieved in the bar later. At present we are actively involved with exercise Pegasus Strike, where **LCpl Steve Pilmer** will hopefully pass his vehicle night navigation after hitting a generator last time out. Finally we welcome back, from his second tour of Bosnia, **Cpl** 'Snoop' **Fincham**.

7 Sig Regt
BFPO 35

CO — **Lt Col Mike Dyer**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Pete Griffiths**

RHQ

The Regiment has added yet more BA(G) trophies to the cabinet in RHQ, the latest courtesy of the RSM and his Water Polo and Swimming teams. The Regt is now proud holders of BA(G) Champion Cups for: Rugby, Rugby 7's, Football, Volleyball, Men's and Ladies Swimming, and Waterpolo and Army Champions Cup for Ladies Swimming. The Trophy cabinet is now bursting at the seams and it's probably just as well that the cricket team is performing on a par with the England team, lest we had to buy a new one.

Much has been happening over the last two months. The Regiment has deployed on its first exercise with 1 Sig Bde in over a year with many lessons being learnt, in some cases, re-learnt. Now that the summer is upon us, the squadrons have been busy planning and conducting adventurous training throughout Europe. One of the highlights of this year was the deployment of over 100 members of the Regiment on Ex Lion Sun in Cyprus.

FAREWELLS

The Regiment has bid a fond farewell to **Capt Ian Heath** who leaves us on retirement from the Army. He is moving on to a new challenge in the civilian communications industry. Having spent his entire Army career on public duties, attachments to other units, and on all manner of 'jollies in the sun' it is hard to imagine what sort of communications experience he gained after four years with the Corps. His new start in civilian life has coincided with his marriage to **Alison**, one of his more informed decisions and we wish him and his wife all the best in their new life.

REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL

The Regimental Football team enjoyed unprecedented success this year culminating in beating the reigning Army Champions–28 Eng Regt–one nil in the BA(G) final on 19 March, with a wonder goal by **Sig** 'Lordy' **Lord**. And for the first time since the inception of the Army Germany cup way back in 1946, 7 Sig Regt is now engraved on the magnificent trophy.

A smattering of experience, a disciplined approach to training and an exceptional team spirit paved the way for a clean sweep in the North Rhine Inter Services Football League as well as the BA (G) Cup. Despite playing the early stages of the season with key players deployed to Bosnia, the manager–**Maj Rick Licence**, team coach–**SSgt Terry Parle** and team captain–**Sgt Gary Williams** felt very optimistic–particularly after coming back from being three nil down at half time against our first round opponents, 1 RHF, in the BA(G) Cup to win 4–2 on penalties. Our path to Aldershot to take part in the Army Final ended in a 2–0 home defeat at the hands of the 1st Battalion The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. No excuses! The Jocks had done their homework and applied the pressure. Sadly, a lack of discipline and a touch of naivety in our own team enabled the Jocks to dominate the early stages. Frustrations grew and the Regt had two key players sent off. Despite this, the remaining nine men showed tremendous guts and determination and threw everything at the Jocks in the remaining 20 minutes, but their resolute defence held.

However, the season was far from over and winning the North Rhine Inter Services Football League (NRISFL) Cup and NRISFL Challenge Cup dulled the pain slightly. An excellent season was rounded off with the end of season bash on 28 July which saw **Sgt Si Booth** winning the Player's Player of the Year award and **Sgt Gary Williams** the Manager's Player award. Three of the squad have since left the Regiment–**Cpl Calvin Bent** to Blandford, **Cpl Gav Hayhurst** to Liverpool (TA not FC) and **Cpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** to Civ Div. Good luck to you and thanks. Rebuilding the team must now commence, so if any aspiring footballers wish to join a good footballing set up, put your dream sheets in.

The Jubilant team look forward to celebrating, compliments of the sponsor for BA(G) Challenge Cup

SEASONS STATISTICS–ALL COMPETITIONS

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against
19	16	2	1	69	31

Winners–British Army Germany Challenge Cup
Winners–North Rhine Inter Services League Challenge Cup
Winners–North Rhine Inter Services League Cup

KREFELD BARBARIANS RUGBY

The Krefeld Babaa's were first formed three years ago to compete in the thriving German Bundesliga. The club is made up of players from 7 Sig Regt and local German Rugby players. This year they were undefeated throughout the season, becoming Regional League Champions. The next step is the play-offs with the champions of other regional leagues to determine who is promoted to the National Bundesliga, the Premier Division. The first match this season was against RC Baunatal where the Babaa's showed their metal by winning 34–12. **Lt** 'Scotty' **Scott** was noted for his outstanding rucking, while there was some tremendous forward play by **Cpls Jim Coombs** and 'Eddie' **Edwards, SSgt Si Norris** showed his versatility by playing in three different positions during the game.

The final game this season was against Heidelberg on 13 July. With promotion already guaranteed for both teams, it was pride and unbeaten records at stake. Early reports about the size of the oppositions forwards were not exaggerated and even **Cpl Jim Coombs** looked small in comparison, but with the Babaa's fielding one of their strongest teams of this season, they quickly taught Heidelberg a lesson in rucking and ball retention. All the scoring came from penalties until the dying minutes of the game, when **Sgt Dave Coffey** intercepted a wayward pass and had a clear run of 40m to score a magnificent try, although by 10pm that night it had turned into the full length of the pitch! The final score was 20–6 in favour of the Babaa's, leaving all the players and supporters enthusiastically waiting for the forthcoming season to start in September.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt (TOT) Baugh MBE**
Regt FofS — **WO1 (FofS) Carl Shead MBE**

The Troop has recently enjoyed a week long 'swan' on Ex Eibelle Start, an adventurous training programme held in Bavaria. Those holding the reins were **SSgt Huw Evans, Sgt Justin March, Sgt Jamie Chambers** and **Sgt Craig Brankin**. Activities included rock climbing, mountain biking, canoeing, white water rafting and the main challenge, climbing the Mindel Clettersteig, an event that left **Sgt Justin March** walking as if he had had a romantic encounter with a donkey! All those involved enjoyed their time and returned enthusiastically to the piled high 'Awaiting Labour' shelves! **SSgt Huw Evans** recently won a powered children's bike in a Sgts Mess Draw. Not feeling the need for it himself, he kindly presented it to a local Krefeld Orphanage and even found his uniform to make the presentation. In yet another piece of luck, he has also been chosen to take part in an Joint Services Hang-Gliding expedition to Spain for six weeks. Hopefully he'll be back just in time for the next exercise.

A couple of congratulations are also due, firstly to **Boris** 'Becker' **Shead** and his family on his recent selection for a commission and secondly, minutes before going to press, to **Debbie** and 'Noddy' **Baugh** on the birth of their baby boy, presently being considered for the name of **Elliot**.

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Alan Stringer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Tony Barry**

The Troops have suffered a collective identity crisis of late, having been through no less than three name changes in the past year. In an effort to provide the Troops with something more inspiring than electronic identities, the latest three names have been chosen to reflect the Squadron's long association with Berlin. TN 012, commanded by **Lt Trudy Robinson**, has become Wilmersdorf Troop–229 Sig Sqn has the freedom of the borough of Wilmersdorf in Berlin. TN 011, commanded by **2Lt Peter Young**, has become Charlottenburg Tp–Charlottenburg is the neighbouring borough to Wilmersdorf. The currently 'out of ORBAT' TN 013 will be known as Brandenburg Tp should it ever re-form. Brandenburg is the province in which Berlin lies.

The Squadron has also been on its annual challenge pursuits training camp, Ex Bear Backstop, which this year took place in the Allgau region of Bavaria. Over three largely sunny weeks in July, around 50 members of the Squadron rotated through the exercise, participating in activities such as abseiling, klettersteig, rock climbing and trekking. During periods of relaxation, our intrepid adventurers enjoyed the delights of mountain biking, water sports, beer tasting (of course) and even amateur photography. A number of very artful pictures of nude male subjects being taken with the camera of the trusting (but now somewhat embarrassed) Unit Photographer, **Sig Jason** 'Snapper' **Nicholls**.

First through the mill were Wilmersdorf, or 'Whiskey' Tp, led by **Lt Trudy** 'action girl' **Robinson** and right-hand man, **SSgt Paul Robson**. The 'Whiskeys' proved that they are a very aptly nick-named outfit, adept at creating their own entertainment–be it stand-up humour in the guise of natural comedian **Sig Jim** 'Clyde' **Bonney**, or good old 'chicken-in-a-basket' karaoke. Next on the scene were the 'Charlies' of Charlottenburg Tp, ably commanded by their big chief, **2Lt Peter** 'follow me lads, I'll be right behind you' **Young**. Head brave **SSgt Neil James** took 'white knuckle' mountain biking to new heights (literally) when he managed to take-off and fly through the air like a two-wheeled 'Eddie the Eagle'. His awe-struck subordinates were delighted to see him carry out a perfect landing through the middle of a hedge. Bringing up the rear were the SHQ crew, with **SSM Tony Barry** at the helm. A close-knit team at the best of times, the men of the Tech Workshops and the Ops Room shared every gut-wrenching experience together–including **Sgt Mark** 'Old Mother' **Riley**'s stomach bug.

By general consensus, Ex Bear Backstop 97 proved to be a great success - an enjoyable and rewarding experience for those who attended. As is always the case, the lion's share of the credit should go to the organisers, instructors and chefs. Namely abseiling and rock climbing instructor **Sgt Kev** 'Lardy' **Eaves**, who showed off his tackle technique (so to speak) at the rock-face for the entire three weeks. **Sgt Stuart** 'Big Mac and chips' **McKinnon, SSgt Gaz** 'Oooh, Gary Davies' **Davies, Cpl** 'Taff' **Evans, Cpl Mark** 'Jonno' **Johnson** and definitely not forgetting culinary wizards, **Cpl Gordon** 'Connery' **Stenhouse, LCpl Dave** 'Fergie' **Ferguson** and **LCpl Stewart** 'Michael' **Kane**. Very well done!

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

The Squadron has had a hectic period over the last few months, with members enjoying trips to various areas in the world at the Army's expense. While a platoon's worth of people took part on Ex Lion Sun, the remainder of the Squadron spent a week in Bavaria on a challenge pursuit camp under the watchful eye of **Capt Bill Anderson**. Everyone had plenty of time to compare suntans on the 1 Sig Bde Exercise with the lot from Cyprus who joined straight from flight. The introduction of time sheets proved members of Quebec Tp were somehow managing hallucinogenic 56 hour shifts.

Oscar Tp has recently returned from adventurous training in the Pyrenees. Rumours are they may be renamed Mountain Tp following a number of 'We've got to go up THAT!' moments. Quebec Tp are also off to Scotland soon for a scenery and culture trip, providing **Lt Angela** 'Officer with a map' **Galli** can navigate them up the M1.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

The Squadron has recently returned from its Annual Military Skills Camp that was conducted at Lavensum Camp and based around a section competition lasting one week. There were a number of stands each contributing to the overall scores, with the first being a two day shooting package, which culminated in a 'section in defence'. Everyone appeared to enjoy **Sgt** 'China' **Cooper**'s 'Battle Bonanza', especially **Sig** 'H' **Aitchinson**, who had to be reminded that empty magazines were as effective as live rounds. The sections then deployed into the field for the second phase, a twenty-four hour exercise. There were various tasks to be completed during this time, such as OP's and fighting patrols, before a night ambush and a dawn attack. The final phase took place back at Lavesum, in the form of a march and shoot competition. This last phase was begun with surprising enthusiasm, but **WO2 (SSM) Chris Naylor** and **SSgt (SQMS) Jim McNaught** soon dealt with it, with the aid of a water bowser.

The final winners were led by section commander **Cpl** 'Bruce' **Findlay** and the Best Signaller Award was split threeways between **Sigs Fielding, Mears** and **West**, all of whom worked extremely hard throughout the week. With the awards out of the way, the floor was cleared for **Maj** 'Skippy' **Thorek** and his harmonica to entertain everyone with renditions of 'Waltzing Matilda' and other Aussie Greats, until the sun went down and the bar ran dry.

EXERCISE LION SUN 97

The 7 Sig Regt deployment on Ex Lion Sun 4/97 under the command of **Maj Keith Whitehead** marked the culmination of many months planning and endlessly changing nominal roles.

On Tuesday 13 May, three Platoons from the Regiment arrived at Radio Sonde Camp, Episkopi Garrison, to be greeted by a suspiciously tanned advance party. Immediately we were subjected to the intense Cypriot sales pitch of **Mr Tonibell**, our ever-friendly ice-cream man, who was to become an honorary member of the Company D.S. Our illusions of a holiday were shattered on the first morning at 0500hrs when the Company was rudely awoken for P.T. Although very keen to get to the beach, our idea of reserving our beach space did not include sprinting and press-ups. However, according to **SSgt** 'Adonis' **Phillips** (SSI), this was merely a gentle introduction to the delights of his Physical Training Programme. The day continued at a ferocious pace with some rather gruesome briefings from the RMP, Int Cell and Med Ops, who induced some nervous twitching with tales of snakes. espionage, vicious diseases and, worst of all, the local taxi drivers.

Our week of dry training was an excellent refresher to basic medical, navigational and infantry skills. Also on the programme were heli and boat drills, which provided an enjoyable alternative to section attacks and harbour drills. Special thanks are to be extended to **Sig** 'Taff' **Langley** for 'volunteering' to test the immersion suit provided on the landing craft. Further thanks are owed to **Sig** 'Matt' **Moye** for his apparent willingness to don the 'padded gimp suit' to be 'hunted and restrained' by the sniffer dogs during a demonstration by the R.A.V.C. Without a doubt, the most taxing element of the week was the beach brief! The excuse for this inclusion in the training programme was to test courage through cliff jumping and banana boating, as well as to practice practical camouflage skills through tanning in preparation for exercise. Field cooking skills were honed by a demonstration by the chefs in the form of a Beach barbecue. However, the best was saved for last: a Platoon attack on the Paramali FIBUA village, following careful instruction from the Kings Regiment. Despite a lack of experience the attack, although arduous, was successful and the highlight of a demanding week. A rest was deserved by all, which came in the form of a weekend of hill-walking and mountain biking in the Troodos Mountain Range. A 'lie-in' until 0700hrs and the cancellation of P.T. ensured a full recovery from the Platoon 'bonding' session the previous evening!

The range week provided a good opportunity to pass, regardless of the number of attempts, our APWT. In addition to this, various background activities were on offer, varying from a 9mm pistol and LSW moving target shoot to a Close Quarter Battle range. Throughout all this, blood curdling cries could be heard from **Cpl Mick Heathcote**'s Bayonet range, under the watchful eye of the omnipresent **Mr Tonibell**. A night shoot and a night navex provided us with an excuse to avoid the lures of nightlife in Limassol. Following a 0400hrs start on Friday, our week drew to close with a live grenade range and an Inter-Platoon shooting competition at Dhekelia ranges.

A weekend of Adventure Training followed and was much enjoyed by all. Activities included parachuting, scuba-diving, water-skiing, canoeing, hillwalking, windsurfing and for the lunatics within the Company, a 24 mile uphill beasting and tea drinking marathon at the tender hands of **Lt** 'Scotty' **Scott**. More fool them! All this joviality was brought to an abrupt end with the start of our first exercise: Ex San Moritz. This was a Platoon level exercise designed to practice the skills learned in the Dry Training Phase, with the Platoon Commanders pitting their wits against each other. Despite being a low level exercise, the rough terrain and Mediterranean climate ensured that all involved had their work cut out to achieve their goals. Each Commander had their fair share of hiccups with 1 Platoon suffering long tabs in the afternoon heat, 2 Platoon negotiating suicide valley and 3 Platoon experiencing ration difficulties. It was then a welcome return to Radio Sonde camp to clean up, relax and prepare for our final exercise.

Following a briefing by **Maj Kieth Whitehead**, the Company was left in no doubt that Ex Monte Carlo would be challenging to say the least. The Exercise started with a bang as 3 Platoon assaulted a beach using their Gemini Landing Craft (otherwise known as Bedford four tonne trucks) and secured a beachhead suitable for the remaining troops to land on. Activities progressed quickly over the next four days, with a helicopter insertion and plenty of action from the enemy to keep us on our toes. Things became a little heated on our third day when the Company laid down their weapons and picked up fire-beaters to assist the local Brigade in combating a bush fire. As soon as the blaze was under control, it was back to the field to continue our mission. Events culminated, on the last day, with a Company level attack on the Paramali FIBUA village, defended by a Platoon from 1 Bn Light Infantry. With the village taken, everybody tucked into a surprise cooked breakfast, with entertainment courtesy of **SSgt Al Martin** and **Sgt** 'Tam' **Reardon**, otherwise known as the 'Cam-cream Shy Green and Brown Minstrel Show'. The evening of our return saw the Company Smoker at a local restaurant by the sea. The evening was a success, with good food, skinny-dipping and one or two of the hierarchy, including the OC, taking an involuntary dip in the sea, much to the amusement of **Maj Coupar**, the visiting 2IC Regiment.

With everybody fed, watered and rested, the time came to have some serious fun. An early morning start signalled the beginning of the Adventure Training/R & R Phase, with the majority of people continuing the sporting activities they started earlier in the tour. Many of the Company took advantage of a four day Cruise to Israel and Egypt for their R & R, while others preferred to taste the delights of local Cypriot hospitality. Exercise Lion Sun has provided members of 7 Sig Regt with a once-in-a-life time opportunity to take advantage of the facilities available on Cyprus, and all involved have gained invaluable experience. Our grateful thanks must be extended to everybody who assisted us, no matter how small a part they played. Work hard, play hard has been our motto for the past four weeks, and all involved have put a great deal of effort into ensuring that this has been a very challenging, but enjoyable experience. (See over).

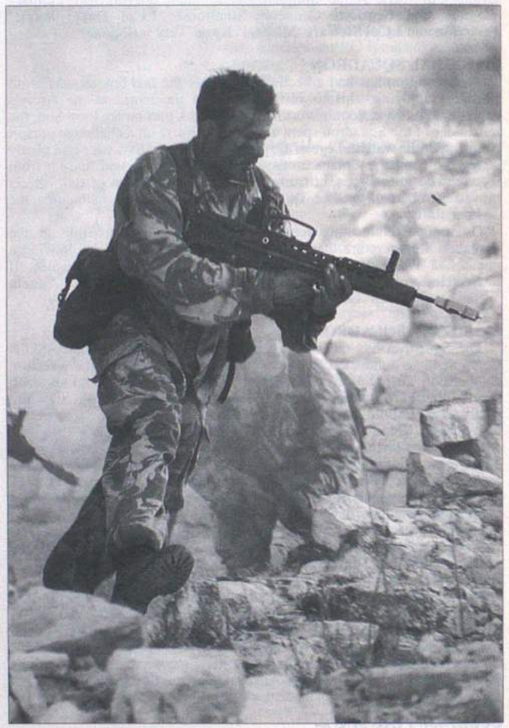
Don't be disappointed

COPY MUST BE RECEIVED SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE PUBLICATION DATE

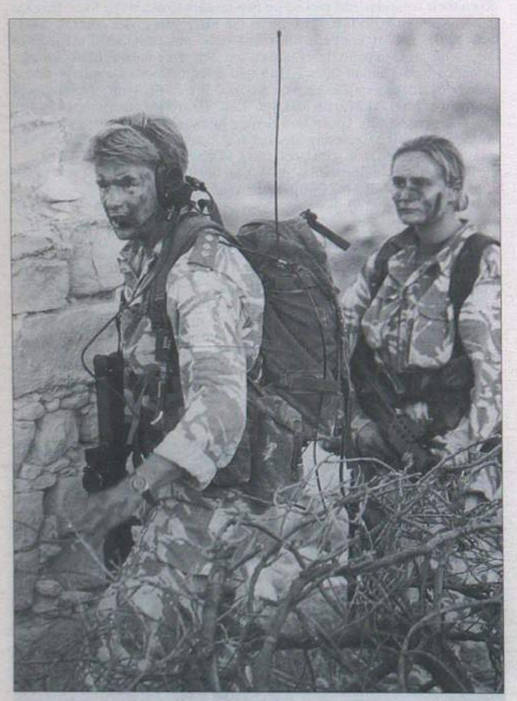
1 Platoon Patrol, With LCpl Heathcote Leading

Lt 'Scotty' Scott Looks On As 1 Platoon Prepare For The Final Attack

LCpl Mick Heathcote Attacking



LCpl McArthy Bursts Into Action



Capt Heath Takes Command of The Company For The Last Time Before Retiring From The Army

1 Platoon In The Aftermath Of War

14 Sig Regt (EW)

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd **Maj R. N. Clapp**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Couston**

Another busy period for the 'fighting 226th'–bouncing from fastball to fastball. Activities have included satisfying the usual operational commitments posed by N. Ireland and Bosnia, supporting the Freedom of St Davids parade, supplying manpower to Pembroke fete, impressing Comd JRDF with our equipments, and organising a variety of Adv Trg escapades. **Lt Brian Johnston** qualifies for a welcome and goodbye, as he has now completed his attachment to us from RMCS Shrivenham–the first real work he's done for a while! It is safe to say that he has left with a few fond memories, primarily made up of Adv Trg, Golf, Welsh lasses and Alco-pops.

TRAILWALKER 28–29 JUNE 1997

Trailwalker is an annual charity endurance event over a course of approximately 100km across the South Downs Way, and is open to both military and civilian four man teams. Originally established in 1981, in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, this year was it's first in the UK, the event having previously been run in Hong Kong over the Maclehose Trail. The Regimental team consisted of **Lt Niall Stoke**, **2Lt Charlie Roberts**, **SSgt** 'Dags' **Dagnall**, and **Sgt Jason Meek**, all from 226 Sig Sqn (EW), with an able support/ admin team featuring **Cpl** 'Brufen' **Hambleton**, and **Sig Lee Roberts**, of HQ Sqn.

The morning of the 28th dawned, with all in a mood of tense anticipation. The massed start was at 0900, the majority of the course being shared with a similar civilian event which was to be run over a distance of 80 miles. Two major factors made the civilian and military competitors easy to differentiate, firstly the military personnel had shorter hair, and secondly the civilians tended to dress like Belgians. The team made good going, and completed many of the legs between the 11 checkpoints at a faster pace than anticipated. The cut-off time for the event was 30 hrs, and the target for the team was 15. Up to the 75km point, the team's estimated time was as low as 13 hours. However, due to a number of factors, including tiredness and nightfall, the team reached the finish point in just over 14 hrs. Of the 37 teams which entered the competition, 12 finished the course with all four members, and of these we finished sixth.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Roberts**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jude**

Comms Tp give a hearty hello to **SSgt Jude** freshly returned from Bosnia, **LCpl Nick** 'FofS' **Berry** R Tp and congratulations to **Cpl Stu Lovely** and his wife **Heidi** on the birth of a bouncing baby girl **Elisha**. Sad farewells go out to **Cpl Tez** 'Airborne' **Blakeley** who has left us for lesser things in 237 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Kerry Cavell**, who after a dog handling course, is posted to N.I. Our final goodbye is to **Cpl Stu Latham**'s driving licence which has gone on a three year det to DVLC Swansea.

June started with a visit from **H.R.H. The Princess Royal**–we then went straight into Cawdor Fayre where **Sgt Bri Heslop** and **Sgt Jason Meek** provided a very colourful goldfish stand. Several members of the Troop played happy families as CIVPOP on Ex Far Flung in lovely Sennybridge, with officer cadets from Sandhurst. The Troop has just returned from a week's Adv Trg where a good time was had by all those taking part. Activities on offer included coasteering, sea fishing, rock climbing, sea canoeing and surfing dude!!

226 Sig Sqn Advance Training at St David's

640 SIGNAL TROOP (EW)

Tp Comd **Lt Stokoe**
OpsWO **WO2 (Supvr R) Watton**

The Troop has been quite busy over the last couple of months, struggling to find a compromise between the commitments, manpower and equipment available to complete the tasks set. On the social front the Troop put together a beautifully crafted duck pond for the summer fete and when the Gods decided to open the skies, it was one of the only stalls to benefit from a little 'unexpected' Pembrokeshire rain.

Hello and goodbye to **LCpl Gregg** 'Elephant Man' **Mulley** who joins the Troop and straight away is sent on his T1 course. Hello also to **LCpl** 'Riverdance' **Johnston** who is another new arrival to the Troop. Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Spud' **Fawcett** on passing P Coy and also to **Cpl** 'Stu' **Burton** on passing the All Arms Cdo course (their new knowledge was invaluable on Ex Pegasus Strike, if filling up sandbags is your cup of tea). Congratulations also go to **Cpl Dave Rome** and his wife **Tracey** on the birth of their second child, **Chloe**.

EXERCISE PEGASUS STRIKE

On 10 July the Troop deployed on Ex Pegasus Strike, a 5 AB Bde deployment via AMC South Cerney, red beret heaven for our budding para **LCpl** 'Spud' **Fawcett**. After days of waiting around, the Troop finally received its orders for the road move to West Freugh airfield. On arriving in Scotland the Troop was greeted by thousands of hungry mozzies, too much for two of our Intelligence Corps personnel **LCpl Chris Bousfield** and **Cpl Sarah Jenkins**, who needed to lie down for a while to recover at the field hospital. **Cpl** 'Denny' **Denton** lost several pounds in weight, mostly liquid and had a serious sense of humour failure when thunderflashes began bouncing off the fuel cans he was carrying. He was ambushed by French friendly forces who had mistaken the orange hazmat sign on the back of his trailer for enemy orange forces. The REME recovery guys were kept busy with **SSgt** 'Angry' **Harriott** being to blame for two incidents. **LCpl Laura Shaw** and **Sig** 'Chuck' **Norris** also came close to losing one of our Wildcat jammer vehicles to the bog, that was before their engine blew up on the road move to the Otterburn training area. Over the two weeks the Troop performed well, with the OC, **Lt** 'Road Atlas' **Stokoe**, more than happy with our results. The Troop however were disappointed with the OC's navigation skills on more than one occasion, how anyone could miss the M5 turnoff when travelling at 20 mph in a traffic jam along the M6 left the Troop in awe. A special mention must go to the troops two ED's **Cpl** 'Denny' **Denton** and **LCpl** 'Freddy' **Starr** for all their hard work!! Congratulations on winning the golden blanket 'Freddy'. The Troop is looking forward to its next couple of exercises in Belgium and Gibraltar, a little more exotic than Scotland, no offence meant Jock.

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Jim Brown**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Richie Angove** (French exchange student)

The Troop would like to bid farewell to a few valued and memorable members. These include, **Cpl** 'Pepsi' **Matacola**, who has left us for a not so distant Isle across the sea, meanwhile, **LCpl Paul Hynard** has left us for 'sunny' Yorkshire and the town of Catterick and last but not least, **Cpl Chris Gunn**, who has left us to carry on his work in Digby. On a happier note, the Troop would like to welcome back those from upgrading courses, from tours of Bosnia, and Det in N.I.! Welcome too, to **Sig Robinson** who has just arrived into the Troop. Welcome one and all!

The Troop was fortunate to have an American presence for the period of a week in June. **Ken** and **Robert** were our Texan Duo from Menwith Hill in Harrogate, who were on exchange to experience the running of our day-to-day routine on camp. A Troop 'DAY OUT' was organised by **LCpl Honeywood** at Heatherton Park, and great fun was had by all. This included Laser Clay Pigeon, Pistol Shooting, Archery for the budding 'Robin Hoods', Baseball for the 'Babe Ruths', and Go-Karting for those who enjoyed the 'Road-Rage" experience!

Many members of the Troop have been kept busy with sport recently. These include **Sgt** 'Fi' **Fielder**, **LCpl** 'J' **Waites**, **LCpl** 'H' **Honeywood**, **LCpl J. Gallacher**, **LCpl C. Wilson**, **Sig N. Wilson**, and **Sig G. Robinson**. All of whom contributed by representing the Regiment in either: the Morrison Cup, held at 11 Sig Regt; Regimental Swimming or Regimental Waterpolo. The Troop would also like to extend its congratulations to **Cpl Sarah Jenkins** for achieving her promotion, and to **LCpl Jo Gallacher** on the return of his promotion. A special congratulation is also given to **Cpl Chris Dunn**, on the achievement of passing his Driving Test!

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1 Dave Stapleton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Fuller**

The Troop would like to welcome the following personnel; new arrival **LCpl Colin Davis** and **Dianne**, returning from Bosnia–**Sgt Bob Ackland-Snow**, **Chris Gibbins** and **Cpl Steve Miller**, and from HMS *Fearless* **Cpl**

Steve Lyne. Congratulations to **Sgt Chris Gibbins** on his recent marriage to **Joanne** and to **LCpl Martin Barker** and **Dawn** on their new arrival **Tara**.

Troop activities have included a successful exercise, 'Brilliant Foil', at RAF Spadeadam, where **Sig Twells** asked if the planes flying over were real or simulated. The Troop also squeezed in a visit to the Airwarfare Centre at RAF Waddington. Finally well done to **Sgts** 'Loz' **Hill** and 'Geordie' **West** who represented the Corps at Rugby League and to **SSgt Dave Fuller** and **Sgt Mark Harbin** on their third position in the Lanyard Trophy.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd **Maj M. Davis**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. C. Fisher**

As well as the usual round of exercises, equipment demonstrations and life in the garages, most of the Sqn has at long last found time to take part in various Adv Trg exercises. Z Tp spent a week in North Wales whilst members of J and Y Tp were the first from the Regiment to complete the 186 miles of the Pembrokeshire Coastal path. This was followed by 50 members of the Squadron spending a week on the highly successful Regimental Adv Trg exercise based at St. Davids. The sun shone all week–unusual for Wales I know–and those who participated sampled sea fishing, rock climbing, surfing and the wild and wacky sport of Coasteering–the art of throwing yourself off 75ft high cliffs!! We must also mention elements of the Squadron who represented the Regiment in the 160 (Wales) Bde Skill at Arms meeting. The team did extremely well overall and **Sig** 'Annie Oakley' **Ney** deserves a special mention as she won the Pistol event for the team.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

As ever, this *Wire* article would not be complete without the usual rounds of 'Hellos and Goobyes.' We bid farewell to **SSgt (Supvr R)** acting **YofS Martin Boston** who hands over the Yeoman's job to **SSgt (Supvr R)** acting **FofS** 'Shrubby' **Shrubb** who hands over the Foreman's job to **SSgt Alex** 'Sailor Boy' **Groves** who really is a Foreman. Also farewell to **SSgt** 'Grant' **Johnston** who having trained up the Lanyard Trophy team and just come off the recent SSgt to WO2 board then received a weeks notice to deploy to Bosnia as RQMS of TEDY. We wish him and his family all the best. Fond farewells have also been said to **Capt Harvey Woods** and **Capt Ritchie Moir**, **Cpl** 'Swampy' **Page**, **LCpls** 'Ferret' **Leishman**, 'Dom' **Regan**, 'Killer' **Kendrick**, 'Peps' **Pepper** and **Sig Michelle Ginger**. Hellos have been extended to **2Lt Thomson-Smith** and **2Lt Crapper** who have been posted into Zulu and Whiskey Tps respectively. Finally . . . Congratulations to **Cpls** 'Jock' **Marshalsey** and **Rob Tubbs** on their promotion to Sgt and to **LCpl Crockett**, **Sig Adair** and **Sig Kirby** who have all decided to tie the knot.

LANYARD TROPHY 1997

With this year's Lanyard Trophy competition reverting back to its normal summer time slot, training started in earnest during early spring. The newly formed squad soon realised the extent of the task to come with some arduous initial training conducted over the Brecon Beacons (being based in SW Wales does have its advantages after all!).Under the watchful eye of team captain **Capt Andy Lucas**, places within the team were keenly sought, although volunteers to drive the support vehicles to the next checkpoint were never hard to find! With competition day fast approaching and hard training behind us it was with disappointment to find the team's 2IC, **SSgt Grant Johnston**, a major contributor to the overall fitness and well being of the team, unable to compete due to Bosnia commitments. The day itself started well with the team moving off at good speed, ready for the (not so) gentle ascent to the first trig point. With no early injury problems the pace was maintained and spirits kept high as we passed a number of teams en-route. By half way the squad was down to nine men but with a hot brew and anything resembling carbohydrate or protein shoved into our mouths it felt good to have the hardest part of the course behind us. With checkpoint 8 came our next casualty, if anyone harboured any thoughts of joining the support team at this stage it was now too late. An unexpected morale boost came in the form of one of the competition favourites taking a break and watching us bang on past them during the latter stage of the course. With a time of 12hrs 17mins the team crossed the finish line coming third in the overall regular unit competition.

Standing (*L-R*): Sgt Chris Coates, Capt Andy Lucas, SSgt (Supvr R) Dave Fuller
Sitting (*L-R*): Cpl Si Green, LCpl Jay Aldred, LCpl 'Badger' Arundel, Cpl Ted Page and Cpl Rob Tubbs

EXERCISE DRAGONS MOLAR
by Capt Bill Brennan–2IC HQ Sqn

How do you organise anything around Cawdor Barracks without the Quartermaster (QM) knowing about it? Well, that was the task OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Peter Whitehead** set himself, and the QM (T) **Capt Rab Young**, when the Sqn Offrs, WOs and SNCOs prepared to say goodbye to the QM, **Maj Fred Bancroft**. Yes! **Fred** (the dark one!) had decided to call it a day, after 33 years man and boy. The lure of civvy street proved too strong for **Fred** and **Chris**, and they decided to move back to their house in Harrogate. How do you say goodbye to someone like **Fred**? Initially, with difficulty! Fred is one of the old school, no nonsense, few goodbyes, just pack the bags and go. He had already declared his hand by stating 'no bloody farewell parties' so there was the likelihood, on seeing any preparations that even resembled the spoken word 'goodbye!' that he would turn around and walk out. So how do you counter that?

Well, first and foremost, you get the CO on your side. No problem with **Lt Col Mackenzie**, he was all for 'doing the right thing' and seeing **Fred** off in style. The next question was how? After much deliberation, it was decided to hold a 'Squadron Breakfast a la 14 Sigs–Tactical!' Because of the poor weather conditions on Brawdy Airfield, the arrangements were transferred into one of the vacant hangars. To set the scene, a field kitchen was set up inside 12 x 12s, inside the hangar. GS Tables were laid with silver cutlery and candelabras borrowed from the WO's & Sgts Mess. The chefs had been slaving away over breakfast since 0530 that morning, inside the hangar, and boy did they do the QM proud. If it wasn't on the hotplate, it wasn't worth thinking about. Everything from croissants to kippers, fresh orange juice, champagne and freshly baked bread rolls. All that was needed was the guest list, the Offrs, WOs and SNCOs. They duly turned up bright eyed and bushy tailed at 0730 hours. **Fred** had been primed for a meeting with the CO, and a building inspection of the hangar. With the lookouts posted, it was hurry up and wait time. At the appointed hour, no **Fred**! Had he sussed out what was happening and said no way José?

Well the CO did his bit and walked him in through the 12 x 12 gate into the hangar and against a backdrop of HQ Sqn vehicles. Spontaneously, everyone to a man stood up and applauded him. To say he was shocked is an understatement, he was stunned! But to his credit, he walked in and took his place at the breakfast table, whereupon a good time was had by all. After a very emotional speech, **Fred** was presented with a silver photograph frame, to match the one presented to him from the officers earlier in the month, and whisked away to the CO's office. **Fred** and **Chris** will be sorely missed by everyone in the Squadron and the Regiment. We wish them well in their semi-retirement in Harrogate, and hope they don't pine for Army life too much.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. G. Hill**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. Cox**

The Squadron has had a very turbulent time over the last two months. It has exercised on Ex Lion Sword/2nd Foray on Salisbury Plain, Ex Fox's Blood and also as OPFOR for the major FTX in Scotland and Otterburn called Ex Pegasus Strike with 5 AB Bde. Not only have we carried out this busy six weeks of exercising, but during this time have turned in excellent results in a hectic period of first and second lines and concurrently moved the Squadron Garages and offices. The Squadron is now looking for a more settled time in Barracks and a well earned period of leave and adv trg.

EXERCISE FOX'S BLOOD

This Squadron exercise was a plug up in anticipation of Ex Pegasus Strike. Once again the locations of the sites were driven more by the locations of land clearance and Portaloo delivery than by tactical considerations. The wind was no less strong than at Brawdy and was enough to topple a couple of Portaloos. Templeton Airfield provided a homely feel to the exercise and allowed people to go back to barracks to pick up kit that they had forgotten. **Sig Jo Murphy** was subsequently known as 'Lucky' **Murphy**. He progressed from bogging in vehicles and running out of fuel to erecting a mast below a power line. As the shock threw him across the field he must have been thinking 'Not me again!'

Sqn Mini Triathlon–In mid June the Squadron competed in a triathlon event for the much coveted Mini Trophy. There was a short swim at St David's Pool followed by a cycle to Cawdor Barracks and a run within camp. **Cpl** 'Abbo' **Abbot** won by a comfortable margin and Kilo Troop were the winning team. **Sgt Sid Yule** enjoyed the experience but 'vowed never again, Sir!' Three weeks later he was representing the Regiment in a triathlon at Bramcote.

Russ Cup Cricket–The Russ Cup Inter Sqn cricket tournament was held at the beginning of July in what can now be classed as typical Welsh weather: rain! Wet weather programme was simple: get wet. The draw was made and play began in a normal 20 overs match with HQ v 237 Sig Sqn and 226 v 245 Sig Sqn. The results for the 1st round matches were resounding victories for 237 Sig Sqn and 226 Sig Sqn. The Squadron started the match and bowled out HQ Sqn for less than 50 runs (sounds like England) and were then batting against a low score which **Cpl Mick Haltam** and **LCpl** 'Dot' **Perkins** rattled off in 15 overs. **LCpl Paul Warren** turned in bowling figures of 4 overs 5 wickets for 7 runs that impressed even Shane Warne. Then onto the final versus 226 which was not the one sided affair everyone thought especially when put into bat we were soon left struggling with 3 for 1 off 2 overs after losing **SSM Joe Cox** for 0 second ball. However we went onto make 93 for 9 off 20 overs with **LCpl** 'Dot' **Perkins** scoring 23. 226 made an excellent start with **WO2 Nige Watton** and **LCpl** 'Toddy' **Todd** making 60 between them as an opening partnership. However with those two despatched, scoring slowed down to snail's pace and they eventually required 3 from 1 ball with no wickets left. Sadly they got run out on the last ball losing by 2 runs and 237 Sig Sqn were the cricket champions with **Cpl Mick Haltam** collecting the trophy from the CO.

JOINT SERVICE HANG GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS 1997

The event was held at the Inter Service Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club at Cwrt-Y-Gollen Training Camp in Wales. As the sole Corps representative, **WO2 (YofS) Steve Potterton** competed in the very competitive Novice Class with a field of 15 fellow 'Crash Test Dummies'. Not so much a flying contest but more of a gliding with style test. The YofS finished as second Army and third overall. One of the funnier events in the competition was a RAF competitor's impersonation of one of Barnes Wallace's inventions amongst the sunbathers of Rhossili Beach, which earned a 10 for effort but 3 for effect. Next year the YofS will be competing in the intermediate class for the AGC (Defector!!).

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Squadron will say a sorry farewell to the OC, **Maj Alan Hill** and his wife **Carolyn** in August as he is posted to the 'College of Knowledge' at Shrivenham. The Squadron also says farewell to **WO2** 'Stitch' **Woollard** and his wife **Liz** on posting to Civ Div and **WO2 Potterton** and his wife **Sam** on commissioning to the AGC and posting to the 9/12 Lancers (Hoorah). Also a fond farewell to **SSgt Chris Drew** on promotion and to **SSgt Kev** 'Whinger' **Baxter**, **LCpls Martin Gillett** and **Rob Stepney** on posting.

The Squadron welcomes **WO2 Dave Devine**, **SSgt (YofS) Phil Tonks**, **SSgt** 'Ollie' **Campbell**, **SSgt Jim Spiers**, **Cpl Bembridge**, **LCpls Dimmack**, **James** and **Dean**. Also welcome to **Sigs Cox-Davis**, **Veall**, **Magill**, **Terron**, **Gregory**, **Lee**, **Whythes** and **Bingham**.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **WO2 Bullimore** and **Sgt Hynes** on their recent promotion. They also go to **Cpls Burrows**, **Bradbury** and **Brown** on selection for promotion to Sgt. Finally, congratulations go to **LCpl Paul** 'Rabbit' **Warren** and his wife 'Pip' on the birth of their daughter **Paige**.

FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF ST DAVIDS PARADE

On Wednesday 16 July the Regiment paraded through the city of St Davids, having had the Freedom of the city conferred upon it. In the week previous, the Squadrons practised their Troops with copious quantities of foot and rifle drill. This was usually under the critical eye of **SSgt Dick Malt** who took obvious delight in making the Troops 'unfix bayonets' and then leave them with their rifles clamped between their legs to see who would let go first. Highly undignified! The Regiment paraded, on the airfield, for the first and only rehearsal on Monday 14 July, with **Mrs Glenys James,** the Mayor of St Davids present. After an initial 'rhythm' problem from the Drum Major was rectified, the practice went well. Once finished, the Troops dispersed for two final nights of frantic polishing.

On Wednesday morning weapons were collected and everyone stood in full No 2 dress, eyeing up other peoples efforts on their boots and mentally noting what medals were on display. It was obvious that time and effort had been spent on kit (and in collecting medals). On arrival at St Davids the Regiment attended a special service at the Cathedral. On completion of the service the Regiment formed up and began their march to the city-square. A large crowd of people had turned out to watch the spectacle and as each Squadron appeared they lapsed into applause and cheers. Having halted in the Square the Mayor, flanked by the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen Sprackling**, and the Lord Lieutenants representative, conferred the Freedom of St Davids upon the Regiment. The Regiment then fixed bayonets and marched through the City amidst much cheering and applause. The parade had been a complete success. The afternoon was given over to a potted sports competition and the Mayor presented the homemade trophies (thanks to the LAD) to **Maj Clapp**'s team. The barbecue was an end to a successful day in which the Regiment had put its best foot forward and shone in the public light.

The Regiment marching through the City of St. Davids

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy must be received six weeks before the publication date

21 Sig Regt (AS))
Colerne

This period has been one of substantial change within the Regt and relentless activity–the pace never slackens! Principal activities have been the deployments on Regt Battlecamp, Ex Gryphons Wing with 24 (Airmob) Bde and Ex Pegasus Strike with 5 (AB) Bde, in addition to supporting the detachment deployed with SFOR. For all those who've been complaining that they spend too much time in the hangar, the past few months seem to have been a comprehensive answer. Immediately after a well earned Summer Leave period, we are off to Germany, with our TA colleagues for Ex Rhino Replen. In amongst all this military activity, the Regiment has also found time to excel on the sporting front. The Regiment were Runners Up at both the Divisional and Morrison Cup Athletics Competitions, and a very creditable 2nd place in the Army Minor Units Swimming Competition. Well done to all those who found the time to compete.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

By the time this edition is printed, command of the regiment will have changed. **Lt Col Don Steele MBE** will have handed over to **Lt Col John Terrington**, who joins us from MOD PE at Abbey Wood. A hearty welcome to you and your family. We also wish **Lt Col Steele** and his family all the very best for the future as he starts his next tour as SO1 G6 CIS Div at HQ LAND in Wilton 'Out of the frying pan into the fire' they say.

REGIMENTAL REORGANISATION

Secondly, 220 Sig Sqn, based in Germany reduced recently by a Troop, as part of the closure plans for RAF Laarbruch. Oscar Tp, that previously provided the communications for the Laarbruch based support helicopters of 18 Sqn RAF, has returned to Colerne, joining an enlarged 244 Sig Sqn. This enlargement of the Squadron has prompted the long awaited internal re-organization, creating a more cohesive and sustainable grouping.

REGIMENTAL BATTLE CAMP

From an anonymous participant

Picture this. Four o'clock on a Saturday morning, what would you be doing? Lying in bed, nursing a hangover? No, deploying on Battle Camp! It was time for our annual migration to Sennybridge. We were all breathless with anticipation wondering what the next two weeks had in store for us (honest).

First came the confirmatory APWT, with best shot going to **Sig** 'Sniper' **Garrett** notching up a very impressive score, this was followed by the moving target range. A bit ambitious considering the number that struggled with the stationary targets! However, the fun wasn't to end there. As darkness closed in, we all set off on our first task–the night navigation exercise. Nobody wanted to be in **Cpl** 'Pathfinder' **Scott**'s section, as he even gets lost going to the NAAFI; nonetheless, we all deployed and miraculously returned in the early hours.

Monday morning started off with the move from Farm 1 to Sennybridge Camp. Not content with the normal routine, we also had to get up at 'early o'clock' for our daily intake of PT, taken by the RSM and Regimental FofS. Week 1 started with Individual Fire and Manoeuvre, building up, through Pairs and Fire Teams, to Live Section Attacks. This culminated in two separate platoon attacks; the build up for which was intense, thrilling and well-planned. The final result was a huge success with all enemy 'killed' and the rest of us caked in mud and sweat, but thoroughly elated. Nice to get one over the DS!

The middle weekend saw us involved in a little hill-walking exercise, taking in all the best (and highest) features in Brecon, designed to practice navigation skills under arduous conditions. The aim was well and truly achieved. The route, supposed to be some 36 miles (if you took the short route) was challenging but nonetheless enjoyable; virtually everyone completed the course, albeit with a few blisters and sore bits! Other memorable moments included the Night-Shoot with the GPMG. Seeing the weight of fire generated by 4 GPMGs, with tracer bouncing off the target was something to behold. The RSM, using his contacts, managed to obtain all manner of interesting weapons, ranging from M16s, through pistols to Remington shotguns (fired from the hip of course). Sleep deprivation featured largely during the second week and on the final morning, we finished with an inter-section battle run over arduous ground. As if by magic, a stretcher appeared at the bottom of the hill (steep) whereupon the largest member of the section was required to get on the stretcher and be carried, by the remainder, to the finish!

Particular congratulations should go to **Cpl Robinson** and his section, in winning the Champion Section Trophy. The following photos show some of the highlights. Looking back, a good time was had by all, we're all holding our breath for next year!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

In between the huge downpours of rain and massive floods here in Germany, the Squadron has been managing to fit in a bit of sport and adventure training. Earlier in the summer OC H Tp, **Lt Toby Heath** and the Sergeant Major, **WO2 H. Wells** took some of the Squadron down to Bavaria for a spot of hill walking. Breath taking scenery and excellent weather made the trip a great success, another one is planned shortly, then the snows will arrive and it will be skiing again, oh what a bummer.. life's a drag over here! H Tp down in Bruggen have been organising water skiing days for the Squadron at a local lake, the outings are extremely popular and are always oversubscribed. It's amazing how easy it is once you get going, the ramp can cause a few problems though. The Squadron is in a unique position for adventure training and sport in that it can take advantage of Army resources and at the same time call upon the facilities of the RAF at the two main operating bases of Laarbruch and Bruggen.

Time for a rest and to take in the Bavarian view

It's not all play though, the Squadron still has tradesmen and women on detachment around the world working on projects for various agencies and of course the daily maintenance of airfield communications is of paramount importance. Once the summer leave period ends we will be into Ex Rhino Replen with Oscar Tp returning on a duty free trip to Germany providing communications for 18 Sqn Sp Helicopters, until then it's back to making the best of this summer break!

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj F. P. Roberts**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Whitaker**
SSM(Des)	**WO2 (SSM) Dickson**

First of all, our warmest congratulations to the OC on his recent marriage. **Frank** married **Anne** at Corsham on 21 June 1997. We wish them all the best in married life together.

The Squadron has recently undergone a major reorganization with the addition of Oscar Tp from 220 Sig Sqn in Laarbruch. From Alpha, Radio and Systems Tps, the Squadron has now become, quite logically, Alpha (AMF L), Bravo, Charlie and Delta Troops, with A, C and D Troops being radio and B Troop comprising the trunk assets and support trades. Concurrently, we have seen a considerable changeover of the Squadron hierarchy.

ARRIVALS AND FAREWELLS

Firstly, a big welcome to **SSgt Steve Gorton** and his merry band of Tele Op TGs from Oscar Tp who have recently joined us from Laarbruch. Then its hello to **Capt Steve Abram**, the new OC Alpha, **2Lt** 'Georgie' **Tyndale**, OC Bravo, **2Lt Leanne Neill**, OC Charlie, **WO2 (YofS) Steve Firth**, **SSgt (FofS) Paul Moore**, **SSgt (SQMS) Lee** and last but by no means least, **WO2 (SSM) Dickson**, our new Sergeant-Major. Once again, a warm welcome to all and hope you have a splendid tour here!

We bid adieu to **Capt Bob Lovett**, who leaves us after two years as OC A (AMF L) Tp who leaves to be a Sqn 2IC at 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. Then to **WO2 (SSM) Dave Whitaker,** who leaves us, on promotion, after only a year to take over as RSM 2 Sig Regt. Then to **WO2 (YofS)** 'Herbie' **Herbert** who assumes the appointment of YofS of the newly formed ARRC Recce Bde. Its good-bye and congratulations on promotion to **WO2 (FofS)** 'Solly' **Solomons** who goes to 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, and likewise to **WO2 (SSM)** 'Paddy' **Morrow**, who takes over as SSM 243 Sig Sqn. Finally its good-bye to **Sgt Shaun Gibson** of Charlie Tp, who is off to Blandford. We wish all of them and their families the very best at their new units.

EXERCISE DEVON IRON (SQUADRON SUMMER CAMP)
by Cpl Phil King, Bravo Tp

June saw the Squadron deploy to Tregantle Fort in Devon for two weeks' adventurous training. The activities covered hill walking, rock climbing, abseiling and sailing. The Squadron was split into groups spending a day on each activity with a day's R & R consisting of mountain biking, go-karting and quad-biking. Strangely, the latter two proved the most popular activities! The hill walking took place on Dartmoor, with the first day having mixed results (which way do you hold the map?). The second day however was an all-round success. The sailing was carried out in Plymouth harbour playing 'Dodge the Warships' under the able and watchful eye of **Sgt Tony Mann**, whose infamous retort, "If we use the motor, it would be called motoring and not sailing!" can still be heard echoing through our 'rigging' (ears). The rock climbing and abseiling was carried out at a crag used by the local RM Commando to practice their climbing techniques, so it was a good challenge for our lads and lasses. Special mention however must be made of **Sig** 'I don't like heights' **Donaghy**, who took some 15mins(!) to be convinced that abseiling really is fun, all of it spent hanging precariously over the edge.

The 244 Sig Sqn Formation Quad-Bike Dancing Team getting some practice in

The 'quadding' and go-karting finished without any fatalities, although the machines got a little worse for wear! An audible sigh of relief could be heard as the Squadron finally left the site! In conclusion, Ex Devon Iron was a complete success and fully enjoyed by all. The Squadron is now looking forward to next year's quadding and go-karting fortnight!

EXERCISE TRAILWALKER 28-29 JUNE 97
by LCpl Preece

The week prior to the event, the Team was looking very strong, fit and optimistic. Unfortunately, things go pear-shaped and the team disintegrates, only **2Lt Owen Finnie** remaining from the original team. In step the worthy replacements, yours truly and **Cpl** 'Badges' **McCarthy** to make up a team once more (albeit of 3). We depart for the South Downs Way in the morning of Friday 27 June with **Cpl** 'Commcen Dweller' **Robinson** and Mr Finnie's other half, **Miss Leslie Yeung**, as our valuable admin/back up team. Arriving at the campsite mid-afternoon, we set up camp, had a quick brew and moved to check out the social scene. Straight to the nearest pub for a Guinness or three, in preparation for the next day and some good old pub grub.

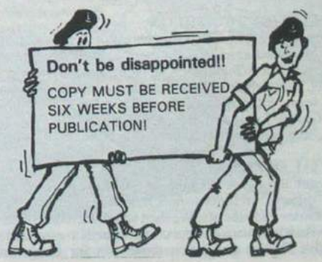
The morning of the run, everyone was feeling tired as nerves prevented much sleep. We registered at 0730, had a few more bananas and slurps of Isotar and then off in a mass start at 0900 hrs. All goes well to the first checkpoint, where we meet the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Krishna Gurung**, who has turned up to support us and boost our morale. Then on we go, checkpoint after checkpoint. During the course of the race we were reliably informed that we had completed the first marathon distance in four hours. Checkpoint 7, 69km completed and a chance for a little bite to eat, 'A warm pie for me, chef' and some more bananas. Leg 10 to 11; we we're delighted to see the lights of Brighton only 7km away. We get a boost when we see the 11 Sigs team in the distance, and find it in ourselves to sprint the last 7kms to finish some 30mins in front of them. We finally finished at 2130 hrs, weary and exhausted, but with a huge sense of achievement, after 12 and a half hours of running.

The Wire is YOUR magazine
Air YOUR views . . .
Share YOUR views

Sig Kerrie Haines emerges, soaking wet, from the 'tube' during the Assault Course Run

Pairs Fire & Manoeuvre, using the US M16 Rifle
Isn't there always a river to run through!

A spot of light relief
Clay Pigeon shooting under the watchful eye of SSgt Cousins



30 Sig Regt
Bramcote

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

9 May saw the Regiment say goodbye to the old and hello to the new as **WO1 (RSM) Paul Horton** handed the reins of RSM 30 Sig Regt over to fresh-faced **WO1 (RSM) Johnson**. With the customary respect shown to someone of his rank and experience, **Mr Horton** was thrown out of the front gates having been pelted with flour and water by some very brave members of the Regiment.

Congratulations to **WO1 (RSM) Horton** who moves as RSM to 35 Sig Regt from where he will be commissioned in the next promotion year.

Mercury presides over the final Photo Ceremony of the Regiment's RSMs

RSM 'Jean-Luc' Horton is bidden a fond farewell

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Pete Doherty MBE**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil White**

NEWS FROM THE HEADSHED

The activities of the Squadron have been dominated by the preparation and implementation of the Regimental Open Day (known in the trade as the Fete worse than death) more of that later. We did however have some movement on the leader board as we bade a fond farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Paul Ellis**. **Paul** has been elevated in life, well from the ground floor of SHQ to the First Floor, as he moves upstairs to 258 Sig Sqn. **Paul** and his wife **Ellaine** will be sorely missed after all their work and endeavours over the last year and we wish them all the best for the future. A big welcome to **WO2 Neil White** who takes over and joins us after a stint in Belfast as training warrant officer with 40 Sig Regt.

5 DIVISION SPRINT TRIATHLON

The Regiment played host to the above event in June and, as is the norm in these things, encouraged as many personnel as possible to have a go! The response was fair to middling with members of Sp Sqn predominantly flying the flag. I am delighted to report that we made a reasonable showing and the Vets team, comprising of Support personnel, won the team trophy with **RSM Garry Johnson** winning the overall vet title. In addition a Regimental composite team won the female class.

REGIMENTAL OPEN DAY

We found out, through UNICOM, (it does have its uses) that there are a total of 14 different religious persuasions within the Regiment, not counting agnostics and atheists. We then summoned one of each to a small corner of the Parade Square and encouraged them to establish contact with their respective Deities and put a request in for fine weather for the

Members of the successful Regimental Triathlon Team showing off their Silverware

Regimental Open Day, programmed to take place on 6 July. Now considering that the fortnight before the great day was the 'wettest June in living memory' according to the pundits and every time we rang the RAF long range weather mob some wag kept whistling 'Stormy Weather' the Deities scam was about the last resort. Now call it what you will but by some act of something or other the Thursday before saw a glimpse of blue sky and those that record such statistics will acknowledge the weekend itself turned out to be glorious–and so to the Fete.

Well to say that the day itself was a success would be somewhat of an understatement. A fairly rigorous advertising campaign coupled with the success of last year mixed with the 'wettest June in living memory' need to get out at last syndrome, saw a fair percentage of Warwickshire descend on the barracks to enjoy the fruits of the organisers endeavours. With a high percentage of the Regiment away either in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia or Ex Xenon Mercury in Qatar, manpower was fairly light and the onus fell upon Sp Sqn to provide the brains with plenty of brawn from the rest. By the time the QRF, stallholders, marshals, car park attendants and the like had been detailed off **Sig Smith** and his family apparently enjoyed the day.

It was a full and interesting package that was put on for the public. The arena displays included the White Helmets, The Royal Signals Corps Band, The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas and a military display by our own 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. The sideshows and other attractions were dominated by a number of military stands provided by a host of local TA and Regular units with a few of the general recruiting and Army Youth teams thrown in for good measure. Of course no fete would be complete without some form of torturous method of enabling the younger element to humiliate their peers. The fact that the ducking stool was unavailable this year tested the Light Aid Detachment's initiative to the full as they came up with an alternative method of torture 'The Stocks'. The usual list of newsworthy personalities received their comeuppence in the stocks with the CO, **Lt Col Paul Oldfield** raising plenty of money during his 15 minute stint. The RSM, **WO1 Garry Johnson** emptied his piggy bank and at the same time jettisoned all aspects of furthering his career by being, perhaps, a little too accurate with the sponges. **Capt Deb Sunderland** had worked out that her period in the stocks coincided with the Gurkha Military Display in the main arena and was reckoning on the focus of attention being elsewhere–she even brought a book along to relieve the anticipated boredom. She was absolutely right of course but had not reckoned on the local Air Training Cadet Detachment's sympathy as she stood alone and looking decidely dry. This coupled with 10 pounds worth of sponsorship from Sp Sqn ensured she had a fruitful experience.

It was estimated that a total of 10,000 people enjoyed the day. After all expenditure had been taken out, somewhere in the region of £7,000 will be distributed to charities and other good causes.

TM TROOP ADVENTURE TRAINING
Thanks to **Cpl Robinson**

This years' TM Tp adventure training took place over a two-week period in Great Langdale in the Lake District. Once we'd found the campsite, it was time to set up the camp. Tentage was no problem, as we had bags of Vango Force Tens, literally, and we were well stocked for food and drink. The sun was shining, the tents were pitched and the pub was only a few hundred metres away. What more could you ask for? In the face of insurmountable boredom, as was common for the evenings, we cracked open the cans of beer before setting off for the pub. By this time we had all gathered at the campsite. As well as **Cpl Robinson**, who instructed on climbing and walking, we had **SSgt Chris** 'Dad' **Higgins** as a hillwalking instructor.

The training itself eventually consisted of two days climbing instruction a two-day expedition and a day of wet weather activities. The climbing itself was challenging as most of us had very little experience of this at all.

We started off on a Difficult Climb (which is climbing speak for easy) to get us used to the gear and progressed from there. On the final day **Sig Cushing** and **LCpl Brooks** completed a two pitch 60m climb whilst **Cpl Dean Leach** and **LCpl** 'Barny' **Gray** completed a single pitch Hard Severe climb (which is climbing speak for tricky). It was an enjoyable experience and one we would probably all volunteer for.

Whilst the climbing was happening **SSgt Higgins** led the others on a bit of a ramble to break our walking legs in. This consisted of a pleasant circuit of a tarn (Lake District speak for a lake) followed by a very steep (walking speak for very steep) climb of Jacob's Ladder. This walk is a short sharp ascent of a path that follows a crack in the mountainside. However, it is worth it for the excellent views it offers of the surrounding countryside and the rich potential for 'Legend' photos. The expedition was a 10-mile walk on the first day followed by a five or six mile trek on the second, bivvying out for the night just below Scarfell Pike. The walk itself, whilst not particularly long was hampered by two factors. The first was the presence of some rather huge mountains, which our route just happened to cross. The second was the heat that beat down on us for most of the walk ensuring a constant intake of water and regular resupps from mountain streams. For the start of the walk our guests, who had stayed the night, accompanied us. These were the CO, RSM, Tp TOT and the Tp FofS. They left us just after lunch. It has to be said the RSM was very keen to carry someone's Bergen and in hindsight, I wished I'd handed mine over. The other 'guest' who stayed the whole week was **Cpl Robinson**'s dog, Dfer, who was a source of constant amusement, trippings up and general all round personality.

The day of wet weather activities had two themes. The first was a morning learning how to cross rivers, using feet, sticks, and finally using a rope, two Karabiners and a Prussock knot. Blue Peter eat your heart out. Suffice to say it was very enjoyable, very wet and even colder. The second part of the activities was a pub lunch that went down extremely well. All in all the Adventure Training was a very successful week with several varied activities, much socialising and loads of fun. On the Self Confidence side of the training it would be fair to say that it was positively overflowing by the end.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Gary Smith**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen**

It is all change for 258 Sqn as **WO2 (SSM) Gordon Hitchen** leaves us after 24 years service. We welcome **WO2 (SSM) Paul Ellis** from Sp Sqn. Also leaving is **WO2 (YofS)** 'Geordie' **Holt** who is posted and promoted. We look forward to **WO2 (YofS) Jim Knight** joining us from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. Congratulations to our Ops Cpl, **Cpl Tim Parkins**, who has been selected for promotion.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Harvey Woods**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Kenny Barker**

The past couple of months have been a busy time for the Troop amid the Regt funny season of exercises, and the on the bus off the bus refit of the CNR fleet. A detachment from the Troop led by **LCpl Paul Strong** was deployed to Nepal to work alongside TCW during Ex Xenon Mercury. A 501 and 322 in the capable hands of **LCpl Pete Ashcroft** and **Cpl Jeff Thomas**, were deployed to Cyprus for Ex Cygnet Vine. A good exercise was had by all involved, and it was an excellent environment in which to carry out all forms of adventure and recreational training. Many thanks must go to 259 Sig Sqn for the games-night they put on, though they seemed a bit reserved for a bunch of lineys and telemechs!

The Troop had many people deployed at the sharp end on Ex Purple Strike. **Capt** 'tall bloke' **Hargreaves** and **Cpl Russ Craig** led a team of 501s to South Cerney supporting a JFHQ deployment. Someone's got to do it.

Finally some hellos, goodbyes and congratulations, goodbye to **Capt Ian Hargreaves** who goes to Sqn Ops, **SSgt Kev** 'sideburns' **Belam** on promotion, **Sgt Tom Gibbins** back to 3 Cdo Bde and to two of the fat full screws–**Cpl Steve Bishop** and **Cpl Ted Heath**. A big hello goes out to **Capt Harvey Woods** from 14 Sig Regt, **Sgt Kenny Barker** from the SQMS department, **Cpl Sharon Speers** freshly tanned from Hong Kong, **Sig** 'Scotty' **Scott** from 216 Sig Sqn and **Sig Robert Maxwell** from training.

Congratulations to **Cpl Mick Preston** and his wife **Gaynor** on the birth of their new baby girl.

EXERCISE XENON MERCURY

This was the first Tri Service exercise to the Kingdom of Nepal. Although the majority of the manning was provided by the RAF's Tactical Communications Wing, a seven strong party from 30 Sig Regt accompanied them. The very hard working **Cpl Gary Lean** led the 258 Sqn element. The aim of the exercise was to prove a variety of equipment from the different services. The Squadron provided a HF detachment in the form of a TRC 322. **LCpl Paul Strong** proved himself to be the HF 'god' that he is and **Sig Lee** 'no comms' **Kemp** didn't do quite so well despite having a medal. As well as testing and cross training our own personnel we were required to train a party from the Royal Nepalese Army. Fortunately it wasn't all work as the RAF had organised an adventure-training package which involved the three-day Royal Trek - so called because **HRH Prince Charles** had made the journey some years before. The detachment renamed it the **Sig Dave** 'The Great' **Kyle** Trek because he believes it sounds more impressive. This was followed by a day of white-water rafting. Beautiful scenery, digestive problems and the monsoons made this a memorable, if somewhat wet exercise.

(*L-R*): LCpl Dean Morgan, Sig Dave Kyle, Cpl Gary Lean, Sig Lee Kemp, LCpl Paul Strong

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt John Collyer**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**

The Troop has been very busy (again) with the Tp Comd away on foreign exercises more often than he is in barracks. **SSgt Ian Carter** has left on promotion and we welcome **SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday** from 7 Sig Regt. We also welcome **Sgt Jill McKay** from the COMMCEN world.

EXERCISE ADVENTUROUS BEAR
258 SQN SUMMER CAMP

Eager faces and bright enthusiasm greeted our annual adventurous training camp. Between the dates 13-18 July 1997, members of 258 Sqn visited Fremmington Training Camp in North Devon for a week of trekking, climbing, canoeing and mountain biking.

Day one arrived with a mix of success and disappointment; the sun graced us with its presence all day but the brand spanking new issued mountain bikes failed to last five hundred yards down the 'Tarka Trail' track with pedals, brakes and soldiers flying in all directions.

Day two embarked with more success as the bikes managed to stay in one piece for the whole day! The sun refused to make an appearance and so the canoeists and hill-walkers returned without the suntan that they had hoped for. Notable performances were made throughout the day with **Cpl Jim Gray** continually announcing that he was a cockney and **WO2 (SSM) Hitchen** gaining a birdie on the fourth.

The final days continued on a par with day two, with good activities but poor weather. Many thanks must be given to all those involved, particularly **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Gaz' **Cole** and **WO2 (SSM) Hitchen** who sacrificed a whole afternoon to host the CO, **Lt Col Oldfield** and the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Johnson** on the local golf course.

EXERCISE PURPLE STRIKE 97
by Sig Indra Gurung

Ex Purple Strike is 5 Air Bde's annual FTX involving the deployment of around 3,500 troops through the UK. The communications phase of the exercise was called Ex Pegasus Strike and it was the 30 Sig Regt role to provide a robust communications network covering all the main exercise locations. The 18-day exercise involved other NATO countries and was successful in passing secure comms (Euromux) over satellite and in testing new CIS systems. It was excellent training for all who took part and we look forward to future exercises.

Detachment Driver Electrician Sig Indra Kumar re-pointing the satellite and managing to lose the 'bird'

WHISKEY TROOP–250 GURKHA SIG SON
by LCpl Darren Edwards

Another hectic few months has been and gone in Whiskey Tp with exercises, open days and various other tasks. Mid June saw the deployment of VSC501 Nectarine on Ex Able Condor. We were given the job of supplying 16 Sig Regt with a Ptarmigan Satellite Bridge, in the process almost losing the 501 down the side of some hill in Germany. The second week was spent with 7 Sig Regt TAC Step Up. They decided to see how many times they could move location in a week and needless to say everyone got maximum sleep, even though it was usually behind the wheel on the Autobahn. Unfortunately for the crew of Nectarine we were forced to cut short our fun Exercise as the det was needed for Spearhead duties in UK.

As Hong Kong has now closed down, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn has the duty of hosting Ex Trail Walker. This year the walk was done across the South Downs and a good time was had by all attending. It was also the first time that the Squadron deployed with the new Wolf Defender Landrovers.

Fovant Badges also came up again in July and **Sgt Gyan** and his troop of Badge cleaners left 250 Sqn for a week of grafting down south. Armed with grass cutters and lots of chalk, a good job was done as always and the troops celebrated with a barbecue, beer and a late night. Meanwhile back at Bramcote the Squadron has been undergoing a training week to bring everyone up to scratch with the Regiment's unique equipment and some ATD's were thrown in for good measure. Not to worry as August is adventure training for most. Garelochead, Costa Del Scotland.

EXERCISE TRAILWALKER
by Sgt John Blyth

Ex Trailwalker follows the format of the Hong Kong event in which teams of four attempt to compete a 100 kilometre course in the fastest possible time. This was the events first ever year in UK and took place over the period 28-29 June. The event ran along the South Downs Way from Petersfield to Brighton, finishing at Brighton Racecourse. This year's event ran alongside the last run of a well-established trail run SDW 80. The race was designed as a challenging exercise, which offered ideal focus for fitness training, team building, a sense of achievement and a chance to enjoy one of the most scenic trails in UK. (Bargain).

With all this in mind, 37 teams of four entered Trailwalker and 700 civilians entered SDW 80. The Squadron were given the task of organising and providing help to the SDW 80 event whenever possible. Come the day of the start of the race, with all checkpoints manned between the start and finish point. Excon began counting down to the start of the race over the net (**FofS Bain** and 'Tez' **Brown** under the direction of **LCpl Tom Anscombe**) it was all in the lap of the gods with regards to the weather. Saturday 28 June at 0900 hrs, the horn blew and they were off.

Each team had to pass through 10 checkpoints along the way, where they had to check in and could get water or sports drinks. At checkpoint 7 **Cpl Tika** also gave them a hot meal. Along the route teams could also meet with their support team for food, change of clothes etc. Once team members finished at Brighton Racetrack they were presented with a medal, a certificate, a T-shirt, a hot meal, showers and a bed if desired.

The event was open to all and on the day all three services were represented. Of the 37 teams entered 12 finished complete with four persons with 63 individuals finishing from the other 25 teams.

First place went to B Coy 1 RGR	–9hrs 54mins
Second went to 11 Sig Regt	–10hrs 25mins
Third went to 2 Sig Regt	–12hrs 26mins

All money raised from this charity event goes towards the Gurkha Welfare Trust with money so far reaching over £3,000.

This year was the first time Trailwalker was held in UK and as such it was to test the water, with regards to future events. Next years' event is over the period 29-30 June 1998, so dig out your diaries and watch this space . . .

The winning team running to the finish point at Brighton Racetrack

31 (CofL) Sig Regt (V)

RHQ

CO	**Lt Col R. T. Weston**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D. E. Hall**

ROYAL TOURNAMENT 1997

The Regiment very kindly volunteered to be the organising unit for the TAVRA Special Event at this year's Royal Tournament, which took place on Friday 25 July 1997. The CO, Adjt, and RSM were the organising team, and 16 other members of the Regiment joined forces with volunteers from 12 other units from all over London to take part in the event in front of a packed Earl's Court arena. The event depicted the support given by the reserve forces to the regular army in Bosnia during the last two years, and used assets as diverse as a 105mm light gun, BV206, Saxon, and civilian aid vehicles. Members of the Regiment had two roles to play, either that of an infanteer (somehow including **SSgt** 'Dinger' **Bell**) or that of a civilian volunteer. They responded to the commentators call for people to join the TA by running through the audience, vaulting the arena wall, and climbing into the back of some 4 Tonne vehicles which whisked them away. Exactly who collected the dozen or so children who also decided to join the TA from the audience remains a mystery, but it is believed that they were reunited with their parents soon after their first taste of the TA. Unfortunately the little chaps from the Field Ambulance unit were unable to carry **Sgt Browning** so he was not able to play the role of the minefield casualty–despite a convincing screen test! It was agreed by all that the final display was a success and much enjoyed by those who took part not least because we all enjoy being the centre of attention and you don't get many bigger events than the Royal Tournament.

Soldiers from 31 Sig Regt (V) taking part in the TAVRA Special Event at the Royal Tournament

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Jackson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) J. J. McMahon**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

A very warm welcome goes to all new members of staff, in particular **Maj Ken Clark** as QM, **Capt Paul Samways** as PSAO, **WO2 George Coffin** as RQMS, **SSgt Loxley Trype** as the Sqn Fin Clk and **Cpl Martin Oliver** as the Sgt's Mess Barman. Unfortunately the influx of personnel is counterbalanced by the departure of **Capt Don Pawlow** on posting back to 264 Sig Sqn, **Capt Brian McAneny** who although still a TA Officer is now working for Help the Aged and looking after himself, and finally **WO2 (RQMS) John Middleton** on retirement. We wish them all good fortune for the future.

VISIT TO BOVINGTON

Since the last issue of *The Wire*, the Squadron has been busy completing progressive training for our annual camp in Belgium. Whilst it has been a busy period ensuring that we are properly trained prior to the deployment, it has not all been work and no play. During June our PSI, **SSgt Craig Bruce** arranged an excellent weekend at Bovington where members of the Squadron had the opportunity to apply their tank driving skills on the armoured school's simulator. There proved to be many budding Damon Hills, but very few who are destined to become tank drivers. The weekend also included a visit to the tank museum and recreational time in Poole where a certain officer from the Squadron, allegedly on a sailing course, was seen enjoying herself on shore!

EXERCISE JOCOMMEX
by Cpl Carey (LAD)

Tuesday 15 April 1997: 1st Parade, the PSI announces that the forthcoming JOCOMMEX to take place this coming weekend has slightly changed in format. No longer did it comprise of a week-end jaunt around the Solent but was now to last ten days taking in Casablanca and ending in Gibraltar, from where we would be kicked off and flown home.

Wednesday 16 April 1997: Firstly I ask permission from **Kate**, my other half who luckily didn't mind, then I try work to see if I can take leave at such short notice. Luckily my Senior Manager is an ex-squaddie and let me go as he felt it was an experience I shouldn't miss! Now I had got the OK from work I phoned the PSI to see if there were still vacancies for the trip and whether or not I would be eligible, as a 'Spanner' and not technically in the Royal Signals (since been rectified). The PSI said he would check with the Training Major and would get back later on.

Thursday 17 April 1997: The PSI phones to let me know I was, to use his words, 'Cooking on gas.' I'd been cleared to go but there was one minor change, the ship was leaving Plymouth a day earlier than thought at 0700 hrs. Hang on a minute that was tomorrow, and the PSI still had to arrange transport and confirm the details with the ship. I agree to arrange my own transport to Plymouth and leave the PSI to do the rest, which he did in double quick time; of course I still had to get home and pack as well as arrange transport to the ship.

Friday 18 April 1997: After having stumbled around in the dark the previous night trying not to wake the others in my 'gulch' I was woken by a strange sound (which turned out to be 'call the hands' played on a bosun's call) only to find that the other bunks were in fact empty. With some trepidation I got up for a shower but kept wondering why people kept shouting out, by the third day I realised they were actually shouting, 'Switching on,' and 'Switching off,' as they operated the showers.

Saturday 19 April 1997: 0800 hrs let the JOCOMMEX begin! The whole thing got off to a shaky start with comms first being established via Cellnet! It turned out that 56 Sqn had a few technical difficulties but once they were resolved it looked like it was going to be a good one, that was until we tried to go secure! Luckily the Navy resources were such that we were able to get around a minor hiccup. Later on we discovered that one of the frequencies allocated was actually a Dutch shipping frequency and they politely asked us to bugger off. I decided to get some shut-eye and left it to the Navy. On my return a few hours later it all seemed a bit quiet, apparently they had lost the secure link. A couple of fills later we were back on line but by then we were running out of time so we each bid our farewell.

Thursday 24 April 1997: After having assisted a few matelot's see off the mess beer issue the previous night I was glad to reach Casablanca if only because the ship stopped moving! We docked in the morning but leave was not due to start until 1600 hrs as we had a few dignitaries visiting the Skipper. At 1130 hrs we received that day's beer issue with nothing much to do but sit in the mess. There seemed like only one sensible thing to do so a few 'snags' were had which led onto the United Seaman's Services club which was to be our 'local' for the duration of the visit.

Friday 25 April 1997: With the ship on Sunday duties we had from Lunchtime to explore Casablanca. The city was certainly different from the old town of the old Mehdina, parts of which seemed to resemble Beirut on a good day! Where ever you seemed to go they were trying to sell you something whether it be a watch, carpet, or their sister (very young, very cheap!). The STANAVFORLANT fleet had also just arrived in town so it seemed like sailors were overrunning the place and the local touts were beside themselves.

Saturday 26 April 1997: A day trip to Marrakech had been organised for those who were interested, this got off to a slow start as we were to share our coach with some Yanks off the USS *Stark* who it seems couldn't wake up in time. A good day was had by all but I think the most photographed sight of the day must have been the belly dancer who entertained us over lunch (and I'm getting paid for this!). When we arrived back on board I discovered that six of the radio operators had climbed a crane over on the far side of the docks the day before and bared their behinds to the entire STANAVFORLANT contingent. This was done whilst shouting out 'STANAVFORLANT kiss my xxxx' and whilst the Canadian Jimmy saw the funny side, the British Commodore unfortunately did not!

Sunday 27 April 1997: The STANAVFORLANT five (they never caught the 6th man) dress up in No. 1's to be marched around the fleet to apologise to all concerned. After that another hard day of sightseeing to be had by all (well apart from those on duty and the famous five), our last day in Casablanca and a chance to purchase some last minute bargains and catch some rays down at the USS club.

Monday 28 April 1997: We set sail for Gibraltar which, although a few hours away, took us the whole day as we practised convoy drills with the Moroccan Navy. I spotted some dolphins and ran off to get my camera but by the time I got back they'd disappeared. Whilst wandering around taking photos I was shown around the ships armament by **Tex** who explained how the 'bullets' were fed from the magazine into the 114mm gun.

Tuesday 29 April 1997: We docked in Gibraltar and found out that we are to be the first ship to undergo the CDT, it would seem that random testing means random ship in the Navy! I tagged along which seemed to cause some confusion for the personnel carrying out the checks, 'What are the REME doing at sea?' I get asked, they look even more perplexed when I answer, 'Comms exercise.' I only had one day in Gib so I decided to make the most of it–first port of call was the Rock. **Les**, one of the QM's, and myself caught the cable car to the top although halfway up Les started turning a funny shade of green! After a slow bimble down to the bottom we decided to take in some refreshments which seemed like the perfect way to end the day and my short stay with the Navy.

Wednesday 30 April 1997: Waking up feeling a bit worse for the weather, I packed my bags and went off to organise transport to the airport. After saying a few farewells I disembarked. I have received an open invitation to hop aboard when they come to London in November and I think I might just do that!

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj S. Baker**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paine**

COLONEL'S CUP 30 MAY-1 JUNE 1997.

Congratulations to the 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn team who won gongs galore in the recent Annual Regimental Military Skills Competition held at Pirbright. The successful team consisted of **2Lt Rob Whitworth**, **SSgt Steve McAuliffe**, **LCpl Paul Starbrook**, **Sig Chris Hunter**, **Sig Martin Henson**, **LCpl Paul Davis** and **Sig Warren O'Driscoll**. They were tested on their military skills, fitness and initiative with challenges varying from command tasks to pistol shooting. Advanced driving skills, communications and first aid were thrown in for good measure. The Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE** presented the team with the CO's Cup Shield and personal plaques.

CROYDON CARNIVAL 5 JULY 1997

At this year's Croydon Carnival, 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn was tasked with producing both a static military display, and an HF link between Croydon and Arnhem (Croydon's twinned town). **Lt Liz Fitzpatrick** was in charge of setting up the static display whilst **Capt Steven Ong**, **Sgt Bob Stanton**, **LCpls Maria Traynor**, **Paul Starbrook** and **Andy Wallace** made up the Arnhem detachment. They reported that the trip over was rather uneventful whilst good comms were achieved throughout, and **Capt Steven Ong** was not seasick for a change. What a surprise they were to have though on meeting their Dutch counterparts–somehow I don't think that long hair stubble and earrings will ever be accepted by the British army! Goodwill messages were successfully exchanged between the people of Croydon and Arnhem.

Capt Steven Ong on 'The Bridge Too Far'

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. M. Bryan TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. B. Waterhouse**

EXERCISE POLAPLOD

The annual Ex Polaplod which is a 40-mile team race over the South Downs Way was held during the weekend 8-9 June. The Squadron as usual provided both a communications net over the course, expertly managed by **SSgt Paul Hattemore**, and the breakfast stop, by our chefs **SSgt Fred Bramble** and **Cpl Steve Howell**. In addition the racing team, which due to last minute injuries was reinforced by the PSAO of 83 Sig Sqn, **Capt Dave Thomas**, came a very creditable fifth overall, despite losing two members at the 5th checkpoint. Special mention goes to **LCpl Avril Tough** on winning the event, and the weekend was seen as a success by all that took part.

The 56 Sig Sqn team (including PSAO 83) on Ex Polaplod

EXERCISE HAPPY RAMBLER

This annual event organised by the Squadron for units of 2 (NC) Sig Bde was held on Tuesday 8 July over the South Downs Way in very hot sunny conditions. Despite the absence of a number of units this year, some 100 willing volunteers assembled at Beachy Head for the start of the 15-mile course. Proceeding at a leisurely pace, the route went from Beachy Head towards Belle Tout lighthouse, before a quick stop at Birling Gap and then the delightful sight of the Seven Sisters hills. Lunch was taken in Friston Forest, organised by **Cpl Steve Howell** and **Sgt Sandra Burns**. A left turn back into the forest took the participants into the villages of Litlington and Jevington, before heading homewards via the golf course to Beachy Head. The QM, **Capt Don Pawlow**, obviously on a high with 'days to do' before posting took his merry team round the route in true style by running it. Well done to all who participated, in what was a splendid day.

CONGRATULATIONS

Finally our warmest congratulations go to **Lt Sarah Streete** for her excellent A grading on a recent Advanced Map Reading Instructors Course, and on her success as a member of the ladies winning team in the recent Army Orienteering Championships.

Lt Sarah Streete (left) member of the ladies winning team at the Army Orienteering Championships

33 Sig Regt (V) Liverpool

EXERCISE ABLE CONDOR 1997–13-28 JUNE 97
FIRST IMPRESSIONS
by OCdt Stephen Clark

Annual Camp took place in and around the Leuth training area in Germany with 42 Sig Sqn helping to provide Ptarmigan Comms in support of 11 (ARRC) Sig Bde. It was obvious from the beginning that it was not to be an easy Summer Camp. Rather than opting for the nice pleasant overnight trip from Hull, the Regiment decided that a challenge was needed from the outset. After being told, 'It's what we'd have to do in war time.' Then swallowing more pro-plus than is recommended in peacetime, we drove all the way to a tiny port in the South-East of England. It was my first exercise and a chance to see the Squadron's signal equipment in action. For two weeks I was bombarded with information and I struggled to come to terms with the effects of sleep deprivation–a cheap alternative to drinking heavily blurred vision, loss of balance and the inability to hold an intelligent conversation.

Cpl Bird flaps around a Genny

Capt Titheridge and **Sgt Corrie** took me under their wing and allowed me to witness the marvels of Node Command, I was told I would see the bigger picture; how everything works and fits into the overall scheme of things. I watched the two masters at work as they sat for hours around a big box with red lights, trying to will them into turning green through power of mind alone. After a week, they kicked me out saying I had jinxed them, but I knew better. They wanted **OCdt Clarkson** in there; they found her much better looking. While they enjoyed warmth and hot coffee, I was forced to stumble around in the dark looking for the Switch and Radio Relays and someone awake enough to explain what they do. Our final move was to Wuppertal, and while the weather deteriorated our Comms improved. On the rare occasion I was allowed back into Node Command, I was amazed to find that green lights had replaced the red. The shots were in and morale was high, they even let me have a biscuit! Finally, after several guards, pan bashes, POL and Resup runs and about two hours sleep, it was all over. I began the long journey back to England with a squadron that had worked extremely hard and proved over two weeks that it was fully capable of completing any objectives assigned to it.

42 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–MANCHESTER

Sqn Comd	**Maj Brian Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paul Wilhams**

COMINGS AND GOINGS

A warm welcome to **Lt Gillian Hughes** who has been lured back after a 3 year sabbatical and takes command of Trunk Node Tp (031). Sad farewells to **Lt Bill Dixon** cross posted to 80 Sqn at Runcorn, **Capt Bill Wiper**, who returns from whence he came, to HQ Sqn at Huyton in Liverpool and last but no means least **Sgt Chris Gouldson** our Regular Tech Sgt on posting to the RSIT team at Corsham. He had a particularly good farewell present from the Squadron as he is back next year as part of the annual inspection team.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations extended to **Cpl Dave** 'Scudbuster' **Welch** and **LCpl Jackie Coker** who have recently been promoted.

SHOOTING

Two members of the Squadron took part in an international shooting competition at Michelsrambach, West Germany over the period 13-14 June 97. **Lt Bill** 'bottle ends' **Dixon** and **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams** managed to persuade the OC to allow them to take part in the competition and then to join the Squadron in its exercise location during the two week Germany camp on Ex Able Condor 97. By doing this they missed all the precamp aggravation and arrived after all the work had been done. Never the less, they acquitted themselves very well competing against teams from the USA, Sweden, France, Holland and Germany and managed an incredible second place behind the Dutch regular infantry. It ought to be mentioned that the Regimental 2IC **Maj Stan Quayle** and **SSgt** 'Taff' **Alden** completed the four-man team and deserves some of the credit.

EXERCISE MANCUNIAN DRAGON–1-3 AUG 97

Mancunian Dragon was the Squadron summer Adventure training weekend at Denton House, Keswick in the Lake District. The Adventure Training Centre, owned by the Kings Own Border Regiment and ideally situated a five minute walk from the town centre, proved to be the perfect base to explore this beautiful part of the country. Elements of the Squadron travelled up to Keswick on the Friday evening to join the advance party led by **SSgt Al** 'Rottweiler Spice' **Keen**.

Saturday morning dawned and the forty strong Squadron party was split into groups to undergo trekking (a 12 mile, in parts vertical bimble around Skiddaw), climbing, abseiling and water-skiing. The trekking, led by our intrepid instructors **Cpl Dougie** 'Pathfinder' **Pepper** and **Cpl** 'Spider' **Smith**, with the PSAO **Capt Gerry Whelan** leading from the front and **Sgt Sue** 'Legs' **Edge** bringing up the stragglers, proved to be anything but the gentle bimble to view the scenery promised by the instructors.

LCpl Rich Hathaway, on loan from the Kings Own Border Regt at Lancaster, took the climbers and abseilers up and down the delights of Brown Slabs and Shepherds Crag. One Squadron member was heard to say that he was particularly adept at handling the girls! Unfortunately the speed boat belonging to our Yuppie Foreman, **SSgt Colin** 'Pieman' **Hamilton**, developed gear box trouble and was only available for water-skiing on Saturday. The officers, led by the Sqn Commander, **Maj Brian Kennedy**, cooked a barbecue for all and sundry on the Saturday evening

On Top of Skiddaw
Rear (*L-R*): Capt Whelan (PSAO), Cpl Lonergan, SSgt Al 'Rottweiller Spice' Keen, LCpl Albert Hicks, Sgt Chris Gouldson, Cpl Dave Kerr, Sgt 'Rooster' Coburn, Sgt Bob 'Pookie' Duffield.
Front (*L-R*): Sig Ben George, Sgt Sue Edge, Cpl 'Spider' Smith, Cpl Dougie 'Pathfinder' Pepper, Sgt Kev 'Corky' Westam, Maj Brian Kennedy(OC)

Ladybird Ridge–The end of the Trek

and the Squadron commander used the occasion to make a farewell presentation to **Sgt Chris Gouldson** to mark his posting to RSIT. The weekend proved to be a complete success with a lot of lessons learned and some people discovering the 'bottle' they never thought they had. We now look forward to our next Adventure Training weekend scheduled to take place in the Cairngorm mountains.

35 Sig Regt (V)

IT'S RAINING SO IT MUST BE ANNUAL TRAINING!

The Regiment's deployment on Annual Camp on Saturday 14 June saw the beginning of torrential rain that was to hound the UK for the following three weeks. As we headed towards Ramsgate and Harwich the weather deteriorated and the prospect of a rain free exercise was becoming remote. Thoughts depressingly turned to vehicles being bogged down all over Germany as the weather front was expected to cover Europe as well! No matter, we are now accustomed to operating in harsh conditions and as we approached the coast of Holland and Belgium our confidence and morale, despite the conditions on the Ramsgate ferry, was at its highest.

The move to the Bde concentration area at Leuth was uneventful and thanks to the efforts of the RSM's advance team the Regiment moved into its initial locations within the concentration area with the minimum of disruption. This bright start to the exercise was a good omen as the cloud cover over the exercise area thinned and the sun broke through. The good weather fortunately persisted up until the R & R phase when we were greeted with severe thunderstorms. By that time the vehicles had been turned around, 1st line inspections carried out, Det Folders brought up to date and, even though wet, we could at least relax and enjoy the time off and look forward to going home!

The Exercise itself was a huge success and once again the Regiment shone amongst its contemporaries, establishing and maintaining vital links. At one stage confidence in the Regiment's ability was so great that an Access Node from 58 Sqn commanded by **Capt Ashley Dillon**, was detached to 1 Sig Bde to provide a contingency link between 1 Bde and 11 Bde. This again was a great success and is expected to be repeated on future exercises

VISITOR'S PHASE

Notable visitors to our Annual exercise included DCinC Land, **Lt Gen Hugh Pike**. He made a flying visit to Access Node 664 based near Wuppertal on Wednesday 25 June and was clearly impressed by what he saw. Prior to this visit, GOC 5 Div, **Maj Gen R.V. Searby** accompanied by Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig D. J. Wills** visited Trunk Node 03 8 located on the Eggleberg on Monday 23 June. The GOC was escorted throughout his visit by the Node Comd, **Lt Alan White** and took time out to speak to many of the soldiers on site. Although what he thought of **Sig Barry Ashford**'s civilian occupation as a Male Stripper remains unrecorded. Over the weekend 21/22 June the Regiment was visited by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Councillor Sybil Spence** and her consort **Mr Dante Spence**. The Lord Mayor's visit concentrated on meeting soldiers from Sutton Coldfield and Sparkbrook. During her visits to HQ and 48 Sqns locations she thoroughly enjoyed talking to as many soldiers as she could from the Birmingham area and sampled some excellent field cuisine prepared by the RCWO, **WO2 Mick Cairney** and **Cpl Stephanie Gibbons** at RAF Bruggen. On the Saturday evening of her visit she was entertained by the Regimental Officer's at a special dinner at the Reaction Corps Mess at the Joint Headquarters based in Rheindahlen. Here she was joined by our Hon. Col, **Brig Ian Sim** who was also visiting the Regiment during the weekend.

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST . . .

Morale depends on many things from the way someone is treated to addressing and understanding an individual's personal needs, that can lead to a happy contented and revitalised soldier. One positive way of improving the spirit of the Regiment is by promoting and maintaining a sense of humour. Happily this exercise was no exception and was full of humorous incidents, some of which are repeated here. Nevertheless, a visitor from 33 Sig Regt to the Regiment's Hide Location near Langenberg may not have seen the funny side of life when he asked **Sgt Dave** 'Compo' **Butlin** for some hot water. The Signaller was directed to the Water Bowser, told to use the red tap and help himself–which he did!

Meanwhile **Sig Liz Judge** at some stage in the future is really looking forward to a tour with Battlebus in Category in Canada–at least that is what she told a visiting Media Ops team who were conducting a video interview. **Maj Steve Pell** on the journey over was appointed OIC Ship on the Ramsgate route and, judging by the amount of times he used it during the night, fell in love with the Ferries PA system–all that he didn't do was requests. He has justifiably earned the nickname 'Ping de Pong Pell' and even offered his services on the return journey! **SSgt Charlie Walker** a notable Regimental comic who likes a tipple received an unintentional dose of his own medicine on conclusion of the exercise. **Charlie** is still experiencing severe withdrawal symptoms after discovering the Bitburger beer he brought home, having spent a large proportion of his TA pay, was low alcohol. A simple case of 'Bitte nein Bit' I'm afraid. Continuing the humorous theme, on arrival at Herongen Camp (which covers a vast amount of real estate) the RSM's team like good soldiers religiously followed the TAC signs to the Regiment's harbour locations to no avail. Sheer desperation and frustration caused them to wave down a passing landrover the occupant of which advised the team to follow those TAC signs marked 40 Sig Regt! No our friends in the province were not to blame, but it is widely believed that this circuit breaker was one of Bdes efforts to boost morale. Finally, a word of advice to **Sgt Kevin Parkinson**, **Maj Colin Meikle** and all those unsung recce party heroes--if you travel in the right direction it can cut your journey time by more than half, PSAO 89 Sqn will put his shirt on it!

Sig Barry Ashford, with his kit on, explaining his civilian occupation to GOC Div
Sig Jackie Sheldon in the background cannot disguise her amusement even with those dark glasses!

Lt Anna Cliff and Sgt Phil Joyce keeping Alpha Troop in the frame!

Sig Julie Wills (why has my SCRAT not moved) and Sgt Micky Mann

A rare photograph of Comd 11 Sig Bde together with WO1 (RSM) Paul Horton.

The TA family–No trading places here, LCpl Martin Winstanley with his father WO2 (SSM) Clive Winstanley

PERMANENT STAFF ROUND-UP

To begin with it gives the Regiment great pleasure in congratulating **WO1 (RSM) Paul Horton** on his selection for commissioning. Staff changes as usual continue and during July and August we bade a sad farewell to **Capt John Speake** who leaves the army, **WO2 (FofS) Martin Drake**, **SSgt** 'Willie' **Scoots** and **SSgt Tom Brand**. All have served the Regt well and we wish them well in their new profession or appointment. As normal a special welcome has been extended to their successors and we have welcomed **Capt Jason Kennedy** our new Tech Adjt who promises to change our Rugby fortunes, **SSgt Derek Adams** the new SPSI in 95 Sqn and **WO2 (Fofs) Mark Hardy** our new Regt FofS.

36 (E) Sig Regt (V)
Ilford

LONDON DISTRICT RIFLE ASSOCIATION MEETING (LDRAM) 97–25TH-27TH APRIL
SHOOTING TEAM:

Capt White	44 Sqn (Team Capt)	**Sig Cole**	44 Sqn
Cpl Bliss	44 Sqn	**Sig Gowers**	44 Sqn
Cpl Byrne	44 Sqn	**Sig Harper**	44 Sqn
Cpl Child	44 Sqn	**Sig Nicholls**	44 Sqn (Res)
Sig Ellington	54 Sqn	**SSgt Haynes**	44 Sqn (PSI)

Buoyed up by recent successes at CORPSAM the team made it's way down to Pirbright ranges on the Friday evening. However, this time we knew we would be competing against the infantry and other people who have SUSATs permanently attached to their rifles and generally do a lot more shooting than the Corps does. There were 18 teams competing, each with 8 firers. Including individual entrants there were over 150 firers.

Saturday morning dawned and it was dull, overcast and drizzling. This was a decided disadvantage as we had only practiced in bright sunshine! The APWT, Roupell, FIBUA, MMTT and LSW matches were shot on the Saturday. The scores of the four rifle matches were aggregated to find out the top 24 individuals, who then went into a shoot off on Sunday morning. The 24th person had a total of 480 pts. From our team, **Cpl Byrne** was in 31st place with 469 pts, **Capt White** took 35th place with 451 pts and **Cpl Child** came 40th with 441 pts. Congratulations to **Sig Gowers** who won a medal for the best New Soldier score in the Moving Target competition. The Fire Team Assessment, Section Match and Falling Plate matches were fired on Sunday morning. The team did reasonably well in the first two infantry-orientated matches, considering we have never shot them before! Indeed, in the FTA, Charlie Fire Team's score beat those of both 10 Para's fire teams. In the Falling Plate, our plates unfortunately did not fall as quickly as required. Overall the team came ninth from 18 teams, which is a very good performance and we were beaten by teams from the Infantry, RLC, RE, PARA and the ULOTC. If we discount the Infantry teams and 'professional' RLC team, the only 'Other Arm' team to beat us was from 135 Topo Sqn (RE). We were placed ahead of teams from the RMP, Royal Yeomanry, London Regt, Int & Sy Gp, 101 Regt RE, 100 Regt RA and 31 Sig Regt.

Congratulations and thanks are due to all the team members who have taken part in the training and competitions, as well as to all those at RHQ who have given their time and support to the team.

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY SHOOTING BIELEFELD (IMSB) 97

Due to the withdrawal of a British team, three members of 44 Sqn (**Cpl Byrne, Sig Harper** and **Capt White**) were able to participate in this event as representatives of a Reserve Forces Association (RFA) team. After a 12 hour journey on the Friday, we arrived at the German barracks in Augustdorf to register. As we only had three firers, we were given **SFC Green** from the US National Guard, Little Rock, Arkansas, to make the team up to the required four.

The barracks held a variety of Bundeswehr units and the host unit for the event was a Panzer Grenadier Battalion. We found out that, if we had arrived there earlier that day, we could have driven a tank simulator as well as training tanks (a tracked chassis with a fake gun and glassed turret). Copies of the courses of fire were available in English which was just as well, since all the range commands were given in German! This led to a case of watching everyone else to see what they were doing, then copying them! We were on the exercise range complex at Sennelager Training Centre.

There were four courses of fire, all using Bundeswehr weapons. Namely the 7.62mm G3 rifle (a bit of a shock if you have only fired the gently-recoiling rifle 5.56mm before) the Uzi 9mm SMG and the 7.62mm MG3, which fires so quickly it is impossible to let off less than a three round burst. The G3 Precision match consisted of three sighters at 100m on a scoring target, being told where they had gone and adjusting point of aim accordingly for a further six rounds. The best six of the nine rounds were counted for score (HPS 60 pts). This was followed immediately by an ETR match which started with a 70m dash (up-range) to collect an 18 round magazine and a 70m dash back to the firing point, load, make ready and fire at a Fig 12c at 100m, all within 60 secs. This was followed by a further 5 x Fig 12c at 100m, 6 x Fig 12 at 200m and 6 x Fig 11 at 300m (HPS 18 hits = 72 pts). For the Uzi match, we had 3 sighters at 25m on a scoring target, followed by 12 rounds in 60 secs to count (HPS 120 x 0.5 = 60 pts). The MG3 matched required 14 targets at distances from 100m = 450m to be engaged by the team in 60 secs with each member having 20 rounds (HPS 14 hits x 14 = 196 pts).

The day's shooting was differently organised, in that the range staff knew on which range the teams were supposed to be and at what time. Unfortunately, this important information was not communicated to the teams, so a sort of laid-back chaos reigned. The shooting was followed by the presentation ceremony. As this was all in German, we relied on some friendly English-speaking competitors to provide a running commentary. We had the following notable successes:

G3 Precision Individual	lst Place	**Capt White** (Trophy)
G3 ETR Team Aggregate	lst Place	RFA Team (Trophy)
MG3 Team Aggregate	4th Place	RFA Team
Overall Team Aggregate	4th Place	RFA Team
Overall Individual Aggregate	2nd Place	**Capt White** (Trophy)

This is a very respectable set of results, considering that 80 teams participated (from nine countries) with a total of 317 individual firers competing. We even beat individual firers competing. We even beat (to their embarrassment when they found out we were TA) four British Regular teams from the RRW, RGJ and RAF Regt. There is always next year, lads!

The exposure to different nationalities Regular and Reserve teams gave us some insights into the way different armies operate:

1. The standards of drill would have sent a Guards RSM into a state of apoplexy.
2. Dress standards were of variable quality.
3. Earrings, long hair and beards apparently rule OK!
4. Salami, cheese and black bread every day for breakfast bring back the full fry.
5. There must be many unemployed dieticians in Europe.

In summary, it was a very fun but testing competition, which was topped off by a successful result for the team. On the social side, new friendships were made and potential exchange trips negotiated. We hope to attend next year and go for the team 1st prize, which is a trophy that is 3ft high and called . . . 'The Herman'

45 (E) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

On Thursday 12 June, **Maj Bob Appleton**, OC 45 Sig Sqn, who are based at the TA Centre in Colchester, presented prizes to his winning team of three women TA soldiers, who took part in the National Orienteering event held at Penhale near Newquay, Cornwall. Competing against several hundred competitors, including nine female teams, **SSgt Louise Walker**, **Sgt Janet Lindsey** and **Cpl Rose Prince** won the Relay Competition and were awarded the Harris Cup for the second year running! 32 year old **Louise**, who lives in Colchester and has been in the TA for nine years, and a Civil Engineer in her civilian life, is currently working on the M11 link road. 33 year old **Janet**, who lives in East Bergholt, is a BT Accounts Manager in London, and 36 years old **Rose** works for Britvic. **Louise** and **Janet** (who joined the TA together 9 years ago) and **Rose** all completed the gruelling course in record time. Said **Louise**, 'This was the first time we had used the course in Penhale and it was one of the most difficult maps (because of all the sand dunes) I had ever had to read.' She added, 'The Internal Orienteering Competition was held there at Easter and I can certainly say that it was challenging to say the least!'

The CO said, 'The Team were marvellous and my special congratulations must go to **Louise** who has also won this year's Royal Signals TA Orienteering Womens' Championship and the Army TA Orienteering Womens' Champion. A wonderful achievement.'

Major Bob Appleton and Cpl Rose Prince (Harris Relay Team)

SSgt Louise Walker Royal Signals TA Orienteering Womens' Champion 1997 and Army TA Orienteering Champion 1997

Change of Address?

Have we demoted you?
Spelt your name incorrectly?
Got your address wrong?
Not receiving your copy of 'The Wire'?

If you answer 'Yes', to one or more of the above COMMUNICATE!

Write to the Editor and let him know

38 Sig Regt (V)
Sheffield

CO — **Lt Col I. W. Griffiths**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) M. P. Bovle**

SHOOTING TEAM–BISLEY 1997

The Regimental Shooting Team attended the TA Skill at Arms Meeting at Bisley on the 4-6 July. All those selected had made great efforts to be released from their civilian jobs, in order to be able to travel down on Thursday evening. The team were actually accommodated in the Inns of Court Pavilion, owned by 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt, and were grateful throughout a rainy weekend that they were not accommodated in tentage, as were others.

Through Friday and Saturday, the competition was no different from most others. In two days, teams completed the Combat Team Snap, the Whitehead, the Roupell, the Service Pistol Match, the Whittaker MTR Match, the Roberts, the Parachute Regiment Cup and the LMG Match. Of course, there were ups and downs. **Sig Paul Hartley**, a B Class shot was joint third overall in the Whittaker MTR Match. He scored 47 out of 50 and beat over 100 infanteers and A Class shots, not to mention all of the other B Class shots. **OCdt Dan Milnor** and **Cpl Wayne Thorp** both had good shoots in the LMG Match to come half way up the table of scores. **Cpl Wayne Thorp** scored 122 while **OCdt Dan Milnor** broke 100 for the first time. Meanwhile, **SSgt Kev Clark** scored 149 with the pistol, and has subsequently been selected as a reserve for the TA Team to travel to the United States National Guard Skill at Arms Meeting. That is to name but a few of the excellent performances; everybody did exceptionally well but it was **Cpl Drew Hall** who was the team's best individual shot, while **Sig Paul Hartley** was the best B Class shot. In their first major shooting competition, **LCpl Steve Furness**, **LCpl B. P. Paton** and **Sig Mark Griffin**, the other B Class shots, all fired exceptionally well.

On Saturday the team spent a well-earned and enjoyable evening visiting neighbouring lodges. The highlight of this particular evening was the presentation by the Canadian Reserve Forces Shooting Team of a Canadian flag. The team then began Sunday with a hearty breakfast at 'Jenny's', the infamous mobile cafeteria which sits near to Century Range in Bisley Camp.

Sunday, the final day, saw the arrival of the CO, **Lt Col Ian Griffiths** just in time to watch the Section Match. Like the Parachute Regiment Cup, the Section Match is an excellent match involving all members of the team who must both concentrate and shoot well throughout. Once again, and in common with the preceding two days, the team fired very well to gain a good position in the overall table. Following the shoot, the team posed on Century Range for the photograph below.

Back Row (*L-R*): LCpl Steve Furness, Sig Paul Hartley, Sig Mark Griffin, SSgt Kev Clark, Cpl Drew Hall.
Front Row (*L-R*): LCpl B. P. Paton, OCdt Dan Milnor, Cpl Wayne Thorp and WO2 Andy Medley

Eventually, the competitors, senior officers and photographers met in the pavilion ballroom for the presentation of prizes by **Lt Gen Hugh Pike**. The team was presented with a number of prizes. Firstly, the Mercury Cup presented to the Best Royal Signals Team at the Meeting. Better still was to come third amongst all non-Infantry units, for which the team were awarded bronze medals. **Sig Hartley** was also awarded a bronze medal for coming third in the Whittaker MTR Match, as mentioned earlier in this article. This was an enjoyable weekend and a successful one. The Team, along with 'hangers-on' **Capt Nell Makepeace**, and **Sgts Paul Parker** and **Phil Preston**, and butt markers **LCpls Vinny Shay** and **Fraser Newton**, returned by late on Sunday night to Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham and Leicester.

EUROPEAN IRONMAN TRIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 10th European Ironman Triathlon Championships were held in Roth, Bavaria on 13 July 1997. **WO1 (RSM) Mick Boyle** and **SSgt (SPSI) Andy Baird** (5 Sqn, 39 Sig Regt) went out to rub shoulders with the professionals and try to improve on last year's performance. At the top end of the race the Belgian, Lue van Lierde smashed the world best time in 7hrs 50mins. **Andy Baird** completed it in 12 hours 40 minutes and **Mick Boyle** beat his previous best time to finish in 13hrs 45mins. **Mick** and **Andy** would like to thank everyone who donated to this year's chosen charity, which was the Leukemia Research Fund and helped to raise £1000.

WARCOP TROPHY–12-13 JULY 1997

Following on from their success in winning Warcop 96, the LAD entered a team into Warcop 97 in a bid to retain the trophy. The Warcop Trophy was originally designed to be a purely TA REME competition held over a weekend to test military skills. Over the years the event has grown and now includes a number of teams from Regular REME units. The event this year was different to those that had gone before, since the format had changed. Previous competitions were predominantly a test of military skills, while this one tested a greater number of trade disciplines, under extreme pressure, in realistic combat scenarios. The stands included recovery tasks, battle damage repair, command tasks and manufacturing tasks to name but a few. The team finished second amongst the TA teams, an excellent result against fierce competition.

The LAD won the following stands and trophies:
Overall Runners Up TA Team
Assault Course–Best TA Team
First Aid–Best TA Team
Driving Skills–Best TA Team
Serco Defence Trophy

Back Row (*L-R*): Sgt 'Jonno' Johnson, Cpl 'Harold' Wilson, Cpl Wayne Thorp, Cpl Lee Swift
Front Row (*L-R*): Cpl Norman Elliott, SSgt Kev Clarke, Cpl Dave Moffitt, Cpl Peter Allen

REGIMENTAL WALK 1997

46 Sig Sqn ran and administered this year's Regimental Walk. **Sgt Graham Fleming**, our resident PSI Tech, and the OC, **Maj Kevin Flanagan**, then took it upon themselves to start the planning and route selection and getting the various necessary clearances. Team training started under **Capt Thelma Ward** and **Sgt Pete Beedle**. The event took place 4-5 July. As in previous years two walks were available, the Long Walk consisting of approximately 37km and a Short Walk of about 21km for those people who are more physically challenged than other. For a change, this years event was organised and run from the TAC of 46 (City of Derby) Sig Sqn (V) and look place in the Derbyshire Dales Peak National Park as a charity event. Each squadron nominated its own local charity. Opening the event up to non-Regimental teams meant that 17 civilians (the oldest being 70 year old **Mr Hirst** of Sheffield) were able to participate in the Walk. The abundance of good walking trails in the Dales meant that the Long Walk could take place along the High Peak Trail whilst the Short Walk took place on the Tissington Trail.

A walk briefing on the Friday evening by the Squadron OC, **Maj Kevin Flanagan**, ensured that everyone was fully prepared for the very early breakfast and departure the next morning. Fortunately, the weather held for the duration of the event. By mid-morning both walks had begun, with some 141 people involved in both walking and providing the necessary administrative backup. Indeed, the medical cover provided by **Lt Rachel Ashton** from 212 Field Hospital RAMC (V) in Sheffield and the support provided to the checkpoint personnel by **Staff Commander Vicky Barkaway** and her ladies of the FANY ensured that the event ran smoothly.

(*L-R*): Cpl Sue Wright, LCpl Sarah Wilde, LCpl Angie Elliott, LCpl Alex Darbyshire, LCpl Claire Furness, Sgt Julie Potts

Of the 96 walkers, 76 elected to suffer the Long Walk with the fastest team arriving at the finish in a time of 5 hrs 55 mins. In all, five trophies are presented annually for various categories on the Walk. This year 46 Sqn ran away (literally) with all but one of the prizes (honestly). The notable exception was **Pte** 'Betsy' **Betts** of HQ Sqn who won the Rita Warburton Trophy for the best female performance on the Short Walk in a time of 4hrs 3mins.

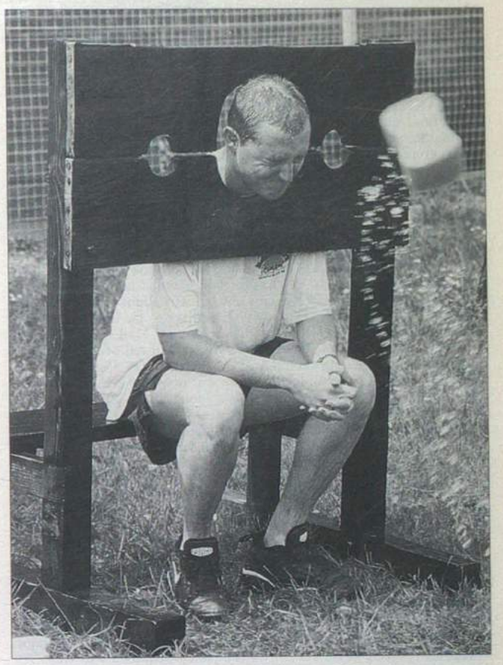
Sig Sharon Newton of 46 Signal Squadron receiving the trophy for the Fastest Overall Time for the Long Walk and the trophy for Best Individual Effort from the Mayor of Derby, Councillor John Fuller

The Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Ian Griffiths**, and Training Major, **David Larkam**, who both did the 37km-route were heard to say the last 6kms were the killer. Aaahh! The presentation of trophies by the Mayor and Mayoress of Derby, **Councillor John Fuller** and **Mrs Gill Fuller**, took place on Saturday evening in the Derby TAC. This was followed by a barbecue meal which was gratefully received by all, as were the drinks which were available from the well supported bar. As an event this year's Regimental Walk proved to be a great success and showed, once again, that 46 Sig Sqn is well able to provide a physically challenging but well supported activity.

30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS–64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Thirty years of 64 Sig Sqn (V) were celebrated at an open day followed by an evening disco on 12 July. Approximately 400 past and present members of the Squadron and their guests attended the celebrations which brought together old comrades and forged new friendships.

Amongst the day's events were a number of stands which included everything from modern artillery pieces and signals equipment to vehicles and equipment dating from the 1940s to our current up-to-the-minute sophisticated communications detachments. All the Squadron hierarchy took their turn in the stocks as did our SPSI, **SSgt Stan Kelly**. **Sgt Anne Simmons** rustled up the hamburgers and hot dogs for our guests, whilst **SSgt Dave Burton** kept the beer both cool and flowing, much to the appreciation of the 'Old Comrades' as they reminisced about times gone by. 64 Sqn was originally formed on 1 April 1967 as part of 38 Sig Regt (V). Our long-serving admin officer, **Miss Kath House**, who commenced work as a civil servant for the Squadron in 1965 and who also served 27 years in the TA, had the most busy day. She had served in one capacity or another with each and every one of those in attendance. In recognition of her long service to the unit and her involvement in tracking down ex-members for the guest list, the CO presented her with a basket of flowers.



SSgt Stan Kelly on the receiving end for a change

OPEN EVENING FOR BUSINESSES

87 Sig Sqn worked hard to make this Open Evening a success and were pleased that the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Nottingham, **Councillor** and **Mrs Greensmith**, and many of the Squadron's other friends could attend on 24 June.

Capt Andy Smith gave a presentation on the Role of the Regiment and Benefits for Businesses. Then all of the visitors were allowed to tour the TA Centre and talk to the soldiers who were operating their equipment inside and outside of the Drill Hall. The Lady Mayoress was presented with a cheque for £275 payable to Nottingham Mencap that was raised by a team from the Regiment who entered the Mencap Challenge Competition. The team called 'Girlpower' consisting of **Capt Jane Hindle**, and **Lts Maria Hawksworth** and **Bev Swift**, were disappointed to be beaten by a team of Hairdressers!

Cpl Nesbitt with the Lord and Lady Mayoress

39 (Skinners) Sig Regt

CO — **Lt Col H. A. R. Hancock**
Trg Maj — **Maj A. D. P. Shaw**

PERMANENT STAFF ADVENTURE TRAINING
by Sgt Ian 'And another thing' Wheeler

With the rain lashing down and the sun on a temporary sabbatical there was a severe lack of holiday atmosphere upon our arrival at Capel Curig training camp. There was, however an underlying feeling of trepidation amongst the permanent staff when it was announced that the Training Major, **Maj Tony** 'Two Stops Short Of Dagenham' **Shaw**, was responsible for the selection of the hill walking routes.

The first day was dedicated to walking a 13km route taking in some of the most breathtaking sights the Welsh countryside had to offer. Unfortunately for us we didn't see a thing as the cloud base was at about 3ft for the whole of the day. On the plus side, the mist stopped us noticing just how hard it was raining! It is now obvious why all the photos available in Betws-Y-Coed were all taken in 1963, as that was the last time the sun made an appearance! **Sgt Robbie** 'Judas Iscariot' **Hall** made a valiant attempt to avoid the whole day out by throwing himself off a rock in the first 100 metres. This proved not to be as successful as **SSgt Richie** 'JR Hartley' **Arundell**'s excuse that his knee was poorly, which it was–very. At the end of the walk, when asked if everyone had got something out of the day the unanimous answer was yes . . . extremely wet!

Day two saw the completely insane again put their names down for hill walking with Chris Bonnington's fitter brother whilst those with more sense enlisted to go canoeing or climbing on the indoor wall. The highlight of the climbing was watching the Adjutant, **Capt** 'Trapper' **John Norris** demonstrate his amazing cat like agility under the direction of **SSgt Danny** 'Piltdown Man' **Daniels**. However, the highlight of the canoeing was watching **SSgt Alfonso** 'Made Up Name' **Tocker** trying to find somewhere dry to keep his fags.

The start of day three was marred by an amazing administrative error that resulted in the three men voted 'Least Likely to Hill walk Again' being selected to accompany the Training Major on an assault on the North Face of the Eiger. **Sgts Ian** 'You Promised us a cafe' **Wheeler**, **Mick** 'Are We There Yet?' **Jervis** and **Robbie** 'It was a joke . . . Honest' **Hall** were impressed with the walk, the blisters and the way the Training Major disappeared leaving them with only a compass to find their way back. As they couldn't think of a use for perfectly drawn circles on the top of a Welsh mountain, they ended up selecting the most difficult route for the descent and fell down that instead! Apparently everyone else did some climbing and canoeing but as I was on the Training Majors jaunt I was too tired to ask them about it on their return!

At the end of the week it was obvious that everyone had had a great time, this was illustrated by the deafening silence that greeted the Training Major's enquiry about whether we had all enjoyed ourselves! So, as the pubs in Betws cancel their temporarily increased beer orders the Training Major and RSM, **WO1 Mick** 'Adjt–Please insert nickname here, he won't shout at you' **Williams** are sorting out next years adventure training trip. The remainder of us sit with fingers crossed and pray that we end up somewhere flat, perhaps Norfolk!

HQ SQUADRON
THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VISIT TO BRISTOL BY THE POLISH PATRIOT TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO
by Sgt Nick Marsh

Polish Patriot Celebrations
(*L-R*): LCpl Mark Taylor, Sgt Mick Jervis, Sgt Bob Gleed, Sgt Nick Marsh, Pte Paul Frowde

On Saturday 14 June five members of the Squadron formed an honour guard in Queens Square to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the visit to Bristol by the Polish Patriot **Tadeusz Kosciuszko**. The ceremony was held outside 37 Queens Square the actual house he stayed in. It consisted of a Polish choir in national dress and trumpeters from 6 LI, Bath. The honoured guests were the Consul General of the Republic of Poland and the High Sheriff of Bristol. The ceremony went very well and we all retired to the reception held at the Polish Church Hall on Cheltenham Rd. We were received and treated very well indeed, in fact their gratitude was at times a little overwhelming. We met and spoke to a number of veterans and managed to recruit a 75 year old to the Royal Signals Association who had served with 11 Sig Regt during the times when everyone was issued with real bullets. Rumour has it that we were sent on this job as they did not want us old ones in the Lively Lynx team for the Lafone Cup competition.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj Paul Wenlock**
2IC — **Capt Dai Jones**

EXERCISE SILVER LYNX
by Sgt Sarah Sachno

The Squadron deployed on Friday 11 July to provide communications using NCRS, MOULD, DUST and FFR to Hullavington Airfield as part of a Regimental Exercise. **Sgt Chris Minchella** was put to the fullest test of ability in her new senior NCO rank coping with a larger than average number of new members. **Sigs McGhee, McClure, Morgan, Priest** and **Sumner** were amongst those discovering their first taste of the communications equipment. Despite this a couple of them are off to join the Regular Army Royal Signals. **Sgt Sarah Sachno** accepted the role of 'pro-tem' Yeoman of Signals for the exercise and the only panic she caused, as far as we know, was to mislay her complete kit for the whole weekend. It turned up 36 hours later–saturated and sitting in the long grass where it had been left when she unloaded it on the Friday evening.

The weekend was a success and those who attended enjoyed a successful communications phase despite having to cope with torrential rain during the early hours of Sunday morning when **SSgt Arundel**, the Regimental Training SNCO, was seen moving like a fish through the puddles.

EXERCISE HAPPY RAMBLER

For the fourth year running the PSAO **Capt Bob Sheldon** and **Smudge**, his Cocker Spaniel, have encouraged a number of permanent and civilian staff around the South Downs on Ex Happy Rambler organised by 56 Sig Sqn from Eastbourne. In order to ensure there was ample representation from the Squadron, **Sgt Judith Phillips** and **LCpl Tina Strachan**, **SSgt Andy Baird** and his wife **Dawn** went along. **Sgt Robbie Hall** encouraged his civilian technician **Matt Kidney** to join us. **Matt** is proud to boast of his achievement of completing the walk, however when asked about next year–translated into publishable text–NO!! was the answer.

THE MAYOR'S SUNDAY–BANBURY

2Lt Sarah Hunter, OC RRTT for the Squadron, set up and ran an excellent recruiting stand at the Town Mayor's Sunday on 6 July. **Sgt Chris Minchella** achieved her life long ambition to appear in the local press with the Mayor, a life-sized dog and two future recruits!!

EXERCISE KIMNEL CAPER–NORTH WALES

The Squadron attended a weekend of Adventure Training in the Rhyl Area of North Wales staying in Kimnel Bay Training Camp. The weekend was organised by **Lt Ruth Empson**, ably assisted by the PSIs. The activities arranged included hillwalking, swimming and dry slope skiing. To round it all off the Squadron tried its hand at Go Karting with a number of spectacular incidents that may see the future Formula 1 racing champion as a member of the AGC. **Pte Elizabeth Matthews** entered the pit lane from the wrong end and still managed to re-enter the track ahead of the others. **LCpl** 'Paddy' **Ferguson** blindly followed much to everyone's amusement. **Cpl Jarvis Cleaver** our RLC Chef, a landscape gardener by trade, is having his mowers converted, or is he having a go-kart converted to a mower!! **LCpl Steve** 'The Video' **Brady** has the whole event on tape. However, as he had the slowest lap times, no one has yet been privy to viewing it. Needless to say it was fun and both **Pte Elizabeth Matthews** and **Lt Ruth Empson** wanted to stay and have another go.

ATTACHMENT TO ARMY CADET CAMP
by Cpl Paul Milner

Unable to attend camp due to having to work in the USA, **Cpl Paul Milner** volunteered to take an active part as a Member of the Royal Signals Training team at an Army Cadet Force Summer Camp at Wathgill over the period 28 June-19 July 97. The cadets were from a variety of sponsored units from both state and boarding schools throughout the country. The standards varied but it was more than obvious that all the cadets enjoyed the pride and rivalry such organisations bring to them. The training centred on teaching the cadets basic communications principles using VRC321 and PRC320 Radios. This involved Voice Procedure, setting up and tuning, mast erection, line laying and radio procedure. Training culminated in a simple communications exercise passing information both over radio and field telephone. The Squadron has had a number of recent successful recruits from our own Cadet Force at Banbury so the work is definitely productive.

IRONMAN ROTH 1997
by SSgt Andy Baird

Our PSI (Ops) **SSgt Andy Baird** took part in the 10th Anniversary of Ironman Championships at Roth, Nr Nuremberg, in Southern Germany. Ironman consists of a 4km swim, 112km cycle ride followed by a full marathon. It's a world class event at which this years winner **Luc Van Lierde** broke the world record by coming in to finish in 8 hours 50 minutes.

Competing for the third time were **WOI (RSM) Mick Boyle** of 38 Sig Regt and **SSgt Andy Baird** of 5 Sqn. No records were broken, however, despite work and injuries (**Andy** had just taken a leading part in the winning TA Team in Lanyard Trophy for 39 Sig Regt) a creditable finish time was achieved with the added bonus of **Mick Boyle** beating his PB with 13:45:46. The chosen charity this year was Leukaemia Research Fund and a final sum of £1000 was raised. Next year it is intended to form a Corps Team (Names to **Andy Baird** on 724 8032) and also a 5 Sqn TA Team.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
OFFICERS 200TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

As part of the Squadron's Bi-Centennial celebrations, the Squadron Officers held a formal dinner in the Squadron's new palatial HQ to mark the founding of the Middlesex Yeomanry. Hosted by the current OC, **Maj Paul Willmott** and his wife **Tara**, the Squadron welcomed all surviving former Sqn Comds and the COs of 47 Sig Sqn. Guests of honour were our Bde Comd, **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, Sqn Hon Col, Corps Commander (WTS FANY) **Mrs A. Whitehead OBE**, and the Secretary of the Greater London TAVRA, **Brig Marchant-Smith**.

The occasion was a terrific success thanks to the considerable hard work of the permanent staff under direction of **Capt David Gibson** (late Coldstream Guards) and **SSgt (SQMS) Andy Cummings** and the fact that the OC **Maj Paul Willmott** decided not to give a lengthy speech on this occasion. PMC was **Capt Chris Gillespie** and the Mess Manager for the evening was **SSgt Cynthia Jackson** from 31 Sig Regt The chefs were provided by the Household Cavalry Regiment and the Lucknow Band of the Prince of Wales Division played throughout the dinner.

COURT AND SOCIAL

Farewells are extended to **SSgt** 'Taff' **Davies** (PSI Ops) who is now on his YofS Course and to **Sgt Pete Reeve** (PSI Tech) who has left to join 15 Sig Regt. In their place we welcome **SSgt Mark Tocker** from 1 Div and **Sgt Ian Wheeler** from 15 Sig Regt. Welcomes also to **Sgt Simon Loftus** who after three months with 81 Sig Sqn has decided to return to the fold, **LCpl Angela Rich** who joins from 57 Sig Sqn in Bristol, **Lt Matt Watts** from 35 Sig Regt (V) and **2Lt Mike Smith** from Tayforth UOTC.

On the social front congratulations to **Cpl Paula Goddard** who won the Regiment's 'Skinners Award' as the best all round female soldier for 1996-97, who got promoted in May and engaged in June. Congratulations also to other promotees **LCpl Cath Corcoran** and **LCpl Allison Ellis** and to **2Lt Rod** 'Not Rodney' **Hook** on passing his Commissioning Course at Sandhurst.

EXERCISE CAPITAL PURSUIT 97

After being informed by the SQMS, **SSgt** 'Grumpy Grandad' **Cummings**, that the Squadron Gore-Tex was for storing and not for issuing, 37 members of the Squadron departed for Stanta. The torrential rain only served to make taking part in Ex Capital Pursuit, the only major London District TA exercise this year, more enjoyable.

The role of the Squadron was two fold, establish comms for both enemy and friendly forces and provide a platoon to be attached to 10 Para to act as enemy. The comms side of things proved to be no problem for the Sqn Yeoman in waiting, **Sgt Jim** 'Roy Orbison' **Bole**, once four people had assisted getting his bouffant hairdo into his helmet GS. All of the FFR dets managed to set up and establish comms within a few hours of arrival. The temporary infantry platoon, commanded by **Lt Marcus** 'Biggles' **Senescal**, with help from his sidekick, **OCdt Rod** 'Its not short for Rodney' **Hook**, managed to get completely soaked attempting to erect bashas in the middle of their location. Despite numerous words of advice from the ever cheerful PSI (Tech) **Sgt Ian** 'I don't have to be here you know' **Wheeler**, the intrepid platoon commander refused to get his head down until he was more drenched than the men under his command. According to 47's answer to Monty, getting soaked for no apparent reason is a requirement.

The arrival of two RAF pumas at EXCON caused a degree of excitement amongst the FFR det who had never seen a helicopter before. **Sgt Ian** 'Golden Pertex' **Wheeler** managed to persuade the RAF to take the det on a jolly by telling the pilot that it was **Cpl Paula** 'Blonde Bombshell' **Goddard**'s birthday. There is of course no truth in the rumour that he wouldn't have tried if it had been **Cpl Bob** 'Self Basting' **Young** who had the birthday instead of the blonde, blue eyed, **Cpl Paula Goddard**. In the end the majority of the Squadron got to experience the joys of airsickness with the 'Birthday Girl' being flown in the cockpit jump seat and being attended to by the best the brylcreem boys had to offer! Commiseration to **Cpl Bob** 'Self Basting' **Young** who missed out on the helicopter jolly. Sorry **Bob**, but it wasn't our fault that the RAF had deployed without an underslung load net!

Whilst EXCON det were enjoying themselves, the infantry platoon were locked in an epic battle to the death to defend a bridge of strategic importance. For this mammoth task, their numbers were augmented by the PSI (Ops) **SSgt** 'Tock' **Tocker** and the PSAO **Capt Dave** 'Has anyone seen my Pace Stick' **Gibson**. After a hard fought battle, the intrepid warriors were beaten back from the bridge by the heroic friendly forces. **Capt Dave** 'Pack Horse' **Gibson** was last seen retreating with surprising speed, considering he was weighted down with a platoons worth of Bergens at the time. I bet it wasn't like that at Radfan was it Sir? **Cpl Garry** 'Bosnia veteran' **Cheshire** deserves special mention for his ammunition during the battle. With his rifle set on automatic he managed to empty at least two magazines before the first empty case hit the floor. This was achieved whilst continuing to shout incomprehensible fire control orders. At ENDEX it was unanimously agreed that the exercise had been worthwhile with a lot of new skills being learned. With the war over, the tired weary warriors headed back to the TA Centre just in time for tea and medals. on a more serious note, the Squadron are praying that the OC, **Maj Paul** 'Thermarest' **Willmott** stops complaining about **LCpl Dave Strevens** nicking his bed within the next six months.

57 (CITY & COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Since our last contribution, there have been a number of changes in Squadron appointments. We have said goodbye to the 2IC, **Capt Steve Smith** who leaves us on taking up a new civilian teaching job but will be staying in uniform with the CCF. In his place we welcome **Capt David Watson** who comes to us from 31 Sig Regt (V). We have also welcomed back **2Lt Jeremy** 'Dan' **Ackroyd** as OC T Tp after some months overseas. As reported elsewhere by the Regiment, the Squadron provided 14 out of the 20 team members of the two Regiment teams that entered the Lanyard Trophy Competition. The Regiment A team was the winner of the TA trophy, and the B team were one of a very few other teams to finish. The Squadron also provided members of the admin and back-up team.

June saw the annual Inter Sqn military skills competition for the Lafone Cup. The Squadron entered two teams and after two days hard competition, the A team, led by **Capt David** 'Too new to have a proper nickname' **Watson** and **Sgt Mike White** were the winners. The B team led by **Capt Steve Smith** came equal fourth, beating the other Squadron's B teams, a very creditable performance as the team included several soldiers who had not yet done a recruits course.

THE LAFONE CUP
by 'A Signaller'

After being split into teams, Saturday morning started with a series of training stands in preparation for the competition in the afternoon. The morning was spent practising grenade throwing, the use of pyrotechnics, zeroing rifles and bayonet training. I'm not sure if the enemy would be scared by our war faces or if they would be distracted with laughter–and it seemed to be a competition within itself to see who could demolish the dummies first!

The competition consisted of eight different stands. These being Casualty Evacuation Under Fire, Close Quarter Battle Skills, Observation Skills, BATCO, Section Attacks, First Aid, Command Tasks and live firing on the range. It was an excellent opportunity to put into practice some of the skills we had learnt about in a classroom and understand the importance of working as a team. Although exhausting, it was an excellent weekend and I would recommend it to anyone if the opportunity arises again. You weren't expected to know everything, just to put in a 100% effort, and there was an opportunity after completing each stand for a de-brief and discuss any points about the exercise.

Victorious Lafone Cup team
Back Row (*L-R*): Sig Rob Cornish, Sgt Mike White, LCpl Ian Foster, Capt David Watson
Front Row (*L-R*): Sigs Dave Jones, Kevin May, Ben Dutton and Dave Smith.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

In August, the Squadron went adventure training in Snowdonia and the sun actually shone. Saturday was spent walking on various routes, including the Snowdon horseshoe and the Glyders. Comments overheard included:

'No-one told me it was going to be this narrow.'

'Yes, don't worry, I've got my eyes shut.'

'It's much safer when it's foggy because you can't see how far it is to fall.'

However, everyone arrived back at Capel Curig Camp none the worse for wear and with a sense of achievement and the beers in the local pub were well earned. Next morning the group split into three, according to whether the preference was canoeing, mountain biking or horse riding. I can't speak for the others, but those of us who thought horse riding meant the horse would do all the work soon found out how wrong we were. Although we went most of the way at a walk or a gentle trot, the horses had a fixation with leaping off the road onto the grass verge and putting their heads down to eat at every possible opportunity despite their riders best efforts. Comments overheard included:

'Help, I'm out of control.'

'Yes, I'm trying to stop him.'

'It's easier to let him eat, he's stronger than me.'

'I don't think mine has a second gear.'

Suffice to say there were more aches and pains after this episode than after walking all the way up Snowdon.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND

by Sig Winterson

On the morning of Saturday 2 August, following our briefing of the agenda for the day we set off for what I thought was a walk/climb to the summit of Snowdon, on the track of the Snowdon Horseshoe. The question asked at our briefing, 'Is anyone scared of heights?' did not really seem significant at the start of the day's walk. Starting at around 10am every one in our group of 14 was enthusiastic to get going. Most had 'done this type of thing' before, only one or two like myself who had not. I was fairly surprised to see so many people climbing Snowdon, from fell runners to families with teenage children. I suppose this variety put my mind at rest as to what I was about to tackle. The day was going well, a few photos for the album being taken and breathtaking views on what was a clear and pleasant day.

After deciding the day was going well, everyone still smiling, we came to the 'Knife Edge'. Not realising the extent of this I carried on climbing with the encouragement of my fellow team-mates. Until I found myself walking along the top of the knife-edge with a huge drop each side. My breathing and heart rate decided to double time and I froze for a while. I looked around and took in the views and then decided to carry on. It wasn't the 'scared of heights' bit but lack of confidence. At this point I have to thank **Sig Dave Jones** for his encouragement, even suggesting I might buy him a pint that evening. His 'It's not far now,' seemed to go on forever but once looking back on what I had climbed it wasn't that far after all. The rest of the climb was great. No more knife-edges, so I grew in confidence all the time. Once we reached the summit I could sigh with relief, although was baffled when I saw a woman in a short skirt pushing a push-chair. The team worked very well together and I must thank them all for encouraging me all the way. My first experience was a good one, and looking back I would do it all again.

71 Sig Regt (V)
Bexleyheath

CO — **Lt Col R. K. Wilkinson TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) A. S. 'Dos' Martyres**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We bid a final farewell to **Maj Steve Jones**, our former Quartermaster, on his retirement from the Army. We welcome **Maj John Aspinall**, **Carol** and **Samantha**. We wish them a successful and happy stay here.

LANYARD TROPHY 1997

This year saw the addition of a TA 30-mile and a female 30-mile course to the normal 40-mile event. With much persuasion and encouragement from the RSM and team leaders the Regiment fielded three teams, one in each category. All three teams finished their respective courses in excellent times as shown below. The 40-mile team (the only TA team in this category) was all from 265 (KCLY) Sqn led by **Capt Keith Duffy Penny** and 2IC **SSgt John Lynch**. They completed the course in 16 hours 30 minutes and came a brilliant 10th out of 19 teams.

40 Mile Team
Standing: SSgt Lynch, Sig Keeble, Capt Duffy Penny, Sig Dunseith, LCpl Pryke, LCpl Keeler
Kneeling: LCpls Woodhams, King, Tanner (D), Tanner (S)

OCdt Picton led the 30-mile male team and the 2IC was **WO2 (SSM) Pieper**. The team was made up of soldiers from four squadrons and serving at four different TAC's! Training together was a problem but it was overcome and the result was an excellent second place which, but for a scenic route detour for two hours could have been first place.

30-Mile Male Team
Standing: OCdt Downing, Sigs Melvin Sparkes, Burke, SSgt Rose, SSgt Murphy
Front: Sgt Feather, OCdt Picton, Sig Foxwell, LCpl John, WO2 (SSM) Pieper

The 30-Mile Female Team of seven females came second. The group comprised of five members of 70 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn and the remaining two from Regt HQ. They were the only female TA team to enter. It was a thoroughly exhausting but exhilarating experience, the highlight of which was beating a male team in on the final 20-metre stretch! The ladies are keen to enter again next year and hope to better their completion time and have a boogie at the disco afterwards!!

The 30-Mile All Women's Team
Standing: Sig Cloughton, LCpl Topley, WO2 Ramsay, Sig Gratze
Kneeling: LCpl Smith, Sig Pilcher, Lt Shelton

265 (KCLY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Simon Malik**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Keith Wrate**

FAREWELLS AND HELLOS

The last two months has seen a large turnover in the Squadron. On their way to new appointments are **Capt Huw Jones** from 2IC 265 to 2IC HQ Sqn, **Lt Sarah Shelton** from OC 884 Tp to OC MTT and **WO2 (SSM) Mustoe** from SSM 265 to SSM HQ Sqn. This has caused some restructuring within 265, with **Capt Keith Duffy-Penny** moving from OC 887 Tp to Sqn Ops Offr, **Lt Penny Wood** becoming OC 884 Tp and **2Lt Penny Clements** taking over as OC 887 Tp. The Squadron has a new SSM in the shape of **WO2 (SSM) Keith Wrate** and 887 Tp has a new Tp Sgt in **Sgt Steve Sefer**. Sadly some soldiers are leaving, **Sgt Andy Westlake**, PSI (T), is leaving the Army after 12 years of service, good luck **Andy**, and **Sig Steve Turner** is leaving the TA to become a police officer with the Met Police, all the best **Steve**. Finally welcome to **LCpl Tracy Bailey** who has transferred from 39 Sig Regt.

The Squadron has been very busy during the months of June and July, training in preparation for our deployment to Belgium on Ex Orient Express, our Annual Camp for this year. It all started with a successful range weekend at Pirbright to qualify the Squadron for their APWT and subsequent field firing in Belgium.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The following weekend saw all the officers and NCO's going to St Martin's Plain Camp near Folkestone to brush up on their leadership skills. There were several entertaining moments over the course of the two days, not least a video, taken secretly by the PSI, **SSgt John Lynch**, of the participants moving into and out of an OP site, many thanks from all involved to **OCdt Julia Lattaway** for the view! The SQMS, **Sgt Dave Whitehouse**, volunteered to be a casualty for the casevac stand, however he hadn't anticipated the bumps, bruises, scrapes and scratches he's got after being dropped on his head so often.

EXERCISE RURAL PURSUIT

Ex Rural Pursuit saw the Squadron deploying to sites throughout the south east in our NCRS (National Communications Radio System) role. After a painless deployment on Friday night all stations settled down to a weekend of det drills and comms procedures. One det worthy of mention was that run by **Cpl** 'Ridgy' **Ridgewell**. Not only were they navigationally challenged, in locating the correct site, but when comms were difficult, **Sig Kenny Foxwell** decided to enter the All Arms Mould Radio Bouncing Championships by taking said radio to the top of the highest point, and then rolling it all the way back down to the det.

EXERCISE SHARP SIGNALLER 97

The Farnborough Freedom Fighters (FFF) were involved in a bitter dispute with the government of Alderona and the Squadron was deployed in support of other British troops in the area to defend key points. The first 12 hours went without incident but as the CO, **Lt Col Wilkinson** was on his way to visit the troops in the field he was kidnapped by the FFF. After a quick assessment of the situation the two PI Comds, **Lt Penny Wood** and **2Lt Penny Clements** deployed their forces to rescue the CO. The remainder of the exercise went well. Although the FFF, specifically **Capt Keith Duffy Penny** the ops offr and **WO2 (SSM) Keith Wrate**, had some problems getting their assigned Platoon to come out to play on Saturday night. Meanwhile the other half of the team, **Maj Simon Malik**, the OC 265 and **SSgt John Lynch**, had more business than they at times could handle. Sunday saw the final attack and dispatch of the FFF and everybody home for tea and medals.

ON LOAN

The Squadron sent two of its soldiers to BATUS on attachment in March of this year, **SSgt Les Watts** and **LCpl Garry** 'Ginger' **Guest**. **Les** is an old hand on his second attachment, but 'Ginger' is new to Canada. If anyone should come across 'Ginger' on their travels, treat with caution, he has been known to consume his own weight in beer and burgers. A note to the BATUS staff, when you've finished with him, please box up, label and return to this unit. Also detached from the Squadron is **LCpl Lisa Bartholomew**, on attachment to 7 Sig Regt, as yet we have no stories through from **Lisa** but we'll keep you informed when we do.

884 TROOP BEACH LANDING BRIGHTON WEST PIER

As part of a recruiting drive in the Brighton area, local units took part in an amphibious beach assault next to Brighton's derelict West Pier. The publicity event was organised to coincide with the anniversary of D-Day on 6 June. The local TV, Radio and Press attended, as did many members of the D-Day Veterans Association. The scenario was for the amphibious assaulting party to rescue a hostage held captive on the West Pier. The landing craft beached next to the West Pier, the platoon disembarked, 2 sections gave covering fire supported by a pair of GPMG's whilst the 3rd section did a frontal assault on the pier, killed the enemy and rescued the hostage.

The damsel in distress was none other than Miss Brighton and Hove 1997. In order to reinforce the reserve forces message the pier concealed soldiers dressed in the clothes of their civilian occupations, carrying weapons and wearing cam cream, thus mimicking the national TV recruiting campaign of Soldiers exercising in their civilian clothes. The main assaulting party was made up of PWRR and Royal Engineers whilst the enemy was provided by 884 Sig Tp, 265 Sqn. Army and Air cadets collected money from onlookers for the West Pier restoration fund. Pictured are members of 884 Tp unlucky enough to have to hold Miss Brighton and Hove hostage for an hour and a half!

The enemy
(*L-R*): LCpl Darren Tanner, Sig Gavin Hall, LCpl Sean Tanner, Sig James Boyden, Miss Brighton and Hove, Sig Ben Casson, OCdt Alex Downing and Sig Gareth Hibbit.

70 (EY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Simon Palmer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

The committee of the Squadron Annual Ball decided to use the successful event to raise money for the British Legion Poppy Appeal Fund and The Essex Yeomanry Association. The total amount raised was £470.25 for the Poppy Appeal Fund and £50.00 for the Essex Yeomanry Association.

The committee was ably led by **Cpl Colin Cavanagh** and assisted by **Cpl Nick Wilkes**, **LCpls Joanna Smith**, **Jackie Topley**, **Sigs Joanne Pilcher**, **Natalie Gratze** and **Simon Grace**. They are to be congratulated on not only producing one of the best social events of the year but also for their hard fund raising.

LCpl Jo Smith, Sig Natalie Gratze and Cpl Colin Cavanagh presenting Mr Eric Seymore with the cheque.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go to **Cpl Rob Gratze** and **Sig Natalie Gilbey** on their wedding that was held at Chelmsford and fully supported by the Essex Yeomanry Signal Squadron. The Bride had as two of her Bridesmaids **OCdt Sarah Coyler** and **Sig Joanne Pilcher**. All three joined the Squadron on the same day. **Sgt Jim Swain** commanded the Honour Guard and the wedding reception was held in the TA Centre. The Squadron wish the happy couple a long and happy life together.

Cpl Rob and Sig Natalie Gratze now 'Mr and Mrs' after the ceremony

THE ROYAL SIGNALS TEAM IN OMAN

Is-salaam alaykum kayf halak. Greetings from the Royal Signals Loan Service team in Oman. Oman shares its borders with Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia and is the second largest country in the Arabian peninsula. The most densely populated areas are the northern coast and the southern Salalah plain. The north blisters under temperatures that often climb above 50 degrees Centigrade in the summer, the south has a monsoon climate. The north is separated from the interior by a series of mountain ranges that are called Jabals which then give way to the interior a mixture of low Jabal and desert before eventually rising to the Jabal area around Salalah.

The team has undergone a lot of personality changes in the last two months. The team is split between two locations, Muscat in the north and Salalah 1000km to the south. The overall team leader is **Lt Col Bob West** who is Royal Signals CO located with the 1 Sig Regt team in Muscat. He is the SO1 Communications and Training Advisor to the Sultan's Armed Forces Signals. Within the HQ of Sultanate of Oman Signals is **Capt Steve Roden**. He is the only member of the team who is in the direct Omani chain of command as the SO3 COMSEC. Not content with the speed he was getting a sun tan he was persuaded by **Maj Peter Grogan** to play for Muscat Rugby Club. Unfortunately he broke his wrist, a cunning plan that has enabled him to relax at home topping up his tan and planning his finances. For those who want the whole story it involves a flat pass and an overweight fly half.

The remaining elements of the northern team are at the coalface, **Maj Peter Grogan** who is the Communications and Training Advisor to 1 Sig Regt. His job is to identify areas of concern and provide advice and possible remedies. This includes a certain amount of involvement in the testing and production of procedures for new equipment. The second part of the coalface is **WO2 (YofS) Marc Ewart** who is the advisor to the Operations Officer, working closely with each of the five squadrons and providing the same services as **Maj Grogan**. He is regularly seen riding round camp on a bicycle much to the amusement of the Omanis (Mad dogs and Englishmen springs to mind).

Finally but by no means least is **WO2 (SSM) Steve Johnson**, who works in the RR Squadron and is responsible for all training and advice on the RR aspect of the trunk network. **Steve** is currently heavily involved in the training of new operators posted into the squadron from 2 SR. Second Regiment Force Signals is located in Salalah, Dhofar. This is the location of southern team consisting of **Maj John Gale** about to be replaced by **Maj Dick Sanders** who we extend a warm welcome to both himself and his family, **WO1 (FofS) John Andrews** and **WO2 (YofS) Chris Nutt**.

Salalah has a pace of life all of it's own, but it does have a lot of things to offer the Loan Service soldier and his family. **WO1 (FofS) John Andrews** and **WO2(YofS) Chris Nutt** continue to sweat it out on new bases, battle camp, annual signal inspections of units and the Regimental FFR inspections. Both are looking forward to a spell of relaxation in the forthcoming rugby sevens competitions held in Muscat and Dubai. **Capt Steve Roden** has been asked if he would like to keep his hand in.

There are a number of ex Royal Signals personnel here all working at different levels within the communications network for either civilian companies or on contract to the military as officers or Warrant Officers. Two of which, pictured here, were recently involved in the Royal Army of Oman exercise. A quote of the exercise by former Telemech **Steve Powell** 'You never forget once you have been with 249' so why did it take you 2 hours to wash and shave in the morning, perhaps it was all that Arctic training at 249.

The last few months have been very busy with the lead up to the Royal Army of Oman Ex Sumoud Arba, which is a divisional size deployment to an area south of Adam in the desert. This exercise will be the culmination

of much hard planning and work by all. So contrary to popular belief life is not just a pay packet and sun. In fact as this is being written it is raining very heavily! On to a number of goodbyes.

Lt Col Anderson posted somewhere in London District, **Maj John Gale** and his wife **Victoria** and the girls, who are off to the Ministry and colder waters. The Dhofar diving and Hash clubs may never be the same again without you. **Capt Lee** '500 dives' **Pilling** and his wife **Jackie** 'If it is not pink I'm not wearing it', off to 14 Sig Regt (EW) as the diving officer, sorry Traffic Officer. Oh and **Lee** do the following file sizes mean any thing to you COMSEC 275K, Diving 16Mb. Finally to **WO2 (YofS) Pete** 'I've got an NVQ you know' **McKinally** and his wife **Marion**, posted to Corsham as a WO1, **Pete** OC 5 Sqn is still talking about you. Thank you all for the hard work.

Good News Travels *Fast!*

Publish it in *The Wire*

The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200)
BFPO 16

Sqn Comd **Maj J. E. Richardson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) K. Jones**

Sqn HQ has seen a significant amount of change since its return from Bosnia. The 2IC, **Capt Paul Smith**, leaves for pastures new, or at least 11 Sig Regt. He has been replaced by **Capt Stu Boyne**, who makes the short hop from Ops Room, 4 doors down. **WO2 (RQMS) Mark Scholfield** leaves to assume to role of RSM 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt. We wish him and his family all the best and remember, everything is easy in comparison to the QM dept in Bosnia. In his place we welcome **WO2 (RQMS) Chris Drew** and family. Finally, on the leaving front, it is goodbye and good luck to **Capt Ruth Pilkington**. Not only is she leaving us for JCSC, but also to get married as well. On a more positive note, congratulations go to the RSM, **Kev Jones**, on his selection for commission. The grass is not always greener, however, we are sure you will succeed wherever they send you.

EXERCISE FIRST TRY 23 JUNE-28 JUNE 1997

At 0500hrs on Monday 23 June, the troops mustered in the garages, vehicles loaded, bids filled ready for the off–the first exercise since Bosnia and we're setting of at silly o'clock (according to **Lt Dave Seymour**) or to beat the rush hour around Paderborn according to the boss **Maj Jim Richardson**. In the six weeks that had passed since our return from Bosnia the Squadron had reconfigured, enjoyed a well deserved three weeks leave and recrewed.

Ex First Try was a Squadron level exercise, without staff, covering a period of three weeks. The First phase was the deploying of both troops along with Ech to the area around Soest in Germany, in order to highlight both issued and personal kit deficiencies, rusty practices, possible new SOIs and to remind us all of our conventional role. The second phase was to re-group back in barracks and spend a week ironing out the problems that had emerged. Training formed a large part of the week incorporating trade as well as soldiering skills. The vehicles were scrutinised hard and new cam systems developed.

The third phase was re-deployment of the entire Squadron with new and improved drills and skills. Unfortunately the weather wasn't on our side. Following the glorious sunshine of week one, we spent what must be the wettest week in history around Sennelager Training area. **Cpl** 'have I told you about Norway' **Plested** was heard to put the world to rights a record number of times that week. Overall Ex First Try was extremely successful. It allowed the Squadron to readjust back into its role without the pressure of the staff and with time to study and improve all aspects of its performance. **LCpl Carl Payne** showed **Sgt Tony Taylor** that he wasn't the only member of Bravo Tp who had extraordinary map reading skills, by leading his packet through a German 'Pick Your Own' strawberry farm courtyard at 0530hrs on a Thursday morning–with a bemused pyjama dressed farmer looking on.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt D. R. Seymour**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ware**

The never-ending change in personnel continues apace in Alpha Tp. Following a successful shakeout from post Bosnia leave on Ex First Try, the Troop has had to bid farewell to a number of characters. **A/Sgt Al Campbell** is making up for his short tour in Bosnia with a six month attachment to 3 Para in Girdwood, **LCpl Tom Anscomb** is now well into his Nepalese lessons at 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. **Cpl Tom Rothera** is on his way to 30 Sig Regt as well, whilst **Sig Micky Devlin** and **LCpl Matt McMullan** are 7 Sig Regt bound. Meanwhile, **Sig Chris Kirkman**, closely followed by **Sig Martin Sleight**, form the advance party of 20 Bde operators who are moving to JCUNI in the near future. **Cpl** 'Mac' **McGregor** is also off to the Province to lend his experience to 8 Inf Bde. We wish them all and their families well.

It has not been all one way traffic, **LCpl Brookwell** has joined the Troop, at least briefly until his P-Coy. **Sigs Coverley** and **MacGregor** have arrived, quite literally together, from Blandford and **Sig Bowring** has arrived from 1 Armd Div Sig Regt (they don't just give us their exercises!) Amongst all the turnover of manpower, **Sgt Mayell** has returned from successful completion of his Sgt's Cse and **LCpl** 'Ronnie' **McDonald** is spending half of his summer in Batus driving for the Bde Commander. He has been able to call in on **LCpl Godfrey** who is on a six-month attachment in Canada. For those of us left behind, we have had the delights of Ex First Try, 1st Lines and Ex Rhino Spear to keep us amused–not to mention all the leaving barbecues. The multi-discipline Troop training day provided a little alternative 'entertainment'. Whilst B Tp played in the mud in Sennelager, the boys from Alpha Tp tried their hand at mountain biking, trailer reversing, shooting, fault finding, general knowledge tests and logic problems. Whilst the winners (the Rover queens of **Sigs Abbott**, **Coverley** and **Harris**) were a little disappointed with their uv marker pens, second placed Air/Aviation det (**LCpl Nolan**, **Sig Kirkman** and **Sig Booker**) were rather more pleased with their afternoon off. The wooden spoonists sadly picked up an extra duty.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt W. R. Holbrook**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Crabb**

When the 17 July 1997 was designated as 'Troop Commander's disposal', Ex Bravo Challenge was born. Due to be the first of many, Bravo Challenge was designed to get paintbrushes out of their hands and the Troops out of the garages. Bravo Challenge was held on Sennelager Training area and the main aim of the day was for some thoroughly enjoyable military training with the compulsory barbecue and beers at the end.

Pre Ex Bravo Challenge DS Brief
(*L-R*): Cpl Wood, Cpl Shuttleworth, Cpl Plested, Lt Holbrook, Cpl Dixon, LCpl Thompson

The morning started at 0700hrs with none of the LCpls or Signalman knowing the exact format of the day. The lads had been given various hints on what to and what not to take by the 'screws', who were organising the day under the direction of **Cpl Jay Shuttleworth**.

LCpl Thompson organised the filthiest, smelliest first aid stand, which rather set the tone for the rest of the day. It consisted of extraction of a casualty through a bog and a wade through a river to a waiting CASEVAC chopper. **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Dixon** and **Cpl** 'Sport billy' **Wood** masterminded a selection of command tasks, something many of the new signalmen had never done before. **Cpl Plested** organised the structured gassing of the Troop (after they had completed a river patrol) to revise their ATD NBC skills. A good tiring day was had by all, and plans are under way for Ex Bravo Challenge 2 after Poland. Can't wait!!

'Comd Task'
(*L-R*): Sig Evans, Sig O'Leary, LCpl Haskell

TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

With the return from Bosnia and the reorganisation of the Squadron, the workshop has found itself being moved from Sp Tp to Maint Tp, with the basic outcome that nothing has changed except the name.

On the hello and goodbye front, it is with great regret that the Workshop says Adieu to **Sgt Martin Heathcote** and his wife **Petra** after a short eight years in Paderborn. Good luck in Civvy Street, and hopefully you will get that dream job driving a forklift at the Warsteiner Brewery. Another goodbye goes to **Sgt Mark Cuddy** and family, also to Civvy Street, which leaves the workshop with no SNCO's (except for **SSgt Barney Patel**, who does not really count). To replace these two stalwarts of Armour is **Cpl Alfie Davidson**, posted from an arduous six month T1 course at Blandford.

Finally, congratulations go to **LCpl Mike Parke** on passing his Leadership course. However, you are not an Officer yet, so a bit of work every now and then would be appreciated.

TOFFS VERSUS TOMS CRICKET MATCH

On a wet Friday morning, the Junior Ranks of the Squadron took on the Officers and SNCOs in the annual cricket challenge match. Conditions were not ideal. In addition to the frequent heavy showers, the out field was also being grown for hay and was always likely to hamper high scoring. The Officers and SNCOs batted first and suffered a dramatic early order collapse. **SSgt (FofS) Lance Marshall** and his twin? brother Tiffy **Marshall** restored some pride and lifted a fairly dismal total to a more competitive 58 all out. Pick of the bowlers was **Sig** 'Crazy Hakim' **Abbott** with his dodgy, underhanded bowling. The Wisden book of cricket coaching will now have to be re-written to include two new types of delivery; the 'dambuster' which bounces 12 times before it reaches the crease and the 'hand grenade'. Both of these deliveries helped **Sig Abbott** to rather surprising career best figures of 4 for 4.

After an excellent lunch provided courtesy of **Sgt** 'Harry the Knife' **Baird** consisting of sandwiches, cream scones and Pimms ('wot, wot, wot, wot'), it was the 'Toms' turn to bat. After a solid start by **Sig** 'Gaz' **Manningham** and **LCpl Ian McCulloch**, disaster struck due to the Officers' Strike bowling force of OC Sqn, **Maj Jim Richardson**, Second-in-Command **Capt Stuart Boyne**, Ops Offr **Capt Jason Hazelwood** and OIC Cricket **Lt David Seymour**. The shining light for the 'Toms' was the steadying influence of **Sig** 'Geoffrey Boycott' **Kirkman** and Mr Extras courtesy of **Sgt Tony Taylor**'s Teflon wicket-keeping gloves. The game was poised on a knife-edge when **Cpl Toby Robinson** came to the crease to display some truly cultured stroke play. He set up the win that was secured rather aptly by the only boundary of the day. With only one wicket in hand, **Cpl Ash** ' does my hair look okay' **Ingham** dispatched a long hop by the OC Sqn to the square leg boundary and victory was ours. Up the Toms!

At the end of the day, as **Lt Seymour** pointed out, 'cricket was the winner' and over a Fosters Ice in the Bar afterwards thoughts turned to the one remaining question: will the OC Sqn's run up get any longer as the season progresses.

19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
Catterick

LANYARD TROPHY 1997

Lanyard Trophy time once again, and once again competition for places within the Squadron was intense. After hours of thought by **SSgt** 'Robo Spice' **Simmons** the team was selected: **Lt Grant Peden**, **SSgt Kev Simmons**, **Sgts Rob Enderby** and **Terry McIntyre**, **Cpl** 'Loggy' **Wright**, **LCpls Dave Berry**, 'Foo' **Harris**, **Dave McConnell**, 'Gaz' **Moore** and **Sig Eddie Banks**. This elite bunch of men was worthy enough to wear the coveted red 19 MBSS T-shirt kindly donated by the Squadron.

The general conversation on the way down to Wales was, 'Why are we doing this?' Not one of us was looking forward to the race–least of all **Lt Peden** who had been 'training' whilst on leave in Greece. The night before everyone was full of nerves. **Lt** 'short straw' **Peden** made the situation worse by pulling out start time 0530 hrs. We would be the first team to start (nobody to overtake–everyone to takeover us!) The race started at 0530 hrs, by 0545 hrs one member of the team was reproducing last night's tea (it looked better coming out than it did going in). This entertaining sideshow lasted for half an hour, and from this early set back we knew that we would be in trouble.

We lost our first casualty (Mr Incredible Puking man) at Checkpoint 3. Now down to nine the team started to open up the pace. We were cruising along like a well-oiled machine, when **LCpl Moore** started to suffer with blisters. At Checkpoint 4 **LCpl Moore** took the decision to carry on (like the true hero he is). This was a wise choice as he would prove very entertaining later on in the day. As we ventured from Checkpoint 4 we had the mightiest of hills in our sights. Morale was high with the odd joke or two being cracked but this all stopped as we gained altitude; the climb getting steeper and steeper. We were almost at the top when **LCpl Moore** started to struggle with his blisters. This did not impress **Sgt** 'psycho' **Rob Enderby** and the pair exchanged words in what was becoming a heated discussion. Once at the top with the only way to go being down, everyone began to cool off. **LCpl McConnell** cooled it more than the rest of us and came very close to catching hypothermia. Unable to carry on any further

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the team was down to the minimum eight men. We could not afford to lose anymore of the team, but with **LCpl Moore** suffering this looked doubtful. Yet again we did not get very far before experiencing another set back. **LCpl Moore** unable to go on we decided to get him down to the checkpoint before we could leave him. So the team of elite super humans were reduced to snail pace hobbling down the steep hillsides. **LCpl Moore**'s pain was other peoples gain. We all had plenty of time to catch our breath on what should have been one of the fastest sections of the course. Once at Checkpoint 6 we were reduced to seven men and technically disqualified. Checkpoint 6 to Checkpoint 7 was littered with school kids, a great time to show off. **LCpl Rick Lightfoot** (admin team) would have loved this opportunity to impress with his 'I'm a hard guy falling down trick'. Checkpoints 7 to 10 were extremely long and boring, conversation was down to a bare minimum and the jokes had all dried up. Everyone did manage a good laugh at 'psycho' trying to run down a concrete road–definitely an entry for the Ministry of Funny Walks. After marching (or yomping for the detol boys) across marshy hilltops we thankfully arrived at Checkpoint 10.

Enjoying the final stretch to the finish!

At Checkpoint 10 we were to follow mine tape all the way into the finish for safety reasons. So upon asking the marker at the checkpoint, 'Which way do we go?' the answer we didn't expect was 'I don't know, people have been shooting off in all directions.' We wandered off in search of the mine tape and the Finish Line. We were now within three miles of the finish line, when all of a sudden there was a massive growl. Everyone looked at psycho he was screaming, grunting, whinging, whining and whipping himself with nettles. Even after this energetic outburst he still had time to slap himself around his head and pick a fight with an innocent local who was walking his dog.

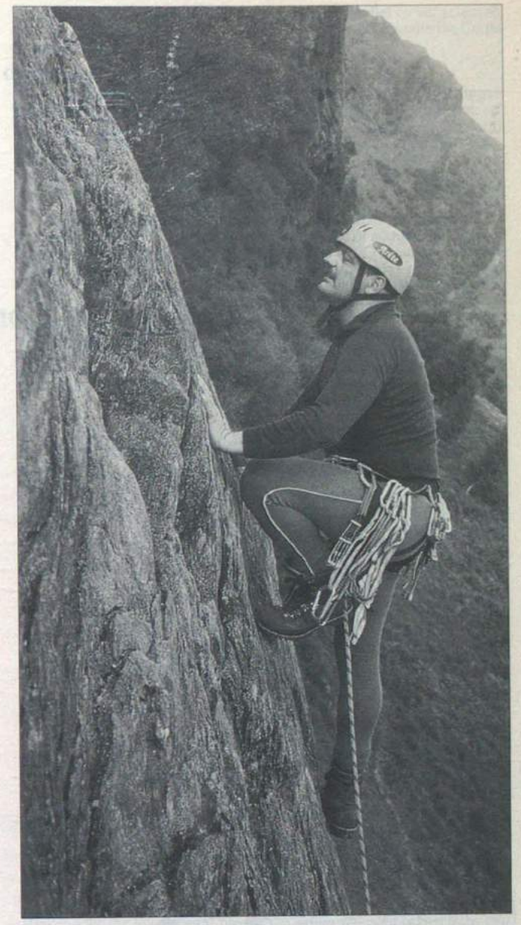
With the Finish in sight everyone made an extra effort. We all put on our 'I'm not totally knackered face', stuck out our chests and cruised over the finish line. Everyone except 'Robo Spice' and 'short straw' were hanging out. The whole team took a vow never to do it again, and most intended to keep the promise. A final thanks to the admin team for trying to keep morale up –better luck next time!!

EXERCISE HIGHLAND EBOR 18-27 JUNE 97

Ex Highland Ebor was Bravo Troops' adventurous training for 1997. After literally minutes of thorough planning by **Lt** 'Jetski' **Peden** the day arrived for the departure from Catterick, executed with military precision as always, with **Sgt Rob** 'cross dressing's for real men' **Enderby** in charge of navigation–my word what an inspired appointment! I myself, had been despatched a day earlier to Norwich with **Cpl** 'ooh it's spikey' **Leask** to pick up a genuine salty sea dog, **Mr Graham Rollins**, who was to be our sailing instructor for the duration. Apart from a few stories of scurvy and mermaid hunting we all arrived within half an hour of each other at Cameron Barracks, Inverness.

Certainly an excellent location, the barracks got us into the swing of things straight away, streams of indigenous population, bedecked in check skirts and furry pouches oozing from every crevice. The lovely quaint sound of bagpipes filled the air, and did not stop until well into the next morning. There was no rest for the merry band of Bravo revellers. By 0700 hrs the next day we were divided into groups and travelling to the organised activities. These were to be hillwalking with **LCpl** 'Taff, stunted, twisted Billy Goat' **Evans**, rock climbing with **Cpl** 'Radio Relay rhymes with belay' **Allen** and mountain biking with **Sgt Rob** 'saddles are for wimps' **Enderby**. There was also dinghy sailing with **Sgt Terry** 'techs are good for something' **McIntyre** and canoeing with **Sgt Mark** 'swim test is a good test' **Swain**.

Sgt Eric 'sleeping beauty' **Williams** was to double as the Tp Comd's driver and the car rang to the sounds of 'ooh ooh can't we go back for the jetski, pleeease!' The jetski was originally supposed to be a background event but by the time the OC and **Cpl Jon** 'the body' **Chamberlain** had used all of the fuel trying to out do each other, the nearest the rest of us got was to catch their spray. A round robin of all the events ensued for the first five days, until after a long rest, well–a night, we all embarked on our chosen three-day expeditions. I chose hill walking because I hadn't quite seen enough of **LCpl Evans**' backside the first time round and was joined by **Sgt Mick** 'lend us a fiver' **Toes**. We set off to conquer the Five Sisters of Kintail, but low cloud base (my only hill walking catch phrase) stopped the assault and we had to settle for a 'low level' ridge instead. All the expeditions went swimmingly (literally owing to the weather), with the sailors having the last laugh; any sport that relies on wind to have a good time sounds a bit suss to me!



Looks can be deceiving–Cpl Dave Allen

On arrival back in Inverness a barbecue was waiting for us, so we sat outside in a thunder-storm, because we are Brits. We then devoured the fayre before retiring to watch demonstrations of strength by **Cpl Dave Allen** and **Cpl** 'Taff' 'five cans is enough' **Mallaney**, before our final sorties into the town of pleasant smiles and dazed expressions. The Troop agreed that an excellent time was had by all, and our thanks go to all instructors, particularly those of non-Bravo origin. An extra salty thanks to **Mr Graham Rollins**, who gave up his spare time to teach the most novice crews he can have ever encountered.

About to take a plunge–Sig Stu Paton

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210)
Colchester

Sqn Comd **Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Pocock**

The Squadron has had another busy couple of months with a number of activities in addition to our normal training, including Nijmegen Marches, Squadron Summer Camp and a number of sporting events. The highlight of the training programme was Ex Gryphon's Wing, a Bde exercise to confirm 1 RGBWs conversion to the airmobile role. The Squadron established an excon in the Bde staging area and deployed RRBs and Tac HQ in support of a number of assaults and aviation raids. There was plenty of helicopter support throughout the exercise and the Squadron was able to practise airmobile skills. The Sqn 2IC, Air Adjutant and Recce Officer, **Capt Hanby**, continued his personal conversion to role by remaining in barracks. He has obviously discovered the page of **Capt Deans'** handover notes titled, 'Excuses For Not Going On Exercise.'

SQUADRON SUMMER CAMP

The Squadron Summer Camp was organised by **Sgt McKenna** and based at Cawdor Barracks, Haverford West, the home of 14 Sig Regt (EW). It was held over a two-week period with all Squadron personnel taking part for one of the two weeks. The aim was to involve everyone in as many activities as possible, including windsurfing, sailing, climbing, trekking, mountain biking and canoeing. Everyone took part in trekking, climbing, sailing and canoeing with a free choice of activities on the remaining days. The most popular choice was coasteering, which involved climbing and swimming around parts of the coastline and jumping into the sea from ridiculously high cliffs. Another popular activity was deep-sea fishing that was particularly enjoyed by **Cpl Topps**, who decided to bait the fish with the breakfast he had eaten prior to getting into the boat. The QM, **Capt Ben Britton**, was the unrivalled fishing champion and kept the chefs busy with his huge catches. Not normally one to tell a story, he enjoyed the opportunity to tell a few fisherman's tales to the less experienced anglers in the Squadron. Sadly he was less happy about **LCpl** 'I thought they were rubbish bags Sir' **Wilson**'s midnight addition to his stock of freshly caught fish!

The trekking was led by **WO2 (FofS) Cooper** who, having tried in vain to explain the technical benefits of his walking sticks, entertained the walkers with tales of his long lost youth. **Sig Brunskill** demonstrated the need to wear a helmet when mountain biking by hurling himself into a ditch and cutting his head. The stunt would have been quite impressive had he not been pushing his bike at the time! With the exception of this minor incident, the two weeks ran extremely smoothly thanks to the hard work of **Sgt McKenna** and all the instructors. The activities were an excellent break from normal work and a good time was had by all.

Trekkers on Squadron Summer Camp

NIJMEGEN MARCHES

The Squadron was chosen to enter a team to represent the Bde in this year's Nijmegen Marches. The team entered as part of a larger Multinational Division (Central) team made up of teams from all four nations within the Division. The Squadron team was led by **Lt Parfitt** and consisted of 11 marchers and a two-man administration party. The team travelled on the Sunday prior to the event and was accommodated overnight by 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, Krefeld. A shooting festival in a local village provided an ideal opportunity to introduce the younger members of the team to the delights of Germany. The team travelled on to Nijmegen the following day, in time to take part in the opening ceremony that evening.

The opening ceremony was a spectacular event held in a large stadium packed with thousands of spectators. It began with the descent of free-fall parachutists carrying the national flags and continued for two hours, finishing with the march past of all teams, both military and civilian.

Lt Parfitt and SSgt Alger lead the Sqn team on Nijmegen Marches

The hard work began in the early hours of the following morning with a march-past, out of the gates of Camp Heumensoord to the sound of a military band. The pattern was set for the following 100 miles and 4 days, with an early start and march past each morning, followed by 8.5-10 hours of marching. The route each day was lined by thousands of spectators, with children offering sweets and refreshments and asking for souvenirs and autographs. The atmosphere was fantastic, with bands playing in many of the towns and villages, and the encouragement of the spectators who stayed out in all weathers was a real lift to tired legs. The finishing point at Charlemagne was a welcome sight, and team medals were presented to the MND(C) teams by **Maj Gen McAfee**, Comd MND(C). This was followed by a parade through the centre of Nijmegen which every resident of the city appeared to have turned out to watch. Despite the wet weather this was an outstanding climax to a hard week, and left just the all-night party to endure!

SPORTS

The Squadron has had a busy sporting schedule with a number of competitions both internal and inter-unit. The athletics team put in a good performance at the Morrison Cup despite minimal training time, finishing in third place in the minor-units competition. **Sig Harris** produced the best individual performance in the high jump, beating his own personal best by a large margin. In the Cadmans Cup Inter-Troop Sports Competition, Sp Tp have maintained their winning form of last season by winning three of the four summer events. Having won the athletics earlier in the year, they also won the swimming and volleyball competitions. Bravo Tp managed to spoil the party by winning the cricket, whilst Alpha Tp's sporting talent was absent representing the Squadron in Nijmegen.

Five members of the Squadron competed in the Colchester 10 Mile Road Race in pursuit of the Military Team prize. The Squadron runners were led home by **Lt Parfitt**, followed by **Cpl Turner**, **Capt Hanby**, **LCpl Pond** and **Maj Watts**, who put in a particularly brave performance after a good night in the Sergeants' Mess. The team won the coveted trophy, beating our local sporting rivals from the Military Corrective Training Centre.

ALPHA TROOP

Welcome to **2Lt Ashton** straight from his Troop Commanders' Course, and welcome back to **LCpl Tarry** fresh from his Class 1 course. Temporary goodbyes to **Sig Olejnik** and **Sig Moran**, detached to 8 Inf Bde, and **Sig Perry** detached to BATUS. Goodbye to **Lt Parfitt** who is going back to school at Shrivenham.

BRAVO TROOP

Welcome to **2Lt Bowdler** from Blandford, **Sig Steward** from 7 Sig Regt, **LCpl White** from 2 Sig Regt and **LCpl Russell** from 3 (UK) Div. Goodbye to **Sig Stevenson** posted to 14 Sig Regt, **Sig Chapman** posted to 30 Sig Regt and **LCpl Walsh, LCpl Latham** and **Cpl O'Brien** all off to try their luck in Civ Div. Congratulations to **Cpl Korchel** on her selection for promotion to Sgt, and to **LCpl Barringer** on his efforts with the Corps Tug-of-War Team.

SUPPORT TROOP

Welcome to **Capt Coulston** from 3 (UK) Div, **WO2 (RQMS) Cupper** from 1 Mech Bde and **Sgt Willoughby** RLC. Goodbyes to **Capt Elliot**, off to complete JCSC, and **Cpl Harvey** off to be a civilian. Congratulations to the QM, **Capt Britton**, on his selection for promotion and **WO2 (RQMS) Skimming** on his promotion and posting to 1 Mech Bde as RSM. Congratulations also to **Cpl Lodge** and **Cpl Topps** on their selection for promotion to Sgt, and **LCpl Horswill** REME on his promotion to Cpl.

5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para)
Aldershot

Sqn Comd **Maj D. G. Halstead**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Turnbull**

SHQ TROOP

As we draw towards leave we have finished another busy, yet successful period for the Squadron. Farewell and best wishes to **RSM Turnbull** and good luck in your new role as MTO of 40 Sig Regt (V). Welcome to **RSM Dave Catchpole** who returns to the Squadron with his wife **Jane** and the children.

216 ATHLETICS TEAM

The Squadron's Athletics Team has had a very successful season with a lot of hard work going on, to produce some well earned results. First in the season was the 4 Division competition where the Squadron was narrowly beaten into second place by ATR Pirbright. However, the team then went on to win the Army Championships semi-final. Unfortunately the final was not a repeat performance but still a very creditable third place. Following on the Squadron successfully won the Morrison Cup despite the appalling weather conditions. Congratulations to **Sgt Jones**, **LCpl Clancy** and **Sigs Good** and **Lowe** who were selected and subsequently represented the Corps in the Inter Corps Championships.

ALPHA TROOP

The main effort for Alpha Tp for July was Ex Pegasus Strike, which had the Troop deployed to the fictional island of New Lothian, just off the East coast of Africa to assist the Bde in humanitarian aid operations. In reality we spent just over a week in isolation at South Cerney before moving up to Otterburn to provide communications and the HQ for EXCON.

There has been a complete change at the head of the troop with **SSgt** 'Ned' **Needham** and **Lt** 'Fat Boy' **Quinsey** both departing to be replaced by **SSgt Kev Read** and **2Lt** 'Which Tac Signs?' **Chambers**. **SSgt Read** joins from ATR Bassingbourn and any rumours that he desires to be a guardsman following his performances on the RSM's muster parades have been quickly denied. **2Lt Chambers** comes to the Squadron straight from the Tp Comd's course at Blandford and has quickly become familiar with the South Cerney area after following the wrong Tac signs for a short while before practising convoy drills and correcting the direction of travel. The Troop says a fond farewell to **Lt Quinsey** and wishes him all the best on his degree course at Shrivenham.

There have been a few other additions to the Troop with **Cpl** 'Ted' **Page** joining us from 14 Sigs after having passed both P Coy and his jumps course and **LCpl** 'Fish' **Salmon** from 1 (UK) Div. Sadly the only opportunity for the Troop to jump was a Skyvan programme which was cancelled by high winds, allegedly caused by **LCpl** 'Paddy The Mouth' **Neill** talking too much. The Troop looks forward to three weeks of summer leave before what will be a very busy month of September.

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LANYARD TROPHY

The 1997 Lanyard Trophy Competition was held in the Brecon Beacons, the centre of activity being Cwrt-y-Gollen Camp. This year, the turnout was the best ever with twenty-six teams entering. Five of those were TA and three were female. As usual, the Regular teams' route was 40 miles and the TA and female route 30 miles. However, one of the TA units put fears aside and attempted the 40-mile route, while a Regular unit entered a mixed team. After an early rise at just before dawn, all the teams crossed the start line and faced a gruelling first few miles, which spread the teams out. Separating the sheep from the goats! Fortunately, the weather was just right, staying calm and clear in the low ground and saving the wind and minimal visibility for higher up. As they made their way along the arduous route, the smiles and the morale gradually dropped from peoples faces. However, everyone marched on to the best of their ability and finally made it to the finish. Except for 3 Div, who were obviously not that impressed with the planned route and so decided to make it more of a challenge for themselves . . .

Congratulations go to each of the winning teams–249 Sig Sqn (AMFL), 39 Sig Regt (V) 'A' and 11 Sig Regt female 'B'. Thank you very much and well done to everyone that took part, whether competing or organising, and we hope to see you all and more next year!

MIKE TROOP
by LCpl Andy Fisher

Ex Pegasus Strike in July is the Bde FTEX which involves an Airborne Insertion, (ooer Missus) RAL and FAL. **Cpl Wayne Braddock** and myself had the honour of jumping in with the LPBG Para Tac element as part of the four-man NWR team. **Sgt Steve Jones** was the technician with Para 1 and **Sgt Neil Paul** joined the NWR team during one of the assaults by 2 Para and for the Fly Forward phase. The Troop was split between the two HQ s at West Freugh and Otterburn and for some of our newer members it was their first experience of a Squadron exercise. However, it was not a normal Sqn deployment as it was Bde orientated. Much was learnt by the new blokes and especially by **Sig Andy Good** who was unfortunate enough to have an RTA in one of the brand spanking new Wolf Landrovers.

Congratulations to our boss, **WO2 (FoS) Steve Bason** and his wife **Shoni** on the birth of their daughter, **Jasmine**. A big Mike Tp welcome to **Cpl Ian** 'Airborne At Last' **Dickinson** and his wife **Kim**. **Ian** gladly volunteered his services to help erect Tent City at South Cerney for Peggy Strike. Cheers!! Congratulations also go to **LCpl Glen Ruscoe** 'P. Coltrane', on passing P-Coy and his Para course. Welcome back to **Sgt Steve Jones** and **Cpl** 'Polly' **Paulson** after their trip to Australia with the Squadron Rugby Team. No prizes for guessing who has been 'big timing' it with their Australian wings on their smocks. 'Brad' has been very busy with Rugby representing his Unit, Corps and Army teams.

The Troop would like to say farewell to **Cpl Tony Sheridan** who has left for 7 Sig Regt, **Cpl Rob** 'Mac' **MacAdam** who has left for his TI and **Sgt Andy** 'Buzz Lightyear' **Scott** who is off sky-diving at JSPC Netheravon.

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223 Sig Sqn (399 SU RAF)
RAF Digby

THE COLONEL IN CHIEF VISITS RAF DIGBY

We were recently honoured with a visit to RAF Digby by **HRH The Princess Royal**. **HRH** was greeted on arrival by the Station Commander, **Wg Cdr Bob Allan OBE** and the head of arm **Maj Alan McComb**. Following an immaculate display by the Station guard of honour, **HRH** was briefed by the Station Commander in the Officers Mess. She was then invited to formally open the stations new Astro Turf pitch and enjoy the station hockey team beating the 'Auld Enemy' RAF Waddington 4–2 in the process. A set of demonstrations by the Aerial Erector School and 591 Signals Unit was followed by an excellent lunch in the Officers Mess where she was able to meet a cross section of all civilian and military personnel of all ranks and from both British and American contingents.

HRH meets the Station Guard of Honour
(*L-R*): LCpls Kerry Sly, hidden–Heather Smart, Michelle Colman, Tarquin Kettlewell and John Myers

HRH was invited to tour 399 SU before meeting the service families and their children who had gathered for this occasion. **HRH** took obvious pleasure in chatting to parents and children alike and provided many a person (young and old) with a day they will never forget. It was just reward for everyone involved in the planning and preparation that the visit was a huge success, as were the myriad of loyal toasts and celebrations that followed!

MAJ (TFC OFF (R)) JIM DODDS BEM

With sad hearts we are saying farewell and bon voyage to **Maj (Tfc Off (R)) Jim Dodds** and his wife **Carol** after 35 years service with the Corps. A true gentleman and friend to many, he has seen many changes to the Corps in his time but had the vision and patience to guide us through the turbulent waters over the years. His wicked sense of humour and hearty laugh will truly be missed (even though he still supports Newcastle!). He has promised to keep the morse key in his heart and welcome old friends when he and **Carol** move up north to open the Shannon Court Hotel for business. Good luck to you from all your friends around the world, within the Corps and here at Digby.

ALPHA FLIGHT

A Flt Comd — **Lt Elly Goldsworthy**
Senior Supvr — **WO2 (Supvr R) Eddy Fisher**

Hellos to **2Lt Roberts**, **WO2 (Supvr R) Fisher** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Humphries** and fresh from the factory **LCpls Shaw**, **McCracken**, **Fox**, **Ashton** and 'Hutch' **Hutchinson**. Goodbyes to our great leader **Lt Goldsworthy**, **SSgt (Supvr R) Worley** to a day job and **Sgt Sayer** on a course, a very very long course! Away are **Cpls Marrs**, **Nowell** and **Matthews**, **LCpls Dunsmuir** and **Burgum**. Goodbye to HQ Civ Div to **LCpls Gilligan** and **Shanks**. Welcome to fatherhood to the following **LCpls Henning**, **Duckering** and **Appleyard**, it is the Lincolnshire air!

BRAVO FLIGHT

B Flt Comd — **Capt Adam Hillary**
DSO — **WO John Jackson**

Welcomes to **SSgt (Supvr R) Pestell**, **LCpl Hobson** and fresh from the factory **LCpls Tresigne**, **Sly** and **Smart**. Goodbyes to **LCpls Lamb** and **Stephenson** to civvy street and detached **Cpl Ghaut** and **LCpl Graham**. On the sporting front **SSgt (Supvr R) Sutherland** and **LCpl Johnson** who helped to win the inaugural Birgelen Hockey Trophy and to **Cpl Malin** who represented the Army in the 110m hurdles against Surrey and Hampshire. Well done to **WO2 (Supvr R) Trethewey** on his promotion and on the birth of his son **Jack**, to **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** on tying the knot and to **LCpl Dingsdale** on the birth of his son. Finally to **LCpl Sue Ford** on a successful RCB, looking forward to RMA Sandhurst?

CHARLIE FLIGHT

C Flt Comd — **Flt Lt Dave Hoyton**
Senior Supvr — **WO2 (Supvr R) Jimmy McGhee**

A good few months for C watch! We took the CO's Cup and won the softball competition again! This year's fete saw us with two stalls, many thanks to **Cpl Berry**, **LCpls Holmes**, 'Sparky' **Collins** and **JT** 'Myra' **Hindley**. Welcome to **Flt Lt Hoyton**, **WO2 (Supvr R) McGee**, **Cpl Chadwick** and **LCpl Steward** and goodbyes to **LCpls Jones**, **Hauxwell**, **Atkinson**, **Nash**, **Lennon** and **Collins** off on detachment. Congratulations on marriage go to **Cpl Chadwick**, **LCpls Warn**, **Collins** and **Vincent** and finally they go to the new OC on the birth of his son **William**.

DELTA FLIGHT

D Flt Comd — **Flt Lt Jason Young**
Senior Supvr — **WO2 (Suvpr R) Track Trethewey**

Farewells to **WO2 (Supvr R) Randle**, **Cpls Mitchell**, **Elliot**, **Smith** and **LCpls Coomber**, **Welch**, **MacLaughlin**, **Saban** and to **LCpls Dave** and **Sam Kirton**. Hello to **Flt Lt Young**, **SSgt (Supvr R) Fogg** and **Sgt Morris** and welcome back to **LCpls Cross** and **McNellis**.

STOP PRESS

Cpl 'Nelly' **Clifford** gets his third! **LCpl Booth** recently married and to **SSgt (Supvr R) Owens** for remembering to bring his cigarettes with him?

RECENT EVENTS

LCpl Dave Kirton won the LSW shooting match during the 2 Div SAAM competition against some very stiff competition. Well done to **Cpl Chilvers** for the fete stall with 'guess the amount of lego' (did your son win 1st prize **Bert**?) who was helped by **Cpl Fishwick**, **LCpls Rimmer** and **Waldron** and **JTs Anderson**, **Nelson** and **Proctor** and raised some serious money for the MRI Scanner Appeal.

DIGBY SUMMER CAMP 97

The camp united (briefly)!! the Army and RAF which was split into military training followed by windsurfing, hill walking, canoeing, rock climbing and abseiling. **LCpls Booth** and **Siddiquee** and **JTs Nelson** and **Jackson** had the opportunity to try their hand at leading from the front. Everyone gave their all and enjoyed the experience, including full NAAFI facilities available on the camp!

RADIO SERVICING SECTION (RSS) WORKSHOPS

Engineering Flt Comd — **Flt Lt Steve Russel**
SNCO I/C RSS — **SSgt Bob King**

Comings and goings and even promotions! All three Sgts have been selected for promotion, **Sgts Hamill**, **Lazenby**, and **Burton** standby for posting orders. Goodbye to **Cpl Flynn** off on his T1 and that leaves **Cpl Bond** on his own (apart from **SSgt King** who runs the workshop when he's not away on courses (or Golf courses!)).

TRAINING FLIGHT

Trg Flt Comdt — **WO1 (Supvr R) Eric Clee**
SSgt Trg Flt — **SSgt (Supvr R) Frank Dalton**

The Empire growth and the people cometh welcome to **FSs Vance** and **Curtis**, **CT Bues**, **Sgts Stanton**, **Stephens** and **Whichelo** and **Cpl Pete** 'Offender' **Best**. Training (Empire) Flight has undergone some serious expansion in recent times under the watchful eye of the latest Emperor **WO1 (Supvr R) Eric Clee**! (Who is the secondary duties king–Unfit Fitness Officer, OIC Museum through to Deputy Health and Safety Officer!) **CT Bues** had a footballing swan to Germany and returned with the Signals Cup! **Sgt Stanton** is back from a Skiing expedition to Germany and walking expedition to Death Valley in the USA! **Cpl Pete Best** scared even more children on a walking expedition in Scotland with his issue poncho! **SSgt (Supvr R) Frank Dalton** would like to mention that he works for the Sports Club and doesn't actually live there! For all those concerned, YES, there will be another Digby In Bloom Competition!!

ORIENTEERING TEAM

Orienteering Comd — **Capt (Tfc Off (R)) Steve Palfreyman**
2IC Orienteering — **Sgt** 'Pimpernel' **Whichelo**

The team has competed in all RAF Orienteering events and has competed in the Royal Signals Championships. Stalwart **Cpl Weston** has left to take up a civilian post and congratulations on his engagement to **Jo**!

The ladies team has had their fair measure of success and pictured are some of the team 'Racing Snakesses'!

'When shall we four run again!'
Ladies Team (*L-R*): LCpl Lisa Shaw, LCpl Sam Kirton, WO1 Jeanette Graham and Capt Jan Sykes

We became runners up in the RAF Logistics championships with notable performances from young and old alike featuring **SSgt (Supvr R) Worley**, **Sgt Hamill** and **Cpl Pat Mullen**! Congratulations to **WO1 Gower** on his 1st place on the Corps Championship 'C' Course–an excellent result at his first championship event. **Capt Palfreyman** managed a creditable 12th place on the 'A' course despite a crippling sports injury from the night before. (Despite falling down 30ft earth bank and nearly breaking his collar bone, he still managed to hold onto his butty!)

HOCKEY CLUB

OC Hockey — **SSgt (Supvr R) Alan Sutherland**
2IC Hockey — **Cpl Gary King**

Names for praise **Sgt Longmuir**, **SSgts (Supvr R) Stockell** and **Sutherland**, **Cpl Miller** and **JT Welham** who punished the RAF Cup favourites RAF Henlow in the semi final, with some great goals and saw us running out the winners at 6–3. Cup Final final day at RAF Halton and Digby fielded a very strong side (consisting of nine players from the Army Element) against the odds on favourites RAF Stafford. The see saw game saw goals from **Cpl Millar** and **JT Welham** cancelled out in the dying seconds by a Stafford equalizer! Extra time and Digby a goal down straight away but displays from **Flt Lt Wood**, **Sgts Hepburn**, **Brown** and **Cpls Berry**, 'Miffy' **Smith** and **LCpl** 'Cam' **Smith** saw us score two goals and Digby became the RAF Hockey Champions for the first time ever. We hosted the Inaugural Birgelen Trophy between 9 Sig Regt, RAF North Luffenham, 14 Sigs, 15 Sigs and DSSS. Digby ran out the convincing winners scoring 26 goals and conceding only three. 15 Sigs second, 9 Sigs and DSSS joint third, fifth RAF North Luffenham and the wooden spoon to 14 Sigs.

399 SU FOOTBALL TEAM CONQUERS EUROPE!

OC Tour — **WO John Jackson**
Team Manager — **CT Dave Bues**

In May, RAF Digby Football Club participated in the prestigious Signals Cup Competition held at AFCENT in Holland. 18 Service teams from Germany, Holland, UK and Cyprus took part. The second team led by Corps player **Cpl Benson** and midfielder **Cpl Coop** suffered only one defeat to finish runners-up in their group.

After some early jitters RAF Digby's first team, got their act together with **Cpl** 'Mac' **McLeod** and **LCpl Stephenson** keeping the defence together with keeper **CT** 'Toff' **Purvey** enabling striker **Cpl Al Smith** to net four goals to win their group. In the semi-final we beat RAF Bruggen the current RAF Soccer Champions. The final was against 280 Sig Sqn (formerly 28 Sig Regt) the elite Army team in Germany. With a single goal from **LCpl Stephenson** we appeared to be cruising but football is a funny old game with 280 Sig Sqn scoring three and Digby equalising with a goal from **Cpl** 'Mac' **McLeod** and then one from **LCpl Stephenson** in the dying seconds. Penalties again! **JT Batey** under considerable pressure scored and left **CT** 'Toff ' **Purvey**, as he did in the semi-final, to pull off a brilliant save and RAF Digby became the Signals Cup Champions at their very first attempt! Our resident German 'Feetba Fan' **WO1 (Supvr R) Chestnut** has very kindly offered to organise next year's event on our behalf. That's all for now and all I can say is hope the mail gets through and the truth is out there!

240 Sig Sqn

Sqn Comd — **Maj Peter Baron**
2IC — **Capt (Retd) Joe Lovell**

OPERATOR TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt (Tfc) Steve Watson**
OPs Sgt — **Sgt Caroline Gordon**
CDA — **Sgt Heather McNair**

As promised in the last edition, we can now reveal that it was **Cpl Donna Reynolds** who had the twins, well done to both of you, and also to **Sgt Caroline Gordon** on her addition to the **Gordon** clan. It's good to have you both back at work. Our only remaining Relief Operator, **LCpl Cath Winder** has deployed to Bosnia for six months, we wish you good luck and hope you enjoy Christmas over there.

TECH TROOP

Tp Comd — **Maj (TOT) Alan Eames**
Tech Sgt — **Sgt Paul Bowes**

Maj Alan Eames has returned from Hong Kong to find he was not missed and SWS did not fall apart without him, he is now preparing his hand-over notes ready for a posting to Corsham, hockey stick and tooth brush in hand. In his absence **Cpl Nick Marcovic** took the opportunity to hand in his notice, and is well into the difficulties of resettlement. **Sgt Paul Bowes** is now wondering how he will cope on his own, not being sure how to plug the kettle in.

EXERCISE OUTWARD EBOR II

Ex Outward Ebor II was undertaken in May and was an occasion for the members of 240 Sig Sqn to stretch their legs. Also to do some map reading (without having to involve the Air Rescue team!)–in other words, it was the annual Adventure Training week held in the 5 star hostel in Ambleside, in the Lake District. So there we all were, first thing on the Monday morning heading across country to the dark horizons of Cumbria. But hoorah, on arrival the sun broke through and remained with us for the rest of the week. The OC, **Maj Pete Baron** had assured us that he had booked it for that week, on the advice of the Adjt, **Capt (Retd) Joe Lovell**, who for once got it right!

Outside the Hut
(Back Row): Mr Paul Hadden, Mr Carl Butler
Middle Row: Mr Steve Boulton, Cpl Tony Brown, Cpl Steve Guilford, Capt Steve Watson
(Front Row): Mr Gerry Colgan, Sgt Heather McNair, Maj Pete Barron, Mr Tony Hewes, Sgt Paul Bowes

Cpl Tony 'all the gear, no idea!' **Brown**, our intrepid expedition leader was awaiting our arrival to brief us on the week's forthcoming activities. So, armed with paddles and wetsuits for the canoeists and a prayer book for the abseilers we set off for the first of many activities. **Cpl Tony Brown** persuaded the canoeists to wade into the freezing water to get used to the feel of it, unfortunately **Cpl Steve Guildford** had an 'out of-life experience!' and the most canoeing that he did was to wear the suit, wade in, only to get dragged straight back out! Freezing of the arteries was his excuse! But everyone else managed to brave the cold, do the "roll" and if need be, helped to do so with **Sgt Paul Bowes** proving that canoes really can fly when he took off from the edge slightly higher than expected!

The Canoeists

The abseilers had their fingers crossed that it really wouldn't be as bad as all that–but again, they were disappointed as the height was more associated with parachuting and oxygen masks than ropes and 'figures of eight'! **Capt Joe Lovell** did not smile once during the whole time, while managing to smoke numerous cigars in the hope that his turn would never come, but needless to say, he was soon roped up, cigar was extinguished and the last rites were given to him! Then it was **Sgt Heather McNair** who not only proved that abseiling could be done by going down head-first, but also showed that disco-dancing was not only restricted to night-clubs when the 'disco-leg syndrome' started to appear. She certainly did not inspire the confidence of all around her with the OC, **Maj Pete Baron** following next who in all his years service had never partaken in this so-called 'fun-sport' before. In fact, he was so pleased in arriving safely at the bottom, that he started smoking again after weeks off on a 'give-up smoking' campaign! What will-power!!!!

During the week, we had two major walks organised, the first one being 'Sharp Edge' which **Cpl Tony Brown** had assured the OC was just a 'mere bimble'. This was easy for him to say as he had never done it before! Needless to say, the going was tough with sheer drops at either side, more associated with Sir Edmund Hilary, although, as it was misty, the fact that we couldn't see how far we could fall was definitely a benefit for the fainthearted! **Sgt Heather McNair** had to be roped up at one occasion purely for safety and not for enjoyment, or so she assures everyone! Admittedly, the sense of achievement felt by everyone was worth it in the end and prepared those for the next walk of the week over 'Striding Edge'. This was a long walk incorporating steep climbs and scrambles which **Cpl Steve** 'I need some new underpants!' **Guildford** managed to cover on hands and knees as he was under the impression that it was just a nice, easy stroll through some fields–NOT! And so it was, that 240 Sig Sqn personnel covered the distance more like the 'Family Von Trapp' than anything else!!

The final activity of the week was mountain-biking held in Grisedale Forest. This was excellent fun with the group being split into two, with **Cpl Tony Brown** taking the 'faster' group and leading them into every mud pool going with **Sgt Paul Bowes** again flying through the air. Thus proving once again that it's not just canoes that can fly but bikes can as well! The 'Slower" ones kept a nice, steady pace going up-hill, that is until the top when it was a very uncontrolled descent with brakes squeaking all the way! **Capt Steve Watson**, our duty photographer, enjoyed the bike ride that was the only activity that he managed to do due to a 'sore thumb' although he was unable to wear a hat due to him not having a comb to hand!

All in all, it was a very enjoyable week with the only injury being to **Cpl Tony Brown** who was 'clubbed' in the face by a canoe paddle! Unfortunately, he survived to tell the tales!

ARRIVALS AND FAREWELLS

LCpl Lorna Banks has been posted to Bassingbourn on promotion to Cpl after completing hastily organised courses to make her suitable for training young and impressionable recruits. We wish you a happy and rewarding tour in your new post, and thank you for the memories left with us of a cheerful and willing soldier.

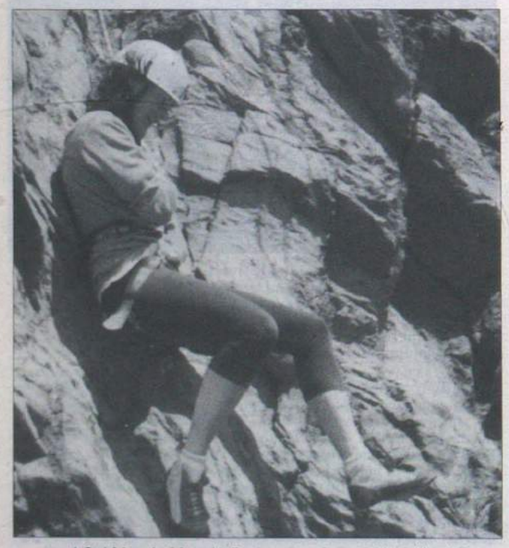
241 Sig Sqn

Sqn Comd **Maj Dave Wright FISM**

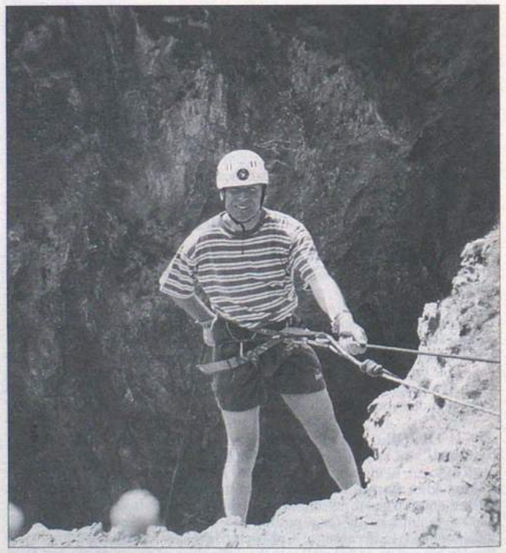
COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd **CO1 Mr Vie King**
2IC **WO2 (YofS) Wilf** 'Martin' **Wedge**

During this editorial period the Troop ventured south to the Newquay area, for the Squadron's Summer Camp. The advance party of **WO2 Wilf Wedge, Sgt** 'Geordie' **Green** and **Cpl Nick Harrington** (Now Mr) thoroughly receed all the training and social locations. The camp consisted of a fixed-point walk along the Cornish coastline, canoeing, surfing, rock climbing and abseiling. The latter proved a laugh for everyone except **LCpl Mandy May** who, as you can see from the picture, decided to have her back to the rock face. The Yeoman showed her how to abseil correctly!



LCpl Mandy May–'A Demonstration on Abseiling'



WO2 (Yeoman) Wilf Wedge–'Abseiling at its best'

During the evenings .22 shooting and orienteering were the main events. **LCpl Zoe Aldridge**'s shooting improved greatly when someone mentioned that she should look through both sights! On the orienteering scene the Troop became a little worried when **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Green** was seen with a map in his hand on the orienteering event. A small orienteering course suddenly became a longer course. Talking of walking, **Sig** 'The Young One' **Banks** enjoyed tabbing the hills with **Maj Jack Cowen**. Seems **Maj Jack** was getting in practice for his year hike around Australia when he has retired.

The Troop wished Bon Voyage to **Cpl Paula Kelson** on her detachment to Bosnia and then posting to ATR Bassingbourn and a very fond hello to **Cpl Donna Scaife**.

TECH TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Phil Leach**

A busy period for the Troop with PA engagements, SWS work and the additional responsibility for IT networks installation and maintenance. The Troop is now some 25 strong with 4 military the rest being, P & TO's, TG1's and MET'S. A finer bunch you have never met. From Longtown in the North to Castle Martin in the South (5 Div AOR) you see the warriors of Tech Tp improving their handicaps, following the leadership of **Capt Phil Leach** who plays off a six. The Troop recently said goodbye to **Cpl Harry Harrington** poached by one of those cable companies, we wish him the best for the future and we have to say a big hello to **Cpl Michelle Price**.

The two Troops above are based in Donnington however the Squadron area covers Brecon, Hereford, Sennybrigde, Bramcote, Kineton, Castlemartin, Warcop, Shrewsbury, Liverpool, Preston and all places in between.

PERSONALITIES:

Sqn Comd **Maj Graeham Neal**
SSM **WO2 (SSM)** 'Paddy' **Morrow**

PASSING OF TIME

June 1996! Our last entry in *The Wire*, my how time flies.

Quite a lot has gone on since then. Our single soldier (female) accommodation has moved from Ward Barracks down to Wilton, much to the relief of all the girl's who no longer need to take the duty stagecoach trip to and from work. Farewells to some whom have moved on to better things!

Last OC–**Maj Mark Castle-Smith**, now with HQ
Last YofS–**Bob Smith**, now with civvy street, loads of dosh.
Last SSM–**Colin Alexander** again to civvy street.
Cpl Nicky Dunlop to the Y List (1st child).
Cpl Fran Geddes to 9 Sig Regt, lucky thing.
Cpl Donna Nevens to 16 Sig Regt, to join hubby (at last).

WELCOMES TO SOME NEW MEMBERS:

SSM 'Paddy' and **Arlene Morrow** who join us from 21 Sig Regt.
YofS 'without portfolio' **Bernie Smith**
SSgt (FofS) Ty and **Lesley Sanderson**

EXERCISE PLOUGHMAN'S RIDE
by Sig Vincenzi

The crew; **Maj Graeham** 'Gizz a big one' **Neal**, **LCpl Trev** 'Desperate Dan' **Legg**, **LCpl Rachel** 'Calm down' **Cavanagh**, **LCpl Lesley** 'It's been a few years since I've done this' **Bell-Wigmore**, **LCpl Karen** 'I'm not scared, honest' **Clifton** and **Sig Nicola** 'I could've been a jockey' **Vincenzi**.

There was an air of great expectancy, as the intrepid crew set off for a day of horse riding at the Grovley Woods riding school. Although it was only ten minutes down the road from camp, **LCpl Bell-Wigmore**'s navigational skills left a lot to be desired. After mastering a ten-point turn on a narrow country road we finally made it to the stable yard. We were each given a particular horse/pony best suited for both our size and capability. Obviously that meant both the OC and **Trev** were allocated the two largest horses in the stable (world)!!!

After half an hours exercise in the paddock, the OC, **LCpls BW** and **Cavanagh** and myself were taken on a hack through the beautiful countryside that surrounds Wilton. The OC led the way on a spirited young thing called Hiawatha (we all came to the conclusion that she had desires of running in the Derby next year). I was left to bring up the rear, something to do with my vast amount of experience, so I could keep an eye on the rest. The only problem was that I ended up needing eyes in the back of my head if we were going faster that a walk. Because **Rachel Cavanagh**'s pony fancied the day off!!

We soon realised once we left the wooded area that our fun and games with Dobbin (**Rachel**'s pony) had only just begun. Once in the fields there was no stopping him, and I don't mean the physical exertion sense! Every blade of grass had to be sniffed, sampled and where possible, swallowed. By the end of the hack her hands were covered in blisters from pulling on the reins so much and we think she may have had a mild case of whiplash, caused by the sudden pulling down for more tasty morsels. Needless to say we didn't express any great desire to return to Grovley Wood in either the near or distant future. **Lesley BW** however enjoyed herself so much that she had thoughts of buying a season ticket, whoops that's football isn't it? Well, the way Middlesborough played last season there's no telling the difference.

A very appetising cup of coffee and a much needed meal of ploughman's lunch provided by the staff of Grovley Riding Stables followed. Even though I could hardly move the next day everyone agreed that all-in-all we had a very good day out.

243 Sig Sqn
Bulford

249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))
Bulford Camp

LANYARD TROPHY
by Sgt Ade Sims

Lanyard training started in earnest after post Norway block leave, following the deployment to Norway, with the Sqn Comd giving **Lt Noble** the incentive that he wanted us to win it–yea right! PT twice a day, five days a week soon showed that leave had taken its toll but 18 'happy' volunteers soon cracked on with pounding the miles and miles of Salisbury Plain. The annual Squadron Battlecamp soon arrived in May but as the Squadron deployed to Scotland the 18-man Lanyard Team moved to Sennybridge camp to do some serious mountain training and route selection away from daily work and to select a final team for the competition. **Capt John Marriot** soon led the way, 'been round here before, known a few routes,' and sure enough our thighs were screaming.

Two training teams were formed, **Lt Duncan Noble** with the biggest walking gate and **Cpl** 'Tug' **Wilson** who used other means of navigation - chicken wish bones, spin the bessel, dowel rods, heading up the teams. With two weeks hard tabbing and plenty of re-hydration being done in the evenings, a team was slowly being formed. Unfortunately as with all training, injuries did occur, the most notable being **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Greaves** who was apparently tabbing like the wind when he twisted his ankle. Three days before the competition started the team was announced and so we headed down to Sennybridge Camp on Wednesday, with the admin team being made up of all those who were injured or not selected during the training.

Our team was elected to leave at 0615hrs in 15th position, the weather was cool with mist so it was ideal for the days tab so someone was smiling on us. Having recced the route visibility wasn't too much of a problem. The first few hours were a blur, apart from passing teams in the mist that boosted morale, although the 'figure of 8 recce' didn't help on top of Fan Gyhiryth. The team was holding well together and staying as a group at all times and pushing each other along. The admin team doing an excellent job supplying the energetic Polaris cake, which was going down a bomb. **Sgt Andy Lothian** soon found that his unlucky number was seven and had to stay at that check point, that's what Para training does for you. **Cpl** 'Mo' **Pay** had to stop for a cigarette at check point nine so we had to leave him. Having reached check point ten with all eight blokes it was time to catch 11 Sigs, but going down the dry river bed was a drama and we never saw them. We later found that they hadn't followed the correct route back gaining some 15 minutes on us between checkpoint ten and the finish. So our team were judged to be in first position in a time of 11hrs 42mins not the way we would have liked to have won, but rules are rules.

Plenty more re-hydration was done that night with 216 Para Sig Sqn opening the bar, thanks to them for a well organised and high standard competition–standby for next year!!!!

ADVENTURE TRAINING–EXERCISE WHITE IRON

Ex White Iron was 249's annual Squadron Adventure Training week held over the period 4-13 July. The aim of the exercise was to get all available members of the Squadron away on a challenging Adventure Training Camp and hopefully have a bit of a laugh thrown in at the same time. The base camp for the expedition was Halton Training Camp in Lancaster, a location that is strongly recommended as it is ideally situated for access to both the Lake and Peak Districts, not to mention the superb R and R 'facilities' that Lancaster itself has to offer. After our arrival and

training briefs on Saturday 5 July, the Squadron were split into three groups for the week and rotated through three main activities each lasting two days and all co-ordinated by the watchful eye of **Lt Tim Jeffery** and his admin team. The activities were canoeing, hill walking and rock climbing.

The canoe phase was instructed by **Sigs Dave Wragg, Chris Noviss, Dave Nix** and **Richie Nicoll** and took place on Rydal Water for the first day and Devils Bridge for the second. Unlike any canoeing any of us had ever done before this phase was a real eye opener. The instructors, after putting us through our paces with basic techniques, rescue and survival, put the emphasis on team-work and 'balance' demonstrating by various methods how stable our canoes really were. As a result we are all masters of the 'Pyramid', a 4 canoe high stack and a spectator sport for passing tourists. Needless to say the challenges did not just involve canoes, jumping off Devils Bridge into the river 70ft below is an experience not many of us will easily forget.

The next two day phase was hill walk and to be honest a prospect most of us were not over enthusiastic about. However the instructors, **Lt Jeffery** and **Sgt Adie Sims** made these two days more enjoyable and more relaxing than expected. Our route involved a steep, sharp (and quick) ascent of Helvellyn and once the height was gained a relaxing walk down to Glenridding via the knife-edge of Striding Edge. That evening was spent easing the pain of blisters and sunburn in a local hostelry, purely medicinal! The following day was a 'flatter, honest' route around part of Ullswater and by the time the transport arrived to collect us we were knackered and as red as lobsters.

Finally the rock climbing and abseiling phase saw us enduring the sun again. **Sgt** 'Ezzy' **Ezard** and **Sig Calvert** instructed us for the two days for some adventurous Top Rope and Abseiling involving viaducts, lakes and overhangs; whilst two guys each day went to Langdale for some multi-pitch routes with the Sqn Comd, **Maj Holliday**. These 'volunteers' all had a different tale of horror to tell upon their return, especially **LCpl** 'Quinny' **Quinn** who allegedly told the OC (whilst 100m up a cliff) exactly why he hated climbing and what would be likely to happen to the OC 'when we meet on the football pitch'. Nonetheless this was all good team building and challenging stuff. Although **Sig Smith** evidently did not feel that he was being challenged enough and as a result woke the OC at 5 a.m. to tell him he'd found another route and they were leaving in half an hour to climb it.

Numerous other stories could be told but we just don't have the space. Ex White Iron was a successful and challenging expedition with some enjoyable 'relaxing' activities in between, especially the visits to Blackpool and Lancaster, and it was an ideal break from the normal routine of work.

EXERCISE SOFTFALL '97–249 SIG SQN WIVES BATTLECAMP
by Jacquline Stavrinou

On Saturday 28 June a number of wives and girlfriends stood in 249 Sig Sqn's compound. The atmosphere was jovial, but touched with a hint of nervousness. This was not only because many of us were meeting for the first time but because we were about to experience an insight into what our husbands/partners do for a living. This was Ex Softfall–249 Sig Sqn's wives battlecamp.

After a short safety brief we were introduced to **Sgt Joe Rowe**, who was running the exercise, and he introduced us to all those helping him for the weekend. For the next hour **Sgt Tim Haines** gave us instruction on how to use the 5.56 Rifle. This lesson was given in very simple terms and in a relaxed manner that in turn helped us to relax. It was then into the back of a BV 206 driven by **LCpl John Love** and off to the Small Arms Trainer. It was amazing how such a short journey could stir up such a frenzy of complaints about how noisy and uncomfortable this vehicle is. On arrival at the SAT we were split into groups and took turns in shooting (video mode, of course). Whilst morale was far from being low it certainly increased as teams managed to shoot the men on the screen! Halfway through we were told that refreshments were outside and without sounding ungrateful, we decided that the Army has a lot to learn about tea making. It was, well . . . warm and wet (what else did we expect)!? Needless to say we hurried back to the SAT for some night shooting (as if it wasn't hard enough during the day). Shooting over with and back into the BV's, we were on our way to Salisbury Plain. On another occasion I would like to return to the Plain to collect my stomach after going downhill, an experience you find exhilarating in a BV only after the event.

It was now time to set up camp. Grouped together we were shown how to erect a five man tent correctly, and afterwards, armed with tents, poles, etc. we set about making home for the night. Having never been camping before in my life and having heard horror stories about tents I was surprised how easy it was. It was funny watching other teams deciding which way they wanted their doors to face. Following that it was time for a cooking and ration pack demo. **Sgt Rowe** talked freely about each object that came out of the box. Although all of the women were a little amazed that the Army supplied a toothbrush, toothpaste, hairspray, small bottle of bodywash, large tin of marvel, Pringles, can of beer and not forgetting a Mills and Boon book titled 'Living Dangerously' amongst other things! After this we all had an attempt at cooking our tea and whilst I don't think any of us would have made Master Chef, we all had a good try. The food over we rested for a while before learning how to read a map and compass prior to the night navigation phase. **Sgt Rowe, Sgt Castle** and **LCpl Love** individually helped each group and then we planned our routes to all the checkpoints. Unfortunately they were inspected before we left so our plans to 'RV' in the Kiwi pub were stopped.

Map and compass in hand and torch in our pockets we were off. With the light on our side finding the first two checkpoints was easy and it was reassuring to know we were being followed and would be informed of any major navigational errors. The night navigation was a good group bonding session and it helped when we were praised at one point for not going around, but straight through some gorse bushes. We were on a mission and a few, all right a lot of, bushes were not going to stand in our way. Also along our path we were ambushed, although to **Sig Greg Hardman**'s disappointment we still carried on undeterred, finding all the checkpoints and answering all the questions. Finally it was time to rest and before long all the teams were back at the camp and 'debriefing' each other on their navigation.

Morning upon us, I was up bright and early (well I had to do my hair and make up) and feeling apprehensive about the next task which was driving. After breakfast everything was packed away and we were off for another adventure. After a lesson on how to drive the BV 206 I was picked to go first. I found that the problem wasn't actually driving the vehicle, it was getting into it, they are not designed for a dwarf! The instructor, **Cpl Rob Lewis**, was very calm and relaxed, luckily one of us was! Still being annoyingly calm **Cpl Lewis** told me we were going down a slope and then pointed to what looked like a cliff. However, my nerves told me otherwise and we headed off in another direction. The groups that were not driving were practising reversing a land rover with a trailer attached or erecting an antenna. We all took it in turns for each event.

The final task was the Assault Course. At this point we were introduced to 'Mo' (alias **Cpl Pay**), the Physical Training Instructor. After getting warmed up for the assault course, this being an amusing situation in itself, the ladies set off around the course. Everyone seemed to enjoy it, even those who where scared of heights. The participants were all praised by 'Mo' and then given liquid refreshments to help cool down before returning to Bulford for the Barbecue. With spirits still high on return, we all sat to eat and relax. The sun came out at long last and addresses and phone numbers were exchanged. Conversation ceased for the presentation of achievement certificates and prizes that were much appreciated. It was evident to me and I'm sure it was to the other ladies what effort had gone into organising and actually pulling off this weekend. I am more than glad I threw caution to the wind and participated. It was definitely a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening weekend and thank you to all who gave up their weekends to make it so.

VISIT OF BRIG J. C. MCCOLL–17 JULY 1997

This was the first visit to the Squadron for **Brig McColl** the Comd 1 Mech Bde and more importantly budget holder for the Squadron. After the usual briefings and a tour of both the accommodation and the garages, the commander was hosted in the WO's and SNCO's Mess. He was asked to present **WO2 (RQMS) Dennis** with his Warrant. The formal presentation to **Cpl Adam Wilkie** of his Commander MND South West's Commendation for Exceptionally Valuable Service in Support of the Division in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia and finally the Sqn FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Owen** was presented with his LS&GC for meritorious service over the career outlined below.

WO2 (FofS) Owen enlisted into the Armv in July 1980 at Grantham and the joined the Army Apprentices College at Harrogate. After successfully completing his training as a Tele Tech (Radio), he was promoted to LCpl and posted to 16 Sig Regt in Krefeld, where he was employed at trade in the Radio Sqn. On promotion to Cpl in 1983 he moved into the main Regt Wkshps. During 1984 he completed an emergency tour in Northern Ireland, serving with Romeo Tp of 233 Sig Sqn.

He attended his Class 1 Course at Catterick in 1986 and on completion he was posted to 1 Inf Bde in Tidworth where he was promoted to Sgt and selected for Foreman of Signals training. In 1989 he was posted to the School of Signals at Blandford to attend the FofS Course. **WO2 (FofS) Owen** came top of the course, and was then posted to 20 Armd Bde in Detmold. Whilst at 20 Armd Bde, **WO2 (FofS) Owen** was awarded the Royal Corps of Signals most outstanding SNCO award. With the changeover of 20 Armd Bde to Paderborn he was posted to 11 Armd Bde, remaining there during the amalgamation of the Bde Sig Sqn into 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt in Herford.

In 1995 **WO2 (FofS) Owen** was posted to the Army CIS System Support Division where he was promoted to WO2 and given the responsibility for the commercial support of several projects, including Ptarmigan. He joined the Squadron in November 1997. Whilst in the Squadron he has successfully passed ASSC and has exercised with the unit in Norway.

Comd 1 Mech Bde with WO2 (FofS) Owen and his wife Carol after the presentation of his LS&GC

251 Sig Sqn

Sqn Comd — **Maj David Ellis**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Kev Jenkins**

HAIL AND FAREWELL

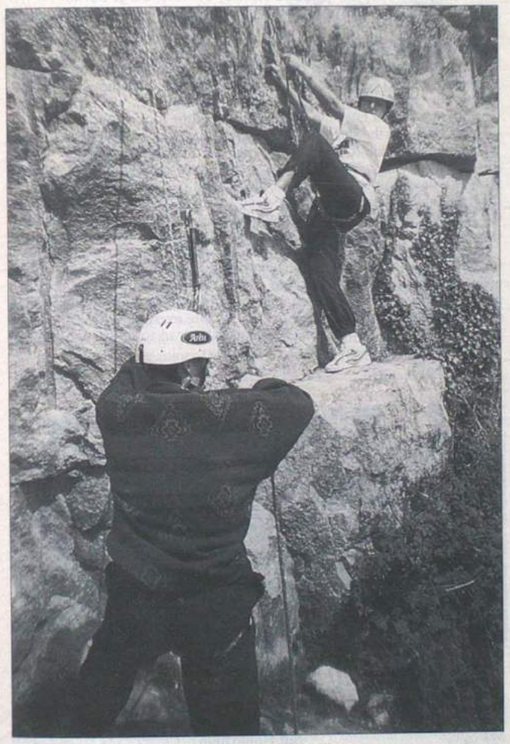
Farewell Ops Offr CAT (G) Nov, SSM Discharge Oct, **Sig Reynolds, LCpl Hill** Discharged. **Sig Huggett** 16 Sig Regt, **Sig Reid** 16 Sig Regt, **LCpl Bowman** 15 Sig Regt, **LCpl Mason** and **Sgt MacKay** 30 Sig Regt. Hail–**LCpl Cooney** 11 Sig Regt, **LCpl Mahugh** 3 Inf Bde.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the OC on being selected for promotion to Substantive Maj and **Sig Reynolds** who has left to have a baby.

SUMMER CAMP
by LCpl Tracy Chambers

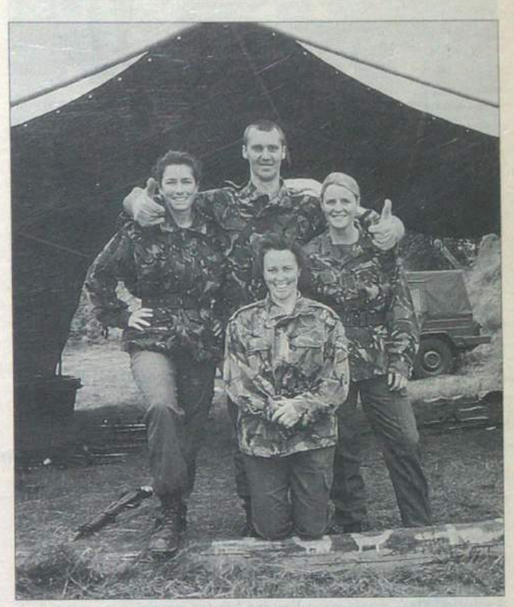
The first day of Summer Camp was dedicated to rock climbing. Myself, **Cpl Pete Casson** and **LCpl Ali Hayes** set up the climbs. We were aware some of the group was afraid of heights so we kept the climbs to 30ft. Once they arrived we showed them how to belay each other, so they could crack on. It didn't take long for the 'Cliff Hanger' stars to appear **Sigs** 'Huggy' **Huggett, Mick Loughran** and **Nicky Wilkinson** leaping the rocks in a single bound. On the other end of the scale there were a couple of disco legs, with **Cpl Lynne Cunningham** and **LCpl Sam Bowman** becoming stuck for 20mins half way up the rock. Once they had their feet back on the ground they couldn't wait to get back on the rock, this time without the Elvis impressions.



'What Disco Leg already?'

EXERCISE CHATURANGA
by Sig Mick Loughran

For the 3rd Year running we foolishly set-off for the Chaturanga Assault Course Competition, this year with a mixed and an all male team. The competition is 36 obstacles, shooting stands using a snipers rifle, Belgium EN, pistol and a crossbow. Both teams put in excellent times, although the mixed team had a false start with **Cpl Shearen** forgetting to use the rope while abseiling. A small strain to her foot was quickly healed by **Capt Baldwin** bravely volunteering to take her to the hospital. Unfortunately the mixed team now only had three members so **Sgt Carter** also bravely volunteered to run the course twice, a feat which was recognised by our hosts and resulted in an extra bottle of wine at the presentations. Both teams put in a sterling effort in the bar and managed to drink all the free beer in the officers mess as well as keep our Belgian hosts amused. Well worth the effort and training.



Mixed Team–Cpl Collins 'legless again'

Male Team–'Turned out nice again'

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following:
ALL PHOTOS accompanying Articles for *The Wire*, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they
MAY NOT BE USED

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
BFPO 35

Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Condie**
RSM **WOI (RSM) Ivan Shiels**

PRINCESS ROYAL DAY–25 JUNE 1997
by LCpl Rutland

Bravo Tp's suggestion of a Squadron water-skiing event proved to be the most popular choice of how to celebrate Princess Royal Day with the emphasis on fun for all. **LCpl Kev Young** and **Sig Lee Rickard** were quick to volunteer, a term **SSgt Davies** applies to all his taskings, to run the event and immediately set about the difficult task of co-ordination. The day arrived and as camp faded into the distance at the start of the journey to the Toppersee Lake, the individuals who had participated before in waterskiing gleefully told all the first-timers just how much water hurts when you hit it hard!! Needless to say, it was with some trepidation that the newer members of the Squadron left the bus and made their way to the lake.

After the issue of wetsuits and the sizing of skis, boards and discs etc. a couple of the more proficient skiers proceeded to demonstrate just how easy it was. **Cpl** 'JR' **Whitney** proved so adept at it that he tried to demonstrate the process of carrying two people on one set of skis. They didn't get very far and soon sank to the bottom of the lake but the basic principle had been passed onto the prospective first-timers. **Sig** 'Omar' **Sherriff** picked it up amazingly quickly and started to show off, with the end result that everyone now hates him! **Sig** 'Mac' **McLeish** only managed three out of the four-comers on every occasion and the longest walk back award goes to **Sig Penny Edwards** who definitely should have taken flip-flops! There were some spectacular crashes and many sore bodies at the end of the day, but everyone returned to camp for a well deserved drink safe in the knowledge that they had personally achieved something, even if it was only entertaining the remainder of the Squadron with some comical acrobatics. Many thanks go to **Kev** and **Lee** for organising an exceptional day out and to everyone else for turning up on the day.

FORMER REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (FRY) MEDAL PARADE
by Sgt Coughlan

With their boots highly polished and No 2s smartly pressed, one sunny Thursday in June the Squadron paraded for the presentation of their first batch of FRY medals. With proud wives and children watching keenly the Squadron marched on at 1345hrs. Shortly after **Brig J. M. Shaw MBE** (Comd 1 Sig Bde) was accompanied by the CO onto the parade square to present the medals. The Squadron citation was read by the 2IC stating that the medals were to be presented to members who deployed in October 1996 until April 1997, on Op Combined Endeavour in support of HQ LANDCENT as part of IFOR now SFOR. A landmark because no unit previously during the camp's 50 years existence has had to deploy on an operational tour. Whilst presenting the medals, Comd 1 Sig Bde took the time to talk to every individual about their experiences and this was very much appreciated. Seven other medals were also presented; five Long Service and Good Conduct medals; 1 Gulf medal and 1 Accumulated Service medal.

Cpl Moore receiving FRY medal

After the parade **Brig Shaw** joined the other medal recipients in the Sgts' Mess for a photo call before joining the rest of the Squadron in Club 280 for an informal chat and drink. To round the day off the Squadron held its Summer Ball. All in all a good day enjoyed by everyone.

The unit is on roulement again in August as part of its continuing support in the FRY until the middle of '98.

Some Medal Recipients with their wives and Comd 1 Sig Bde (*L-R*): Sgt Foreman (Accumulated Service); SSgt McNulty RE, Sgt Sweet RLC (LS & GC), Maj Condie, SSgt Barker (Guy' LS & GC), SSgt (FofS) Griffiths, Sgt Coughlan (LS & GC)

IRT 8-14 JULY 1997

On the evening of 8 July 1997, 20 men, both young and old (**Cpl Ricky Allmark**), of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, arrived at Westdown Camp on Salisbury Plain. On arrival they were informed that reveille was at 0600hrs. Considering such a late start to the day, everyone took the opportunity to go sight seeing in the surrounding area. All, that is, accept **Pte Rob Pearce** who remained behind in order to write the first of many letters to his girlfriend back in camp. The week started slow but ended with a bang, with two days on the ranges and finally a test day where everybody was assessed on the skills that they had been taught in the past few days. If like the Sqn Ops Officer you have a pistol as a personal weapon you spend one day on the ranges and one day inspecting the inside of your sleeping bag. Unlike **LCpl** 'Killer' **Whitehead** who showed his section what a finely tuned killing machine he really is, on the live field firing exercise. It was also interesting to see **LCpl Ian Wells** demonstrating his diplomatic negotiation skills, in a scenario involving some restless natives on the final day. In all it was a worthwhile and enjoyable exercise with some very relevant lessons. These lessons will hopefully lead to a safe and trouble free tour, for all, in Bosnia.

IRT Team

MT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt D. A. Wright**
MT Sgt **Sgt Honeyman**

The MT's jolly boys outing this year was an uneventful 3-day trip driving five of the Squadron's Land Rovers to Bosnia. It was led by **Sgt** 'I'll map read and drive all the way' **Honeyman**. Although the exhaust on one fell off at the Austrian border, and another was so thirsty it drank all the oil, all five made it all the way. **Sig Locke** even saw a plane being towed by another (it was a long drive)!

It's that time again in the MT when the Squadron's fleet of DAFs are put through two weeks of TUV. This year made harder due to the fact that the Squadron is still currently deployed out in Bosnia. Still, the busy two weeks passed quite quickly without any major problems and was one of the best TUVs in past years. The Troop continues its long details to Ramstein and Hannover for flights, due to the Squadron's rotation of personnel. Morale is apparently high, so we've been told.

The MT wishes to congratulate **Sgt Dave Honeyman** on his promotion and **Cpl McDonnell** on his selection for promotion and **LCpl Richie Birch** on his marriage to **Karen**. We also welcome our newest member **Sig** 'I don't look like Wayne Hilton' **Jackson**.

EXERCISE TRAILWALKER

Marching 100km over the South Downs Way may not be everyone's idea of a fun weekend, but four members of the Squadron took up the challenge when we sent a team to compete in Ex Trailwalker. The event, that until last year was run in Hong Kong has been brought to the South Downs Way by 250 (Gurkha) Sig Sqn and is run in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

The Squadron team consisted of **Lt Gareth Lamb** (Team Captain), **Sgt Steve Spiers** (APTC infiltrator), **Sgt Donald Ferguson** (Red Bull addict) and **LCpl Kris Umney** (Tractor spotter). The team was kept on the trail thanks to the excellent support provided by the Gurkhas and also our own admin team consisting of **Cpl Kev Young** (Racecourse Inspector), **Sig Jo Ellison** (all round constant source of amusement) and unofficially **Sgt Spiers'** Mum (Tea and Coffee). After the initial euphoria at the start, the long grind soon became very real and it was thanks to people like the infamous **Dennis** and **Eleanor** who followed us all day, that spirits remained so high. Despite losing one member of the team through injury, the remaining three kept the pace up through the day and achieved the initial team goal of making it all the way to Brighton racecourse before midnight. In completing the event, the team had a challenging but worthwhile weekend and raised over DM 700 towards the Trust. Finally, two points for future Trailwalkers. Pre race kebabs do nothing for your insides, and Brighton racecourse is not a continuous loop!

Ex Trailwalker
(*L-R*): LCpl Kris Umney, Sgt Steve Spiers, Sgt Donald Ferguson, Lt Gareth Lamb

Joint Communication Unit Falkland Islands

OC **Maj M. J. Fensom** R. SIGNALS
USM **WO2 Mitchell**

This will be the last set of *Wire* notes from 257 Sig Sqn before our return to Bulford in mid August. Not too many days until we see the happy smiling faces of the Sig Sqn from that other, less well known Division from Herford. The Army element of JCUFI, continues to have a most successful tour and have been active both at work and on the social scene. We also had the pleasure of a week long visit from the CO, **Lt Col G. R. Leach** and the RSM, **WO1 Fitzpatrick** in mid June. We hope that they left with a favourable impression of the Unit and the work that the soldiers (not forgetting the sailors and airmen) do, some times in the most inhospitable conditions. We have recently said goodbye to **LCpl** 'Polly' **Pollitt**, who was so vital to the Regiment in Bulford that they demanded him back. In his place comes **Pte Louise Ashman**. About time that we had a decent clerk! So over to the Troops for their observations of the last few weeks.

A TROOP–RADCON
Tp Comd **Ft Lt Valentine**–RAF
2IC **SSgt Flooks**

LCpl Chris Bonham has finally returned from his three-week jolly with HMS *Leeds Castle* to Montevideo. At the time of writing no-one has managed to work out what he did for three weeks, after hearing some of the rumours it's probably better that way! The rest of Radcon have been busy grafting with two major exercises as well as everyday tasks. The first of these exercises was Ex Purple Strike, which took place between 27-30 May. It was a joint live firing exercise and Radcon's roles were three-fold. Firstly we deployed two Tac Rebros with 1 RGR to ensure that the Force Command Net and Safety Net were in and working. **Lt Jason Gray, Cpl Matt Kutzner** and **Sigs Tony Hodgson** and **Ian Shaw** manned the dets. The second task was the manning of a static rover borne Rebro that monitored all the nets involved in the exercise.

This det comprised **Sgt Ian Paterson**, and **Sigs** 'Finbarr' **Saunders, Eric Gardyne** and 'Taff' **Butt**. The OC Tp, **Flt Lt Sue Valentine** who did her popularity no harm at all by getting the brews on straight away, joined the Det on the last night. She was also handed a handset and a two-hour radio stag for her troubles as well. The third and final, but by no means less important role was the 24 hr manning of the Ops Room, listening not only for exercise traffic but also real time traffic from around the Falklands. All in all, it was a very successful exercise in which Radcons reputation was enhanced.

The second exercise was Ex Cape Petrel that took place in and around the MPA area. Once again Radcon was in the thick of the action and in-between manning the ever active Ops room, feeding half of the Line section and getting infiltrated by the enemy we still managed to fit in a slack handful of deployments. The most eventful of which involved **Cpl Matt Kutzner, LCpl** 'Spud' **Murphy** and **Sig** 'Finbarr' **Saunders** in the flying Rebro which was heli-lifted to Campito hill which had been 'taken out' by the enemy. As we landed we were attacked by a section of Gurkhas who told us that we weren't to set up the Rebro. After much heated debate they relented and in went the Rebro.

Now that the bulk of exercises are over, we can start to look forward to August and handing over to 1 Div. We are not counting the days of course, but rumour has it that there are about 63 to go!

Posing for the Press visit
(*L-R*): SSgt Flooks, Flt Lt Sue Valentine (A Tp Comd), Sgt Patterson

B TROOP–COMCEN
by Sgt 'JP' Partridge

Since the last time of going to press, things have been fairly quiet in the Comcen. We did however have a visit from the CO and RSM and tried to baffle them with NSTN. I think it worked! The girls in the Troop held a very successful charity night in aid of cancer research. The theme was a M.A. S.H night and raised £432. Well done! Not long to go now and then it's a months leave. What we will we do with all that time off ?

C TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Bosley** R SIGNALS

Yet another busy month for the over worked Charlie Tp, with several highly successful 'bashes' in the Unit bar ranging from live bands and curry afternoons to celebrating the Falkland Islands Christmas or Fixmas as it is known. The Troop has been heavily involved in various exercises in and around MPA recently with one of the highlights being **SSgt Matt Nuttall, Sgt Flo Jarvis, LCpl** 'Sweetcheeks' **Porter** and **Sig Bell** trying to act like something from Bravo 2-0 when infiltrating the TXer site. Apparently they could have marched in with a brass band and a herd of elephants behind them and the occupants of the site wouldn't have noticed a thing! They may consider turning down the volume on their play-station next time. Many of the Troop are now taking R&R with one or two lucky souls getting a trip to Ascension Island and they have come back looking a healthy tan colour. **Cpl Wayne Hilton** couldn't be bothered with all that and spends most of his waking hours on the sunbed. Unfortunately his skin tone resembles that of a Jaffa orange! Finally, it's well done and about time to **LCpl Randy Randerson** on promotion to Cpl. Only one thing **Randy**, get that hair cut.

D TROOP
Tp Comd **WO Blackburn RAF**

D Tp went about its business maintaining the aerials and masts within theatre and keeping the airfield navigational aids, for the most part, serviceable. The highlight of the month was the unqualified success of the 'Scary Monster' theme party held at Sharkies. Members of the Troop arranged the event. They, for reasons that will become obvious, wanted to remain anonymous. What made the occasion so memorable was the total lack of monsters, scary or otherwise. What was probably more amazing is that nobody, other than the OC JCUFI, seemed to notice this oversight. It is rumoured that after this heady taste of success the Troop have plans to arrange another theme party based on unusual pets. If the past is anything to go by I fully expect to win by bringing a tin of salmon.

PATROLLING WITH THE REINFORCED INFANTRY COMPANY
1 ROYAL GURKHA RIFLES
by Sig Ian Shaw–IT Cell JCUFI

Having seen the Royal Gurkha Rifles at work on several occasions I was more than happy to be accepted to work with them on patrol in the Falklands. Whilst here as the Reinforced Infantry Company, their tasks include the defence of MPA in the event of attack by an aggressor. However, during peacetime they spend a lot of time exercising and training. Part of this includes patrolling throughout the islands to familiarise themselves with the terrain and conditions that only the Falklands can provide and more importantly, to carry out various public relations tasks.

It was such a task that I had volunteered to join one of their patrols for. In short, the patrol would be dropped at Goose Green and make their way back to NTA on foot, stopping at the various settlements on route and offering the services of the patrol to help and aid the people in any way they could. After a short preparation period of briefings and then packing and re-packing my kit, I was finally deployed with the patrol. A journey of one hour in the back of a Bedford took us to Goose Green but as we arrived we found the press had got there first. A film crew from SSVC was there to take some footage of the life of 1RGR in the Falklands. So, the first afternoon was spent patrolling for the cameras and listening to the patrol commander being interviewed. As the interviewer was German and the interviewee Nepalese you can begin to imagine the fun and games they had trying to understand each other!

On that first night we had not yet met the head man in the settlement who would provide us with somewhere dry to sleep and task us to work, so we found ourselves filing into the woollen mill where we would sleep and eat. The food was a taste of things to come as the Gurkhas set about making a brilliant curry. If you've ever tried their curry you will agree that it is a lot better than the usual you get from the Golden Dragon down the High Street. On our second day we met up with our contact at the settlement who already had in mind the job he would ask us to do. It sounded simple enough when he said that he wanted us to cut back his gorse hedges. He let us find out for ourselves that his hedge actually stretched for several miles and we would spend not only that day but the next as well trimming it. We were rewarded for our efforts though with a leg of mutton and as many fish as we wanted from a catch that had come in as we worked. All of this food found its way into the curry pot and we had a good feed with enough left over for the remaining nights on patrol. After three days in Goose Green and with only three days left, we packed up, food and all, and made the 17km march to the next RV. After being assured that the pace wouldn't be too fast, we arrived there in the early evening and I was completely exhausted after three hours on the go.

Having spent the night in a derelict stone shed we began our final move to Swan Inlet, a settlement roughly 7km from MPA. The only family that lived there were very friendly towards us and asked us in for tea and cakes on the evening that we arrived. It was nice to know that even the people here are just as British as those back home. We were given our task for the next day, moving some old wooden crates, and shown to our 'bedroom'–the cowshed! On our final morning we were woken by the noise of a cow being herded into the shed where we had slept and were offered some fresh milk straight from source. It was still warm but tasted better than the UHT milk at MPA. After completing our task we said farewell and waited for the transport that would take us back. After a short debrief the patrol was officially over. I was grateful to be back at NTA knowing that I would not have to put up with the cold nights that you get down here, but I had many memories that will stay with me for a long, long time. I thoroughly enjoyed my week with the patrol and hope that I have at least given something back to the Falkland Islands whilst taking away the sights that I have captured on film that are unique to this part of the world.

EXERCISE LATIN JOLLY 2 MAY-20 MAY 97
by Lt H. L. Bosley

WARNING ORDER

Mission:	The mission of Ex Latin Jolly is to sail to Montevideo in order to increase local liaison and further develop Tri-Service relations.
Orders:	Time 0900 02 May 97.
Location:	East Cove, Mare Harbour, Falkland Islands, onboard HMS *Leeds Castle*.
NMB:	0900
Admin:	For personal protection require sun glasses, suntan lotion, flick knife and rape alarm.
Specialist equipment required:	cocktail dress, Lonely Planet Guide
Ammunition:	Each man is to take Pesos, Visa and Master Card.

Phase 1–Golden Gonk Bag: During the four day passage to Montevideo the main intention was to acquire as much sleep as is physically possible. The competition for the Golden Gonk Bag was tough and just slightly lost to **Flt Lt 'John' Roylance** who actually had no desire to be awake at anytime. The Capt took me under his wing and made sure that I benefited from the passage as much as possible. I gained knowledge of some of the more intimate parts of the ship including being locked in the laundry room for an hour!

Phase 2–Montevideo: Shops, wine bars, restaurants, neon signs and Macdonalds! Returning to Western Civilisation as I know it after two months in the Falklands was a welcome pleasure. Montevideo or Monty for those in the know was not the most attractive of cities but an excellent time was had by all for the ten days that we were along side. Drinking Champagne and eating Caviar outside in the sun at the ambassadors lunch and I wondered if a tour to the Falklands was that bad afterall! I had the pleasure of meeting several Argentinean and Uruguayan Naval Officers, not forgetting the charming officers of HMS *Leeds Castle*.

Phase 3–Buenos Aires: The opportunity to step into Argentina was not to be missed. What a great city and not dissimilar to London surprisingly enough. To me this was the highlight of my trip. A little hovercraft took us over and back again which was a pleasant change from the luxury of one of Her Majesty's Warships.

Phase 4–Along the Coast: After visiting Argentina and exhausting Monty it was time to venture up the coast in search of new places of interest. By hire car we headed North in search of yet more luxury, obviously not content with just sun, champagne and caviar. Our new distraction was found in the form of an elegant hotel with a Jacuzzi. Now we definitely had enough ammunition to wind everyone up at Mount Pleasant Officers Mess.

Phase 5–Return to Work: The four-day passage back was welcome recovery time. Many blueys home were written and it was soon time for me to switch back to the life back in MPA.

Summary: All in all the trip was a fantastic opportunity. I had a wonderful time. I learnt a considerable amount about the Royal Navy at sea and had some excellent R & R. I would certainly like to thank everyone on HMS *Leeds Castle* for their hospitality and would advise anybody who is given the opportunity to sail with the Royal Navy, to jump at the chance. **Sig Chris Bonham** had joined me on the trip and was promoted on board which was an added aspect to the trip. Congratulations!

TRIP TO MONTEVIDEO
by LCpl Chris Bonham

During the four days it took to sail to Montevideo, I was employed in the MCO (Main Communications Office). This entailed a series of shifts through both day and night. Other duties involved removing rust marks from the outside of the ship. This was in preparation for it to be painted in Uruguay. I also took part in a number of other activities especially when the ship came into and left harbours. Probably the most unusual signalling work I performed was using the flags and pennants on the halyards. All together I learnt a lot and enjoyed doing my work.

The social side was probably the highlight. Everyone onboard HMS *Leeds Castle* was more than willing to help you if they could. They were easy to get on with and enjoyed socialising. Montevideo was a fantastic place to go. All the night-clubs were open until the last person left which was normally well into the very early hours of the morning. Altogether I had an excellent time and would jump at the opportunity of doing it again.

FIXMAS SWIM

It is tradition in the Falkland Islands to celebrate Falkland Island Christmas on 25 June every year. This milestone in the social calendar is

JCUFI UHQ at the FIXMAS Swim

celebrated by means of all the local inhabitants stripping off and plunging their lily-white bodies into the depths of the South Atlantic Ocean. Hmmmm. Some of our more adventurous seniors and officers partook in this monumental event. The day started with members of Her Majesty's forces from all ranks and the local participants making a mad dash for the ocean, in various forms of fancy dress or not as the case may be. Afterwards everyone huddled around a large bonfire lit up on the beach before pilling into one of the many inviting Locals for a bevy or two.

CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST–28 JUNE 1997

On Saturday 28 June the Royal Signals officers in theatre held a champagne breakfast in order to celebrate Princess Royal Day. Sixteen officers and seniors serving with JCUFI and JSSU (Joint Services Signals Unit) were invited to the breakfast that was an excellent start to our working day. Scrambled egg and salmon to complement our cooked breakfast, as well as Bucks Fizz was a pleasant change. However, certain diners announced a preference for scrambled egg and bacon. The breakfast was a most enjoyable occasion and enabled the unit to say goodbye to **Capt** 'Oasis' **Gamble** and **Capt** 'Dad' **Stewart**. All the best in Germany/ Bosnia to you both.

JCUFI at the Champagne Breakfast on Princess Royal Day

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

OC **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**
YofS **SSgt (YofS)** 'Pete' **Van den Broek**

The team has seen out yet another busy period of exercises, and finally made it to summer leave. After a quiet month in June, for exercise any way, the team managed to get some much needed turn around time for the vehicles after the previous busy months. It was also a time for career courses and other courses. With **SSgt (YofS) Pete Van den Brock** heading back to UK for a Course reunion. **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** heading in a similar direction for a crypto course. **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** left for his Det commanders course and the three siggies ('Andy 2' **Powell**, 'Vic' **Vernon** and 'Scott' **Yuill**) heading off for Cat C and C+E driving courses.

Sig 'Vic' **Vernon** also managed to get in a two week sailing expedition, with 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. The expedition started in Gosport, at the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre, before heading out to sea on the first day, bound for Cowes on the Isle of Wight. From there, a marathon 3-day slog landed him and the rest of the crew of HMSTY *Dasher*, on the Isle of Man. Another night cruise to Liverpool and then on to Fleetwood before finally landing in Holyhead and eagerly awaiting the next crew to take the boat on the next leg. Highlights of the expedition include **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** throwing one of the boats bowls overboard and the rescue of an old shrimping boat which floated past the yacht one day with a completely useless motor.

The 1 July saw the opening of what we thought would be a busy, three weeks out of four, month of exercises. This failed to materialise due to training area restrictions so we contented ourselves with a one-week deployment to Bergen Hohne to support the Devon and Dorset battle group prior to their deployment to BATUS. **Sigs** 'Vic' **Vernon** and 'Scott' **Yuill** were once again allowed into the Receiver Wagon (the heart of the Defensive Monitoring (Radio) System) to wreak unknown havoc on the system. During the exercise the GOC UKSC (G), **Maj Gen Drewry** visited the det, the second time this year, for an update on the team's capabilities and a look at the new equipment. He left suitably impressed for a lunch with members of CAFTG (G). We've been visited by the DCinC, a couple of GOCS, various battlegroup commanders and two Lieutenants from the Corps this year, don't believe what you hear about Vic's tea making, come for a visit in one of our exotic locations. We were also able to practice putting up our new 100ft mast, borrowed from 30 Sig Regt. With a bit of patience, and real estate, we should be able to glean even more radio signals from the training areas. The team is looking into borrowing spy satellites, from time to time, to give us that extra edge.

With leave looming over the horizon it was a time for farewells, as **LCpl Andy Johnstone** goes over the wall, in to civvy street. After a slap up Indian meal and a few drinks **Andy** was presented his 'Jimmy on a bun' and **Andrea** (**Andy**'s wife) received her 'Piggin' pig. The presentations didn't end there. **Andy** presented the team with a model 8/12 generator complete with one rear leg missing and wires hanging out, with the inscription 'I don't have the power, Captain' (more astute readers Ya'll remember **Andy** is the team trekkie (see *The Wire* issue May 97)). The surprises weren't over yet however. **Andy** had, as instructed, brought along an engraved plaque, but he didn't know what for. His eyes positively glowed when a Land Rover door was produced, painted red with the old team callsign 6 painted in white, as per the team's livery circa March-July 96. So begins another COMSEC tradition. With the door being presented back to the team, with plaque, for the next person to escape the team.

Capt 'Mac' **McCrindle** and **SSgt (YofS) van den Broek** spent three days on a CAFTG (G) study day, giving two presentations on the Corps and COMSEC, before spending three hours standing in a monsoon of Polish proportions discussing battlegroup advance to contact procedure. The grand finale was a TEWT consisting of a field visit in the role of a company commander responsible for a major reserve demolition.

In Poland with our Guard Force

As an added treat just before leave we gave up our hill-walking in the Harz for the joys of a rapid, and last minute, deployment to another damp forest to monitor Ex Rhino Spear for HQ 1 (UK) Div. This exercise proved to be very different from anything we have encountered before, mainly because we were monitoring HF frequencies instead of the normal VHF ones. It proved to be a testing deployment, as we coerced our equipment into receiving and recording HF noise. With various HF antennas being tried and confirmed with ARCHITECT, we listened to a wide variety of radio checks and set tuning but alas, and not very surprisingly, divisional staff was too shy to use HF. It is rumoured they would rather walk 5kms over hot coals to the nearest phone box. Aside from the insects other minor irritations included 100% Menu D goulash for the duration (self-inflicted by Vic), mouldy bread (it's the humidity, said the master chef) and our decision to deploy without the Sky system for a change. The end of Rhino Spear saw the team dispersing across Europe for summer leave, anticipating September refreshed and looking forward (No, but we are) for another (really we are) month long, deployment to Poland for 20 Armd Bdes Ex Ulan Eagle 97.

If you're visiting Bournemouth or Poole,
why not combine it with a visit to
The Royal Signals Museum
Blandford Camp

Sussex Army Cadet Force (HQ)
Annual Camp 1997

ANNUAL CAMP (1997) FREMINGTON, NORTH DEVON
ANNUAL CAMP DATE: SATURDAY 2 AUGUST-FRIDAY 15 AUGUST
CAMP REPORT

Sussex Army Cadet Force's highlight of the training year and main event had arrived, we are off to Annual Camp! 256 Cadets male and female plus 27 Officers and 54 Senior NCO's arrived at Fremington Camp after a journey of six hours. This was the first visit to Fremington for Sussex and for many young cadets their first taste of Annual Camp. As usual our very busy Training Wing, led by **Maj David Collett** arranged a wide variety of training, using to the full the many benefits of first class military and adventurous training facilities Fremington Camp has to offer. The training package included a brilliant, on camp 85ft aerial runway, mountain bikes, assault course, 22 shooting, air rifle shooting, surfing, canoeing, climbing, first aid training, abseiling, D of E training, lots of sport, cross country running, White Helmets Display Team motorcycle riding and of course I must not forget to mention the very tasty 'happy bags' . . . Cadet packed lunches!

Two of the many highlights of camp was Land Yachting and Caving, both proved to be great fun and a new experience for most of the Cadets. The training programme designed to bring out newly acquired skills will result in many cadets returning from camp sporting new star badges on their brazzards. To keep us all informed and amused **Maj Frank Greenwood**, the Camp Adjt produced the very popular Sussex ACF newspaper the 'Sussex Sentry' this informative daily paper put many smiles on cadets faces on a regular basis.

Our camp notes would not be complete without expressing our thanks for the tremendous efforts on our behalf of medics from 256 Field Hospital, 5 PWRR (V), 67 PWRR (V). Also the Guards adventure training team, based at the camp, Royal Marines assault boats from the Amphibious Trials and Training Unit, Instow, Bideford, whose contribution made the camp so enjoyable and fun. A number of distinguished visitors attended camp and saw many of the different activities taking place, our Hon Col, **Sir Brian Bartalott, BL, OBE, DL,** 2 Bde Commander, **Brig Godsal, MBE**, GOC 4 Div, **Maj Gen N. W. F. Richards OBE, Col D. H. A. Shephard**, they all left our camp delighted to see so many cadets enjoying themselves and were very impressed by the enthusiasm and courtesy in the manner in which they responded to questions asked. Our weather was again dry and warm, plenty of Devon 'sunshine'. At the end of camp we enjoyed our usual penultimate days presentation parade, again a sizeable array of silverware and prizes presented by our Commandant, **Col Chris Blessington, JP**. Without doubt our Cadets returned to Sussex all the better for good training, good sport, good fun and good fellowship ready to crack on with local training with even greater enthusiasm.

HARROGATE REMEMBERED

ARMY APPRENTICES SCHOOL, HARROGATE
HEADQUARTER COMPANY
No. 2 PLATOON
DECEMBER 1954

A/T Digby A/T Flower A/T Crichton A/T Foukett A/T Earnshaw A/T Garrett A/T Evans A/T Duncalfe A/T Gowlett A/T Frye
A/T Derbyshire A/T Deighton A/T Eastwood A/T Goldup A/T Farnsworth A/T Fraser A/T Farrar A/T Dyke A/T Freeman A/T Davies A/T Dixon
T Farley A/T Dennis A/T Goymer A/T L/Cpl Shaw C.S.M. Cole, E. Major Thresher, A. Sgt. Blades, J. (B.E.M.) B.Q.M.S. Evans A/T. C.S.M. Newberry A/T Gilmoye A/T Guest A/

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Like 'Korky', who so splendidly evoked Harrogate memories from the 1950s in the final issue of the RSI Journal (Spring 1997), the pull of the past also prompted me to embark upon a sentimental journey to Penny Pot Lane. I went in August 1996 for the final passing out parade that ended a 50-year era at the Army Apprentices College at Uniacke Barracks.

As he said, the old school was much changed, with only the cinema and a covered walkway on the far side of the barrack square the readily recognisable surviving landmarks from 40 years ago. Links with the past were at a premium; and there wasn't even the consolation of seeing a few familiar faces–indeed, not bumping into at least one ex-54B apprentice among the other visitors was rather more disappointing than I cared to admit at the time. Unlike 'Korky', my stay at Uniacke was brief and did not prove a prelude to a long army career. Even so, one remembers it as a significant phase frequently recalled–and not without affection. As a clerk, based in the same 'B' Company as lads preparing for a career in the Signals, my apprenticeship was curtailed by the break-up of the department. Some clerks switched to Aldershot (RASC) and a small group, myself included, moved to a REME detachment at an RAOC Camp at Blackdown, where, within less than a year, my soldiering days ended with a medical discharge. The 1996 return was only my second in four decades, the previous one being as long ago as the summer of 1957 for the passing out parade of my former colleagues. I have not seen any of them since, but many faces remain vivid in the memory and, naturally, though a few Christian names have been erased by the passage of time, one often wonders what happened to the boys of 54B.

Like 'Korky', my introduction to army life in September 1954 began when, having travelled alone the short distance from Sheffield, I was met at Harrogate railway station by a veteran sergeant from the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers. He delivered me to HQ **CSM Cole**, who in turn passed me into the care of dear old **Sgt** 'Tommy' **Blades**, who took me to the barrack room. It was here I first met the likes of **Peter Gray**, 'Weasel' **Dixon** and other ATs including **Arnold, Fraser, Goymer, Guest** and two great characters called **Corbett** and 'Bob' **Christmas**, and a friendly LCpl called **James**.

I quickly came into contact with **George Ient**, a boy sergeant who was later with me in 'B' Company, and who proved a major source of encouragement and a steadying influence in those early days when it proved a struggle to adjust to a new way of life. Alas, I was not a 'natural' soldier, but, even with my limited experience, I recognised a 'born' leader obviously destined for distinguished service.

Although my Harrogate stay was short, memories abound: for instance, of sharing a regular Saturday job with **AT Gray** cleaning the Red Shield premises (for two-bob and a pile of cakes!) Also of producing a magazine, the Clerks' Gazette, with the encouragement of **WO2 Wilmore** (RASC) and our shorthand teacher, a civilian called **Mr Petty** and of the encouragement of the camp chaplain, the **Rev Moffatt** (he died recently aged 81). I remember, too, being praised by **Maj Walker** after taking a battering from a hefty fellow AT (whose name I've forgotten) in a 'B' Company boxing tourney. **Walker**, who was Scottish and wore a kilt, was often found in the company of **CSM Harris**, and, when there was a problem, he had a habit of saying, 'It's got to stop, lads!' I remember, too, night visits from 'B' Company to the chip van, always parked just within the camp on the road parallel with Penny Pot Lane, to fulfil orders collected from colleagues who happily paid a 'tax' of one half-penny for the service in order to enjoy a late 'meal'! There was also a famous occasion when I slept overnight in the church and returned to the barrack room without anyone realising I'd been out all night. Then there was the flu epidemic of December 1954 when, having caught the 'bug' later than most others, I spent the first days of Christmas leave still 'trapped' in the MRS!

Who can forget being on duty when the Queen visited Bradford in 1954, or preparing for an appearance at the Edinburgh Tattoo? (I missed out on Edinburgh, but the exercise sequence formed the basis of a daily keep-fit routine for some months after I left the army!) I could go on at length about so many incidents: being frequently 'nabbed' (as so many were) by **AT LCpl Melia** for 'extra' duties. Usually just when one was relaxing with a book, writing a letter, or simply buffing one's boots or cap badge; appearing before the CO, **Col Carny**, with **RSM Lonsborough** whispering instructions in one's ear; prompting verbal abuse from colleagues with one's choice of record on the YMCA jukebox, etc.

The 1996 visit brought home how young were those boys parading before us, and served to emphasise that back in 1954 we, too, had been similarly callow but equally enthusiastic. Yet how different the world was then! I was sorry the video produced from that final passing out parade was not more comprehensive and failed to incorporate something of the history of the Harrogate School. It was an opportunity missed. Some old footage and a few familiar faces and sights from yesteryear would have made it a best-seller among old boys for whom the place will always be special because that was where it all began and where they formed friendships that have survived the passage of time. So many of my Harrogate contemporaries went on to enjoy great progress and success–most in the Signals. If any read this–and I'd especially like to hear news of **George Ient** and 'Weasel' **Dixon**–I hope they might be persuaded to contact me at 5 Hill Top Rise, Grenoside, Sheffield S35 8FD (Phone 0114-2460474)–KEITH FARNSWORTH

The Junior Officer's 'Truncated Career'

Maj J. Dryburgh
(SO2 Officers (MCMD) R. Signals & Intelligence Corps)

Foreword By Col M. J. C. Galloway OBE

Maj Jim Dryburgh joined my team in January1997 following two years as Second in Command of 3rd (UK) Div HQ and Signal Regiment. During his 23 year career he has served across a wide area of mainstream Royal Signals units at Corps, Division and Brigade level. He has served on the training staff, both in the special to arm environment, as well as in the combined arms arena.

There is no formal written mission statement for the SO2 Officers, (MCMD) R SIGS & INT CORPS, in relation to junior officer career management. Were I to write one then it would read as follows:

'To provide the opportunities for R SIGNALS officers to gain the necessary experience and qualifications to be selected for attendance at The Joint Services Command and Staff Course, at the earliest opportunity. With a view to those officers going on to compete for posts against other Arms and Services at the highest levels of Command and Staff available to R SIGNALS.'

THE TRUNCATED CAREER

There is much discussion in the Field Army at present as regards the management, or indeed mismanagement, of junior officers' careers. There is an understandable tendency by commanding officers to attempt first line management of their young officers careers, based on their own career experience. Sadly, this is no longer possible without an understanding of the second line requirements. Perhaps it would be helpful therefore to highlight the constraints to managing a junior officer's career in relation to what has been labelled the 'Truncated Career'. There is also much consternation among junior officers being caused by a perception of the requirement to promote to major at age 30. The aims of this article are three fold:

- To explain to a wider audience the 'Truncated Career' and highlight the challenges involved in the management of this new 'ideal career pattern'.
- To alleviate the fears of those who are not promoting at first or even second appearance in the promotion zone as regards their longer term careers and potential for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.
- To identify the challenge and promote discussion on the issues addressed.

THE OFFICER FROM SANDHURST

The Regimental Colonel's aim is to recruit, from as wide a spectrum as possible, properly motivated candidates, with good officer qualities, who are capable of assimilating and putting into practice the technical aspects of the Troop Commanders Course. Of those officers recruited 80% are graduates although only 25% of the graduate entry have a 'relevant' engineering degree. This high level of graduates is not a reflection of a targeting exercise or a policy to produce an all graduate officer corps within Royal Signals. It is merely a reflection of the availability of the quality of candidate that we would wish to attract and recruit in common with other Corps and Arms. Non-graduates are still actively recruited and will usually hold 'A' level qualifications in numerate sciences or in mathematics. The average age of young officers on exit from Sandhurst in 1996 was 24.5 years old. The officer is recruited to fit a manning structure, and is then managed during his career, by year of birth.

THE NEW IDEAL CAREER PATTERN

With promotion to Major being available at age 30 and the average age of entry standing at 24.5 the implication is that where possible an officer must be given the opportunity, having had only 6 reports, to promote. This may be compared against officers who in previous years, had an average age of entry of 21.5 and could amass up to 11 reports before going into the promotion zone for the first time at 32; this is a tall order! In order to produce a career profile that will allow officers to compete for promotion at age 30 it is necessary to move them through the regimental duty posts quickly and appoint them to regimental staff posts earlier. The essential elements of the new ideal career pattern are shown here:

Troop Comd	24.5 - 26.5 (possibly 2 short tours)
2IC/Bde Ops	26.5 - 28
JCSC/IPSE	28.5 (ideally to allow for IPSE)

Adjt/Regt Ops/RMAS 28.5–30 (exceptionally some to Grade 3 staff)
Grade 3/Sub Unit Comd/ 30–34 (JSCSC zone 31 – 34)
JSCSC /Dagger/MSc

This is, as the sub title indicates an 'ideal' career pattern. Careers are still manageable outside this ideal pattern and young officers reading this article should not see this illustration as a hard and fast template but simply a guideline.

DISCUSSION ISSUES

The new ideal career pattern elements give rise to a number of issues that may benefit from wider discussion:

Troop Command: During the April 97 APC road show of UK units the desk officer was being asked constantly about the turbulent effect that two tours in two years would have on the soldiers under command of the Troop Commander. We do not believe this to be an overriding issue. Commanding officers have always exercised the option to move young officers within units to enable them to gain a wider experience across regimental disciplines. Indeed during one tour as a young officer the author managed to fit in Troop Commander, Second in Command, Adjutant and even for a short time Squadron Commander. The only difference now is that such moves are likely to take place as a posting between units; the aim being to create as wide a profile of experience as possible. It is important for commanding officers to realise that the MCMD do not see two tours in two years as being a hard and fast rule. Each officer will be managed on a case by case basis in relation to their personal competencies, experience and career requirements. The effect of turbulence on the individual unit will also be taken into account. What will be required of commanding officers is an active policy of deconfliction, between the junior officer, warrant officer and indeed senior non-commissioned officer plot. This must be driven at unit level, in consultation with Officer and Soldier Wings at MCMD.

Squadron Second In Command: There is a perception that the truncated career pattern is resulting in a considerable weakness in this area. The majority of young officers will be promoted to captain only 30 months after commissioning. Traditionally officers being appointed to second in command posts would have completed a regimental duty 'apprenticeship' of anything from four to six years. Young officers are finding it difficult to perform up to the expectations of squadron commanders and commanding officers with only two to three years regimental experience behind them. In essence we have a training gap. It may be possible to close this gap by re-thinking the current Captains' Core Modular Course to provide the tools associated with sub-unit administration and management of operations. Attendance would be a pre-requisite to promotion or appointment to a Squadron Second in Command or Brigade Squadron Operations Officer post. Having discussed this with a number of officers from a previous generation, it has also been suggested that there may be a case to risk re-inventing the wheel and return to a two-part Young Officers' (YO) course in order to address this training gap.

Attendance at the Army Junior Division: The Junior Command and Staff Course at Sandhurst is a critical component in the professional development of a young officer. The report always has been important; since being included in the officer's confidential report book it has assumed an even higher level of importance. Once again however the

truncated career provides a challenge for the career manager. There is a requirement to achieve balance between sending officers as soon as is possible, in order to make them employable as regimental staff, and not sending them before they have amassed sufficient experience to allow them to both contribute well in syndicate, and benefit from the course content. If all officers are to be given an opportunity to be presented to the promotion Board in their 30th year then they must attend JCSC by the July of their 29th year. On a recent Adjutants' Board, 3 of the top scoring candidates, in age zone 27-30, had not attended JCSC and had achieved their scores on three reports. This presents a dilemma, should these people be appointed as Adjutants pre-JCSC? If they are as good as they appear on paper then they should have little difficulty. This brings sharply into focus the need for accurate and honest reporting. Alternatively potential fast track officers, who appear to have the potential to be promoted at 30, might be identified and loaded to JCSC as early as three years after commissioning, with the inherent risk that they struggle due to a lack of field experience.

YOB	67	66	65	64/63
Age in 97	30	31	32	33
In Zone	23	15	8	10
Selected	4	6	6	5
% of YOB	17.39%	40%	75%	50%

PROMOTION TO MAJOR

It is important that there is a clear understanding about the realistic chances of promotion at ages 30 and 31. On the recent No 5 Bd (promotion to major) R SIGNALS had 56 candidates in zone for promotion with the following results:

A number of points can be drawn from these results:

Only the very best will promote in their first year in the zone.

The largest percentage of officers will promote in the 3' year in zone (normally 32).

Not all officers will promote. (Those who do not promote in 'Last Look' (4th year) will be directed to retire, as captains, at first pension point.)

What is not clear from the results are the effects of promoting or conversely not promoting at age 30.

Promotion at 30: Under the present manning constraints there is no guarantee that a newly promoted major will find himself in a major's post. Indeed given the pressures highlighted previously in relation to short experience, attendance at JCSC and the policy on qualification required by adjutants, it is increasingly likely that early promoted majors will find themselves in order of priority as follows:

Sub Unit Command: If the SO1 Officers MCMD is able to employ newly promoted majors at sub-unit command, this is the preferred option. This option maintains profile for selection for JSCSC and is valuable experience that should result in a very useful confidential report.

Grade 3 Staff: Some officers will already be in post at Grade 3 Staff when selected for promotion. As these officers are appointed by MS it is unlikely that they would be moved before the due end of tour date, unless to attend JSCSC. Some officers may be put to Grade 3 Staff on promotion to maintain or elevate profile in an attempt to secure JSCSC selection or as a hedge against not being selected for JSCSC. Under these circumstances the career manager is employing a 'belt and braces' policy which ensures that those not selected will keep pace with their pse peer group. The first option will always be for a weapons post followed by straight staff where an officer falls short of the weapons prerequisite qualifications. In either case this is still valuable in reporting terms.

On Hold in Current Post: It may prove necessary to hold incumbents in post following promotion. This may be forced either because there is no one of sufficient quality to take over from the incumbent or because there is no suitable post available to move to. The penalty in this scenario is that the individual will then find themselves in a fallow reporting year, receiving a report as a substantive major in a captain's post. We would wish where possible to avoid this option. Unless there are changes to the policy on prerequisite qualifications for adjutants and/or a greater availability of either sub-unit command or grade 3 staff posts it is an inevitable occurrence.

Not Selected for promotion at 30 or 31: There is ample scope for a full career and promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and beyond for those not being selected for promotion at 30 or 31. Promotion at 30 brings some career benefits and is beneficial in enhancing pension rights. As reports are written in substantive rank they may result in early selection for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. There is, however, no penalty to completing a Grade 3 staff job as a Captain. There are two critical issues involved:

Selection to attend JSCSC: Promotion to major early, assuming a staff pass at IPSE is in the bag, is a good indication of a likelihood of early selection to attend JSCSC, but no guarantee. Similarly later promotion is no indication that a candidate will not be selected for JSCSC.

Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel: In order to be selected for early promotion a candidate must be grading excellent (under 40). A psc officer must have 3 CRs a sq officer must have 4 CRs. The average age for the promotion of R SIGNALS officers is still 41. This means that even those being promoted Major in the last year in zone will have the necessary time available to gain seven reports with which to achieve promotion to Lieutenant Colonel at the average age. This represents time for sub-unit command, a Grade 2 earning Staff post and either a second tour RD or Grade 2 Staff Post.

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge for R SIGNALS is in ensuring that, by means of a partnership between the young officer, the commanding officer at first line, and the career manager steering a strategic plan, we continue to offer a rewarding career for the junior officer. In doing so we must strive to groom those who are qualified and able for higher command and staff posts. In order to achieve this all parties must understand the requirement to recognise success early. Commanding officers must take a long term view as regards a balance in career management in relation to the interests of the Corps and the individual. All parties must guard against practising self serving short termism . . . 'the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few'. Those who grew up, in career terms, in an era where there was time to learn by mistakes and where reflection was possible, must understand that our young officers will have thrust upon them the same levels of responsibility, at an equivalent age as in past years, but with considerably less experience. We believe it is imperative that we move quickly to address the training gap at sub-unit second in command and brigade operations officer level. Not to do so is to ignore a real problem with the potential to become an operational penalty in relation to combat effectiveness. On a more radical note perhaps the real challenge revolves around a serious study of the whole structure of R SIGNALS officer manning to take account of the constraints forced by the 'Truncated Career' of the junior officer. We may also consider that, as this challenge appears not to be isolated to R SIGNALS, an Army wide solution is required. This may further lead us to consider a complete change to the method in which officers careers are managed. Lessons could be drawn from soldier career management and point towards management by years of service rather than by the present system that is driven by an officer's year of birth.

The Hong Kong Handover

INTRODUCTION

Unless you spent the first six months of this year closeted in monastic isolation to avoid the General Election and still linger on in hibernation, you will have realised that Hong Kong was returned at the end of its ninety nine year lease to the Peoples' Republic of China at midnight on 30th June. Hong Kong is now a Special Administrative Region of China with a new flag and emblem to replace the Colonial insignia. The Governor sailed on HMY *Britannia* with the **Prince of Wales** after the hand-over ceremony and **Mr Tung Chee Hwa**, a Hong Kong Chinese citizen took over as Chief Executive.

For the last 20 months or so the wider Corps has been deployed in large numbers throughout the peacekeeping and humanitarian support world. During the same period, a dwindling band of communicators in our final outpost of Empire have helped plan and execute the Hong Kong Garrison drawdown and withdrawal plan. The period has been full of interest and incident as we have prepared ourselves for departure. We have had unique contact with the incoming Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA). We have also been faced with the complex problem of carrying out a withdrawal without the cushion of a baulk period, with operations continuing until minutes before our departure. Also with a full extraction of our troops, families and equipment being completed prior to 30 June 2359 hours witching hour. Midnight was an absolute and immovable guillotine for our departure. It meant that the classic Pre-Advance Party–Advance Party–Main Body 1–Main Body 2–Rear Party movement model could not be followed.

As Hong Kong was saturated with all forms of media coverage during its final few months as a British Territory, you will almost certainly have formed your own impression about how things went. There have been all sorts of reports written and views expressed. This article is a selection of informal personal jottings on a strange and unusual period in the Country's colonial and the Corps' own history. It was a fascinating experience, even if it was not always as plain sailing as it may have looked, or as we had hoped.

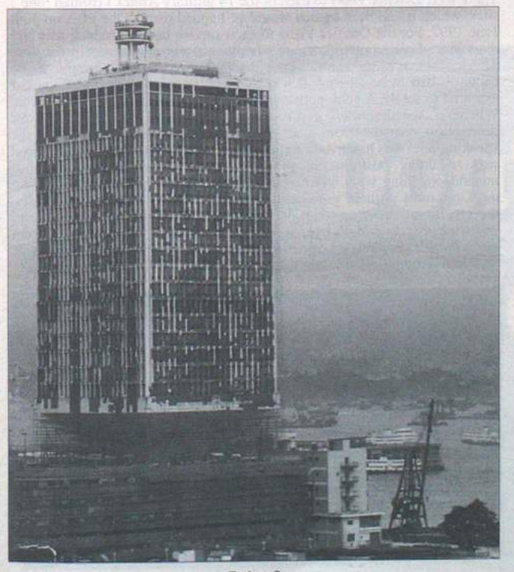
BACKGROUND

The strength of the Hong Kong Garrison was well over 10,000 until late 1992, when a review of the likely security situation in the four years prior to the transfer of sovereignty led to the announcement that the Garrison would be reduced to a strength of 3250 in 1995. The Garrison stayed at this lower figure until September 1996, when the final phased rundown began with the principal remaining elements being its HQ (and Sig Sqn (+)), a Naval Patrol Craft Sqn, an Inf Bn group, a Sp Heli Sqn and a Log Sp Regt. Even with these reduced numbers, the Garrison's role remained the provision of a tangible demonstration of the UK's sovereignty and commitment to Hong Kong until 30th June. It did this by retaining sufficient capability to assist the Hong Kong Government in the maintenance of territorial integrity, the maintenance of stability, security and confidence within the Territory, the support of the Royal Hong Kong Police and the provision of disaster and emergency relief.

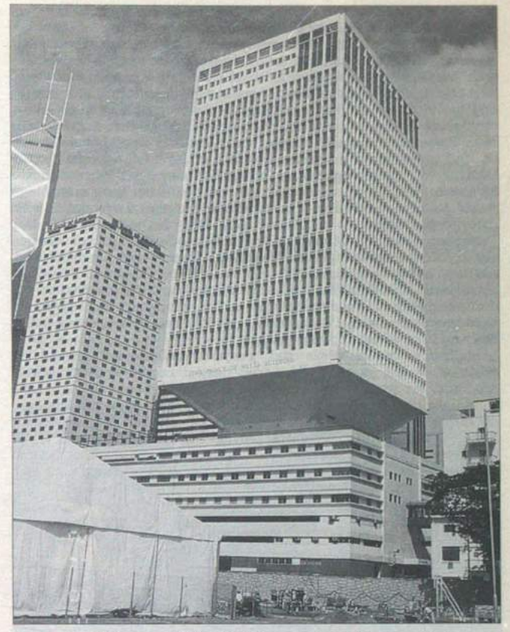
In July 1993, Queen's Gurkha Signals had a worldwide strength of a fraction under 800 souls, deployed with an RHQ and three squadrons in Hong Kong, troops in Brunei and Nepal, four rear link detachments, a number of Brigade of Gurkhas extra regimental employment posts, an element on long leave and a burgeoning squadron in 30 Sig Regt. By July 1995, in concert with the reduction of the wider Garrison's strength, the Regiment had reduced through redundancy to a strength of 595. We were left with an RHQ, a HQ Sqn, a Comms Sqn and an administrative unit responsible for the then forthcoming closure of the Sek Kong Garrison and the Gurkha Family Lines there. The major change for the Regiment in this period was the order to decamp from our parent barracks and home for twenty five years in the New Territories to become, in all but name, the British Forces Hong Kong HQ and Sig Regt based in the Prince of Wales Barracks on Hong Kong Island. This was a difficult and sometimes traumatic period, as we fought to re-establish our Regiment identity and to retain some semblance of our Gurkha way of life in the face of some quite unnerving and unnecessary prejudice. In time honoured Royal Signals tradition the Regiment inherited responsibility (and blame) for the administration of the HQ and the crumbling barracks infrastructure.

WORKS

The Prince of Wales Building, the twenty-eight storey 'upturned gin bottle' so often portrayed in photographs of modern Hong Kong, was commissioned in 1978. Its central services (lifts, pipes and electrics) were supposed, in line with normal Hong Kong building practice, to have been overhauled at the 1993 fifteen year point. Unfortunately, funds were not available for the required overhauls at this time. In fact, the whole of the Prince of Wales Barracks had been starved of maintenance funds throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Something had to break, and break it did. In rapid succession the hot and cold water systems, the lifts, the air conditioning and the fire alarm systems all suffered cataclysmic failure and required immediate, emergency overhaul. I am not sure which caused the most aggravation; whether it was trying to explain the third false fire alarm of the day to a Commander British Forces (CBF) who had been forced to walk down and up on each occasion from his 11th floor office (or the Chief of Staff who had come from his 28th floor penthouse!), or having to deal with 5 feet (yes, genuinely) of water on the 8th floor of the building, the third of four major floods caused by burst, corroded high pressure water pipes in a three month period. The last of these regular floods was saved until our last ten days, when at the moment it least helped us the service lift electrics were submerged, putting it out of action for the umpteenth time. However, the 'deepest joy' was reserved for the moment when the original white tile cladding of the building started to come away. In the end it took us four miserable months to replace the tiles with a special plasticated paint covering; two of these four months were taken up with teams of men spending ten hours a day, weekends included, jack hammering every single one of the remaining tiles off. It drove everyone, particularly the shift workers, progressively mutinous. The final straw was to be invited to explain why the special top cover paint wasn't white or even off-white, but a sort of pink tinged creamy yellow! Fortunately, the colour mellowed with time, although CBF's mood, when his fellow Taipans phoned to ask about the banana Headquarters, did not!



Beirut?



The Prince of Wales Building–soon to be renamed

In the meantime, work started to fill in the Naval basin within the perimeter of the Prince of Wales Barracks in mid 1995 as a part of a multi-billion dollar project to reclaim 75 metres or so of land from the sea in front of the Barracks. It was a massive two-year undertaking that was only just completed seven days before the 30 June Farewell parade was held on it. It meant that the Barracks was the centre of a huge building site. We were besieged seven days a week by a cacophony of sound, so loud at times that the contractors were forced by the Hong Kong Government Environmental Protection Department to double-glaze our office and accommodation buildings at their cost. I am not sure whether I was more surprised that we got the HK$1 million for the double-glazing or that the Environmental Protection Department existed at all!

East Tamar Stadium–site of the 'Farewell Ceremony' starting to fill on the day of hand-over

COMMUNICATIONS

Although our communications withdrawal plan was by far and away the most complicated element of our work in the last 18 months, it was in fact the easiest to complete. This was despite the fact that we retained sufficient military communications infrastructure to operate completely independently of Hong Kong Telecom within the Territory until really quite late on. We decided at an early stage not to trouble the HQ British Forces Staff with the minutiae of our plans. As we were able to maintain, with the help of some sleight of hand, a core of communications facilities in the HQ throughout the period, we were allowed to get on with our own business and were rarely bothered. Occasionally, we asked for direction and decisions over the dates for the drawdown and withdrawal of facilities, but this was generally only a ruse to acquire a written response or edict from the J3 Branch, in order to give ourselves formal 'top cover' go-ahead.

Happily, J3 seemed to trust our judgement and we rarely had any impediment placed in our way. For most Branches and Units, the provision of communications support remained an area of intense indifference and misunderstanding–a significant bonus! The only area we had any difficulty with was in prizing computers, mobile phones and pagers out of the hands of the Staff. Hong Kong is the mobile phone and pager capital of the world and the incessant ringing, warbling and buzzing invades your senses throughout the day, in the office, in the parks, in the cinema, in the theatre, in restaurants, in meetings . . . everywhere. I am not a fan! In the Autumn of 1995 a number of meetings were held in the MOD, chaired by ICS (Ops), to plan the strategic communications requirements for our final six months in Hong Kong. At that time, we really did not know how things would go. We certainly did not know whether the general relationship with the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) and the incoming Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) Garrison troops would be 'benign', or whether our excellent relationship with Hong Kong Telecom, who had provided our day-to-day strategic circuits for more than 20 years, would be maintained until 30th June 1997. The problem was compounded by the decision that the Garrison would not go into baulk and that operations would continue until late on the evening of 30th June. Given no rear party, this gave us an initial pause for thought.

Implicit in our drawdown task was the requirement to remove all evidence of our strategic, fixed and tactical communications before departure, but we also had to support HQ British Forces, Government House, the Foreign Office and other Government Departments, let alone the remainder of the Garrison, until the last moment. Happily, CINC FLEET made an early decision to provide CBF Hong Kong with HMS *Chatham*, a Type 22 Batch 3 frigate as his strategic and tactical communications platform to cover our final few weeks in Hong Kong and to give us the breathing space we needed to strip and clear the COMMCEN.

Arrival of HMS *Chatham*
CBF Hong Kong's strategic communications platform

This was a huge relief, not least as HMS *Chatham* was due to be fitted with both a Flag Officer's and the ARMILLA patrol suite of communications enhancements and would be very capable. Indeed, she arrived in Hong Kong with all we had asked for, and more. At this stage, we assumed that once HMS *Chatham* was berthed alongside the Prince of Wales Barracks CBF and his remaining Staff would move on board, so allowing us to strip the HQ out. As the months went by, the Staff's enthusiasm for living and working on board gradually waned. We also started to ponder what would happen if during the period HMS *Chatham* was in our waters a typhoon should arrive, as late June is well within the South China Sea typhoon envelope. In the end, MOD ICS (Ops) agreed to sponsor the purchase of the latest specification Marconi Mobile Off-the-Shelf Satellite Terminal (MOST). This gave us the ability to maintain our full DCN 087 strategic link to the UK, a heady mix of PATRON secure phones, and standard and special handling telegraph circuits, independent of the service provided by Hong Kong Telecom. Of course, our plans for the MOST and HMS *Chatham* depended on the line of sight paths from the top of the Prince of Wales Building and HMS *Chatham*'s June 1997 berth and whichever satellites we would be allocated. This was not as simple as it first seemed, as each of the three possible satellites had their difficulties. The Americans could not guarantee us the access we might need through their DSCS Indian Ocean and Western Pacific satellites and our own SKYNET IVB both wove an inconveniently large figure of eight track across the sky and played up more seriously from time to time. But this all paled behind our real concern that the two transmission sites would be boxed in by several massive buildings under construction. An initial trial TSC 502E deployment by 30 Sig Regt and a later trial by HMS *Exeter* were not fully conclusive but were nevertheless essential in helping to sort things out. Even so, we had not managed end to end trials on all three satellites before HMS *Chatham* arrived on 2 June 1997.

During 1996 and early 1997 the new Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) at Northwood became an increasingly important influence on our lives in the run up to PJHQ 'going live' and taking Hong Kong under command on 1 April 1997. The formal command relationship between Chief of Joint Operations (CJO) and CBF Hong Kong was highly unusual. At the highest level, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) vested full command of land, sea and air forces with CBF Hong Kong, less the three Peacock Class patrol craft and the six Wessex, full command of which was vested in CinC Fleet and CinC Strike respectively. In response, CBF Hong Kong vested operational command of these forces with CJO. In turn, CJO vested operational control of them with CBF Hong Kong. Fortunately, this slightly bizarre arrangement caused us no difficulties. With the advent of PJHQ two brand new CIS systems, Pilot Joints Operational Command System (PJOCS) and the Joint Deployable Intelligence Support System (JDISS), were pressed into service in the Headquarters as it prepared itself for departure. It was sad that they were deployed with an early version of the software (shades of WAVELL) and too late to have been of any use to HQBF Hong Kong. Had they arrived fully modified six months earlier then things might have been different. That an agreement was struck for the HQBF Hong Kong PJOCS terminal to be fired up for a Monday to Friday, 1630 to 1800 hours schedule only spoke volumes for our technicians who struggled manfully to maintain it over our MOST link on a 24 hour basis!

PLA

We were asked in June 1994 to prepare a short written brief for the PLA, listing the main sites where our communications facilities existed. This was followed by a more detailed oral presentation in May 1995, which gave them a more generous outline of our strategic, fixed and tactical communications in the Territory. The purpose of this briefing was to help the Chinese delegation sort out the factors they would need to consider for the future PLA Garrison's communications. We wanted them to understand the planning and negotiation required not only with the British Forces but also with the Hong Kong Government and the Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA), as well as with Hong Kong Telecom and other Hong Kong-based commercial communications providers.

In November 1995, the PLA conducted an in depth visit to study the civilian telecommunications infrastructure in the Territory. As a programmed part of that visit we reiterated much of the May briefing and accompanied them on visits to the two hill top sites, Tai Mo Shan and Victoria Peak, where we still retained permanent fixed and tactical rebroadcast facilities. Prior to the visit, we were given guidelines about what could or could not be said to the Chinese. The keys points were that:

a. The Chinese must in due course be told everything about the physical infrastructure that they would inherit. This included details about the civil telephone network within their future barracks, and details of any communications infrastructure we would leave behind.
b. The Chinese could be told about the operation of our military communications in Hong Kong where it was directly relevant to their own operations. For example, they could be given broad details about our reliance on civilian firms, although nothing on any commercial-in-confidence or contractual matters.
c. The Chinese could not be told anything about British military communications in general and could not, for example, be told about our tactical communications equipments or our procedures.

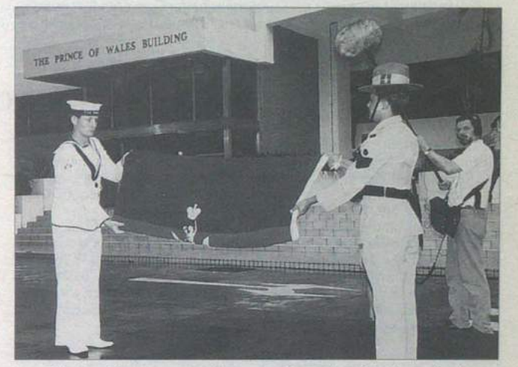
Throughout 1996, the PLA conducted a series of Defence Investigation Visits (DIVs) and Dossier Visits. There were 7 or 8 DIVs, each of which generally lasted a working week and each of which revealed in great depth how the Garrison has gone about its business. There were, for example, logistics, naval, air, medical and operations DIVs. The communications DIV was left until the very last–much to the PLA's obvious irritation. There were Dossier Visits to each of the 14 military Annex I (roman 'one') sites, which it had been agreed would be handed over to the PLA on 30th June 1997. For the Dossier Visits to each site we had to produce lists and diagrams of all communications equipments and assets within the site. This meant that every manhole cover had to be lifted and every cable in the cable pit had to be labeled. It was a very time consuming business, but essential as the PLA genuinely checked every cable pit during their visits. Whenever we described a piece of equipment, we had to read our description verbatim from a script, it was then translated and then the speaking note was handed directly to the visiting team. Although a stilted way of doing business, it meant that there was no possibility of misunderstanding what had been said. There were some long and tiring days, but most of them were conducted with good humour. Occasionally, they were not and more than once we had to make a formal complaint about the visiting group's aggressive attitude and rude behaviour. We spent the better part of six weeks preparing for the communications DIV which was held during the 3rd week of January 1997.

The Chinese PLA

Although it was a major effort to get every word of the various scripts right, we were certainly pretty well prepared by the time the PLA team arrived. They were led by **Maj Gen Dai Qingmin**. During one of the several banquets we had that week he confided in me that, 'The PLA can do without food, they can do without accommodation but they can never do without communications.' The reason for the irritation over the DIV's timing suddenly became clear; their centralised nature of doing business demands good communications above all and they really had wanted to get a head start as early in 1996 as possible.

When the week finally arrived, we bombarded them with information. We told them all they were ever likely to want to know about our fixed communications infrastructure, some things about our strategic circuits, but absolutely nothing about our tactical nets and nothing about the frequencies we were using or had reserved for us. It was intriguing to see how keen they were to know about our frequency assignment from OFTA. We helped OFTA at every stage of their battle to resist the PLA's demand to inherit the British Forces frequency assignment in toto. Our usual response was generally, 'No. Tell us what equipment you are going to bring to Hong Kong and let us know its operating parameters, then we will assign you appropriate frequencies.' They did in the end send us what we had asked for. It came on two sides of paper and gave us numbers and locations of equipment as well as operating parameters. They also told us when they wanted to bring the equipment into Hong Kong. The PLA sent 3 Advance Parties to Hong Kong prior to 30 June, they were known as Batches 1 to 3. The discussions over the timing of the arrival of each Batch and the numbers in each Batch lasted several months. The details of these discussions are sub judice, suffice it to say that the PLA were beaten down to a Batch 1 of 40 on 21 April, a Batch 2 of 66 on 19 May and a Batch 3 of 90 on 30 May. Interestingly, the major justification for the Batch 2 and 3 numbers centred on the numbers of communications installation experts they felt they needed. This was where the importance of their 'two sides of paper' came into play. We were asked to comment on the PLA proposal at very short notice. It was obvious that they intended to install a comprehensive network of satellite, trunked and mobile systems across much of the frequency spectrum prior to the hand-over, which would afford them complete independence from the Hong Kong commercial communications providers in time for the arrival of their Main Body troops. It was our view that much of what they were proposing to do was of a quite different scale to what they would actually need prior to 1st July. They were also clearly overestimating the time it would take to install even the systems we did think were reasonable. We were suspicious that this was a ruse to boost the numbers in their 'depleted' Advance Party. The paper we constructed in response was one of the key weapons used to keep the PLA at bay for longer. However, the day for Batch 1's arrival was eventually agreed. After a frantic few days preparation we were ready to receive **Maj Gen Zhou Borong, Senior Cols Yi Zeng, Xie Qiu Yun** and **Zhou Ze Xiang**, and 36 others. They swept into the Prince of Wales Barracks in a range of brand new vehicles, led by **Gen Zhou**'s Audi A8 staff car! They were also very smartly dressed in the brand new Pierre Cardin-designed PLA uniform, which **Gen Zhou** later told us would probably not reach all elements of the PLA until 2050 at the earliest! Their uniform nicely set off the three standard suspiciously Gucci looking suitcases and bags each man arrived with. During the ten weeks the Batch 1 personnel were with us in the Barracks before the Handover, both sides got on extremely well with each other. One of our Mandarin speaking officers acted as Liaison Officer to deal with any day to day problems they had, and CBF and his immediate inner circle of officers met with **Gen Zhou** and his team every Thursday morning to review the PLA's activity and progress that week. This meeting was also a forum for some more difficult problems to be aired prior to the Foreign Office's discussions at Ministerial level in London and at Ambassadorial level in Beijing. The meeting was for instance where we first confirmed the PLA's intention to arrive in Hong Kong in large numbers prior to 0001 hours on 1 July.

It was very interesting being one of CBF's team at these meetings. It was a wonderful opportunity to study a very different military culture at close hand. That the PLA have a different way of doing things to us is perhaps a statement of the blinding obvious, but it really was an education to see the importance of 'face' at work, their difficulty over 'hot' planning, their reticence to delegate and their acute sensitivity over the Press. There was a kerfuffle over a simple border crossing incident which caused them enormous angst, as the Hong Kong media instantly assumed that the PLA expected to railroad the Law. The Press's response was perhaps unfair, but equally it was naïve of the PLA to expect a completely smooth run from the free press in a democracy about to be swallowed up by the largest communist country in the World. Nevertheless, as the final weeks of British rule in Hong Kong drew to a close, the PLA and many long-term residents of Hong Kong rightly became frustrated by the media's continual emphasis on the potential for change after the handover. In reality, the handover was not about change but about continuity in all elements of the Territory's life.



The last flag to come down on Sovereign Garrison land
Note the West Country news and PLA Officers in the background. The flag is to be donated to the Corps museum

The British Garrison did its level best to prepare the PLA for their life in Hong Kong and to ensure a smooth transition of defence responsibilities. I like to think that Queen's Gurkha Signals represented the Corps with a certain style and panache, playing its part successfully and professionally. Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals.

Don't be disappointed!

Matter for publication must reach the Editor six weeks before the publication date!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col J. E. F. Kirby OBE**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt I. Gray** Glasgow Mil
Secretaries:	
General	**Capt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2874
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Sgt Cowell** Blandford Mil 2810
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	**SSgt N. Finnegan** Osnabruck Mill 2225
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster** Bulford Mil
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** York Mil 2346
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney** Bulford Mil

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club. If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

BT MATCH RACING

The Army entered three boats into the Services BT Match Racing Championships held at Queen Mary Reservoir on the 8-9 September 1997 in glorious sunshine and force 2-4 breeze. **Maj David Ellis** was given one of the Army's entries and he chose an all Royal Signals crew of **Capt Simon Spiers, Sgt** 'Chas' **Cowell** and **Sig Stu Suthern**.

All crews sailed against each other once this came to eight races, the crews with the most wins went through to the semi-finals. The semi-finals consisted of three Army Crews and one RAF. We drew the RLC Crew, the winners were the first crew to have two wins, which we won 2–0. We went on to meet the RE in the final which was the first to have three wins with the Corps Team winning 3–0. However, the racing was very close and of a very high standard.

The Corps Team did try to reduce the size of their mast by two metres against an RAF crew and were penalised financially (£150) and disqualified from that match. The Corps Team have now been given a wild card entry to the National Finals in October 1997 at Bewl lake.

STOP PRESS!!!

J24 (GBR 4242) *Hitchikers Guide to the Galaxy*

Maj David Ellis 2nd Overall 1997 J24 National Championships Plymouth (30 Boats).

Maj David Ellis 2nd Overall 1997 J24 European Championships Plymouth (42 Boats) 1st Brit Boat.

REPORT TO FOLLOW IN NEXT ISSUE.

SPORT

R SIGNALS V RAF SIGNALS SPORTS DAY

The Corps hosted the RAF Signals on the annual sports day at Colerne and Blandford on 2 and 3 July. The competition was preceded by a 'meet and greet' function organised by the hosts for the evening 21 Sig Regt (Air Support) at which the Corps team members did their best to 'nobble' the opposition by providing copious amounts of beer and a fiery curry.

The competition this year included Swimming, Waterpolo and Tennis at Colerne, Sailing at Ringwood with Golf and Cricket at Blandford. The diverse venues for the sports is an unsatisfactory arrangement caused by the inability of Blandford to provide the necessary accommodation. Hopefully by the year 1999, when we are next due to host the competition, this situation will be resolved and the Corps will be better able to provide a single venue and the opportunity for a more formal presentation of prizes.

The Corps, with the RAF narrowly avoiding a whitewash won the overall competition this year. The results were:

Swimming and Waterpolo–The swimming competition was closely fought until the relays that were all won by the Corps making the Corps the outright winners of the competition. The waterpolo was very evenly matched until the 3rd quarter when the superior fitness of the Corps side overcame stubborn resistance from the RAF. In both these competitions the Corps were fortunate that the swimmers of 7 Sig Regt were in the UK for the Army championships and the Corps teams were considerably strengthened by their presence.

Tennis–The tennis competition was another closely fought affair but this went the way of the RAF 51/2 to 31/2. This was largely due to the Corps being short of one player who had to withdraw at the last moment and the fact that the Corps star player for many years, **Maj (Retd) Billy Miles** being ineligible. This result was particularly disappointing as there is a lot more tennis talent in the Corps than was available for this competition.

Golf–The golfers of the RAF managed to sneak this one 8–7 despite the valiant efforts of **Capt Len Yates** et al. The Four Ball competition played in the morning went the way of the RAF 3 to 2 with the singles played in the afternoon being shared honours even at five each.

Sailing–This competition was reduced to two boats per team as the RAF could only muster four sailors. The competition was over five races with the Corps team triumphant in the last race to win the match 3–2. This in spite of the sailing secretary fielding a weakened side to give the opposition a chance.

Cricket–The cricket team enjoyed a comprehensive victory scoring a runaway 188 for 8 with the RAF only managing 105 all out in reply.

RSGC AWARD OF CORPS COLOURS

Corps colours have been awarded by the Chairman of the RSGC, **Brig D.J. Wills** for the following sports:

Squash		
	WO2 (FofS) Bason	5 (Airborne) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
	Sgt Piears	9 Sig Regt
Womens' Hockey		
	Sgt Graham	16 Sig Regt
	Sig Smith	16 Sig Regt
	Sgt Calabrese	30 Sig Regt
	Sig Burkitt	30 Sig Regt
Mens' Hockey		
	Sig Butt	11 Sig Regt
	SSgt Davies	14 Sig Regt (EW)
	WO2 (YofS) Sutton TDT	HQ R Signals
	Maj J.C. Williams	DOR LAND (CIS)
	Maj A.S. Williams	HQ ARRC CIS
Rugby		
	Sgt Gartside	2 Sig Regt
	Sig Denham	2 Sig Regt
	SSgt Day	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
	Sgt Key	14 Sig Regt (EW)

ATHLETICS

Although the summer is now over we can look back on another outstanding athletics season littered with team and individual successes. One of the most heartening aspects of the summer was seeing the enthusiasm with which several key members of the Corps are currently driving, encouraging and nurturing those young soldiers who have a genuine interest in the sport.

That 2 Sig Regt emerged with yet another strong team was a surprise to no-one, but the Army Championships at Portsmouth in June must have produced groans of frustration among those hoping to win a trophy or two over the next 10 or 15 years. The seasoned and well disciplined athletes from York performed well, of course, and eventually took the Major Units cup away yet again, but what must have hit the other Corps hard was that the only team who could push them close was from 11 Sig Regt! The contrast between the two teams was striking.

The York team included many seasoned and well-disciplined athletes who have graced the track for years. Some were fresh from America where they had honed their tans and their techniques to perfection beneath the Westcoast sun. It is a delight to watch them perform well, but one expects it. In sharp contrast we witnessed an exciting, fresh young team from Blandford, most of them whipped together for one brief season, short on technique but immensely strong on eagerness and raw talent. A fascinating day's competition in really foul weather saw 2 Sig Regt eventually run out winners by a mere 7 points, but with 11 Sig Regt lifting the trophy for scoring most points in field events.

The ladies competition finished in the same order when 11 Sig Regt Relay Squad ran a storming race to wrest the runners-up medals from a strong Aldershot Garrison team. The standard of ladies athletics in the Army has taken giant strides in recent seasons and it is good to see that there are a handful of individuals in the Corps who are determined to see that Royal Signals remain firmly in the driving seat. Let us hope that during the winter we can put together sufficient distance runners to give the RLC a decent race in the Inter-Corps Cross-Country Championships.

From atrocious weather in Portsmouth the scene moved a week later to even worse weather in Blandford for the Morrison Cup. A great deal of planning and preparatory work had gone into making the first major fixture to be held at the Corps' new athletics facility a success, and even continuous heavy rain couldn't dampen the athletes' enthusiasm. After another day of hard fought competition the Major Units event came down to the relays with 11 Sig Regt and 2 Sig Regt neck and neck. A disastrous baton change left 2 Sig Regt without a point in the 4 x 100m and the result, as they say, is history. 11 Sig Regt won by 12 clear points–a worthy and well-deserved result for their young team. The Women's Competition was equally exciting with the Blandford girls a point ahead going into the final event. Sadly their third place in the relay denied them a clean sweep but they can certainly hold their heads high as they reflect on an outstanding season.

If further proof were needed, that we spread our talent widely, 216 Para Sig Sqn under the guidance of their able RSM, **WO1 Neil Turnbull**, certainly provided it. They have moulded together a formidable minor unit team. Although they couldn't quite win the Army Cup this season, their strong and talented team proved too much for 21 Sig Regt in the Morrison Cup and the Minor Units' Cup will grace their Aldershot trophy cabinet for at least the next 12 months. The final event of the season was the Inter-Corps Championships hosted by REME at Bracknell. Needless to say the RLC produced an unbeatable composite team from within their massed ranks. However, we did ourselves proud with some gutsy performances both on the track and in the field events. We must continue to support this somewhat neglected competition at all costs.

As we look forward to the winter season–maybe to a spot of cross-country or a few indoor meetings–we should take some time to reflect on two athletes who have given so much to their sport throughout their careers and will be well ensconced in Civvy Street by this time next year. **WO2 Jeff Martin** has been a bundle of energy and commitment throughout his long and illustrious sporting life. Tireless both in his own punishing schedule and in his encouragement of younger distance runners, **Jeff** has reaped a few rewards along the way. None can be more satisfying than having had the distinction of winning the Army and Inter-Services Marathon in FIVE successive years. It will be many, many years before that unique record falls. **Sgt Tremayn Dobson**, known to all throughout the Corps simply as Dobbo, is a strong and dedicated athlete behind whose smiling face rests a bottomless fount of technical knowledge. Dobbo started life as a sprinter and high jumper (and a mean footballer as well), but later he took up the challenging and highly technical throwing disciplines and has been a regular member of the Army squad ever since. Dobbo is always willing to give up his time to coach and advise younger athletes but he will also be known to many Corps members away from the track. An accomplished skier and a patient and knowledgeable coach, he has kept a watchful eye on hundreds as they've taken their first faltering steps on the Snow Queen slopes and elsewhere, and he has helped many brief flings with Skiing turn into life-long relationships. Both these athletes have given immeasurable service to Corps, Army and Combined Services sport, and we wish them well as they embark on their new careers. We owe them a debt.

As the nights lengthen and we may be starting to think about fitting in a week's skiing ourselves during the winter, let us just reflect for a moment on the achievements of this season and renew our commitment to train hard, to coach and encourage the newcomers throughout the winter months, to foster loyalty and team spirit as a Corps, and once again to fly the flag of success in 1998.

BADMINTON

by Sgt Andy Ball

On Thursday 24 July 1997 the Army Badminton Team set off on a six-day tour of Germany. Three of the team where represented by Corps personnel, **Sgt Andy Ball, LCpl Jinty Rigg** and **Sig Mhairi McIntosh**. Our first match was against the British Forces Germany Team the following day. Both teams dived straight in at the deep end with **Jinty** and **Mhairi** proving to be the backbone of the female team. Both players won all of their games to square the match at 8–8 with one game left to play. The Army partnership of **Pte Cindy Dougherty** and **Sgt Andy Ball** came out victors, winning the final Mixed Doubles game 2–0 to secure the first match 9–8.

A local German Team was the opposition for the 2nd match on Saturday. With morale high from our first win we took the match by the scruff of the neck and battled through to a tremendous 12–5 win. Our 3rd and final match of the tour was against a Dutch Team that consisted of wafer thin, 15 year old jumping gazelles. We knew that this was going to be the big one. Our sights were set, sleeves rolled up and we marched into battle. The majority of the games could have gone either way however, the Dutch youngsters played out of their skins and came out victors 13–4.

There were some excellent performances from the Army Team during the tour, with **Sig Mhairi McIntosh** losing only one of her nine games. All three matches were played with great spirit and in a friendly atmosphere. The Team agreed that the Tour was a great success, winning two out of the three matches.

The team are now making preparations for the Inter Service Championships in which we hope to give the Royal Air Force a run for their money. Chief scout, **Capt Terry**, is looking to create a strong squad from the Royal Signals Championships which is being held during 27–30 August 1997 at Colerne. In past years the Signals team has always threatened to win the Inter Corps, but never delivered the goods. This year will be different.

ROYAL SIGNALS CANOE AND KAYAK CLUB

Yet again 11 Sig Regt entered the Army Canoe Union Sprint and Marathon Championships on the River Wye at Monmouth over the weekend 19/20 July. Prior to the Championships **Capt David Drinkall** took 14 volunteers from Charlie Tp plus two Army Canoeists from Germany on a training camp over the period 14–18 July. The weather was excellent, the team was full of enthusiasm and hopes were high to retain the Trophies won in 1996.

During the weeks training camp, absolute novice canoeists learned about different types of canoe and kayaks, underwent both sprint and marathon training and had the opportunity to 'play' on the grade II white water of Symond's Yat, where **Sig Grist** found his forte, at last! The week was full of incidents . . . being attacked by swans . . . being electrocuted . . . capsizing . . . swimming . . . and that's only one persons story!

The day of the sprint races dawned to find, against all the odds, a further eight 'known' canoeists had arrived from Blandford during the dark hours and the chances of gaining a few team trophies were now looking excellent! The whole 11 Sig Regt Squad worked extremely hard, competing in 4 out of the 6 team sprint competitions. All the competitors from 11 Sig Regt had reason to stand proud, and when, at the end of a hard days racing 11 Sig Regt collected the Junior Racing Trophy, the Junior Novice Trophy and the Ladies Racing Trophy as well as coming a very close 3rd in the Senior Novice Trophy, it was obvious the hard work had paid off!

Sig Connie Turner learning to paddle a sprint K1

The Saturday evening saw a few victory celebrations before the Sunday and of course the Marathon! With temperatures of 80 degrees F the Marathon was going to be a real test of both endurance and tenacity, but no need to worry with the best soldiers in the British Army! Yet again the 11 Sig Regt Squad won 3 out of 4 trophies entered, coming a very close 2nd in the Senior Novice competition to Land Command School of Adventure Training! Yes they do canoe for a living, so extremely well done our guys! Congratulations go to the whole Squad for an excellent performance, but

especially to the following. **Capt David Drinkall, Cpl Rob Ash, LCpl Julie Portlock, Sig Nicola Burnip** and **Sig Connie Turner** on being selected for the Army Squad 97/98. Also to **AT SSgt Macelhinny, AT Cpl Dinsdale, AT LCpl Clarke, AT Cpl Richardson, AT LCpl Dolan** and **AT Johnson** for a clean sweep of all the Junior Trophies.

It also should be noted that **SSgt Chris Lloyd**, 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt and **Sig Rich Astridge**, 30 Sig Regt also were selected for the Army Squad, so for the first time in many years the Royal Signals are extremely well represented at Army level in Sprint and Marathon Canoing. Next year we aim to build on these excellent results by running a Corps Training Camp the week before the Champs, so watch this space!

11 Sig Regt Team

FOOTBALL

CORPS OUTSTANDING SPORTSMAN
WO2 (RQMS) HIGGINS
by Colonel C. J. Walters–President, Royal Signals Corps Football

WO2 Alan Higgins joined the Army in June 1981 and on completion of basic and trade training was posted to 16 Sig Regt in BAOR. During this tour he showed his initial promise by playing for the Regt and representing Rhine Area in the Inter Division Competition and the Corps in the Lloyd Trophy. He was posted back to 24 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in September 1985 and was selected for the United Kingdom Corps Squad that won the Inter Corps Quadrangular Tournament in season 1985/1986.

His first appearance for the Army team was in 1987. He was also selected for the Combined Services Team during his first season with the Army and has been an ever present in both teams since. He has represented the Army more than 100 times and is one of only a few players who have achieved this distinction. During this period he has won 4 Inter Services (Constantinople Cup) winners medals, 2 South West Counties Cup Competition winners medals representing the Army and 2 Kentish Cup winners medals representing Combined Services. The second one in season 1995/1996 as Captain of the team.

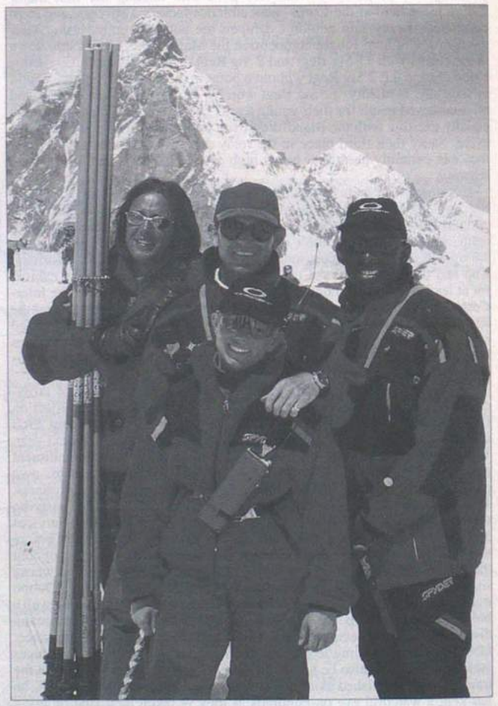
He has had the honour of Captaining the Army Team a number of times and has been the Combined Services Captain for the past two seasons. He has also been voted Army player of the year on three occasions, 1989/1990, 1995/1996, 1996/1997. He is the first player ever to have gained this honour in successive years. At Unit level he has won one Army Cup winners medal, 2 runners up medals and 2 Jubilee Cup winners medals, all whilst serving with 2 Div Sig Regt. Playing for the Army and Combined Services has given him the opportunity to partake in overseas tours. To date he has played representative football in Cyprus, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Portugal, Hong Kong, Thailand, BAOR, Jersey and Guernsey 3 times and will tour Australia with Combined Services in June/July 1997.

He qualified as a FA Advanced coach in 1989 and has recently attended the first UEFA 'A' conversion course. As such he is one of the top qualified coaches in the country. No report on **WO2 Alan Higgins** would be complete without mention of his wife **Meg** who throughout her serving career and beyond has always been one of his, and the Corps', keenest supporters. The Corps footballing fraternity wishes her well. **WO2 Higgins** throughout his military career has been one of those players who never lets you down. It is this attitude, combined with his footballing skills that have made him one of the outstanding players of Combined Services, Corps and Regimental Football. He is most certainly an example of loyalty, dedication and team spirit.

SKIING

BRITISH LADIES ARMY SKI TEAM (BLAST)
SUMMER TRAINING AND SELECTION CAMP 1997

For many the idea of two weeks summer skiing must seem anything but arduous–how could it possibly be called 'Adventurous Training'–but with reveille at 0600hrs every morning to be on the lifts for 0700hrs–it was anything but a holiday! Training took place this year on the Plateau Rosa glacier. The main aim was to cover basic ski techniques as well as race training. **Maj Paul Ford**, R Signals, ran the camp. As well as instructing he had the unenviable task of 'controlling' 25 female skiers. The other two instructors were **Sgt** 'Dobbo' **Dobson** from 2 Sig Regt and 'Geordie' **Crawford**–ex R Signals.



Ladies' Team Instructors

BLAST is open to Regular Army female skiers of at least Joint Services Silver Standard (good parallels). Female skiers from TA and University OTCs may also apply provided they are committed to Regular Army service in the future. About 20 places were available on the camp, selected in the order of the following criteria:

a. Current team members.
b. Current programme members selected to attend from previous camps.
c. New trainees with known form or racing experience.
d. New trainees up to the minimum standard.

Ladies' Ski Programme Team

This year there were 5 Royal Signals members both from Germany and the UK:

Capt J. Walster–SORLS RHQ
2Lt K. Simmonds–16 Sig Regt
AT LCpl J. Wood–11 Sig Regt
2Lt A. Cliff–35 Sig Regt
Sig J. Neal–1 ADSR

Those attending the camp had to ensure they were fit before attending as training was arduous and conducted at an altitude of over 11,500ft. Ski Training was between 0800 and 1300hrs every morning. The first couple of hours was dedicated to improving technique and allowed most members to achieve either the 4 star or 5 star Gold Downhill award at the end of the camp. After a quick bite to eat at 1000 hrs it was onto the race-course. Half the time was spent on Giant Slalom and half spent on Slalom. There is something very daunting about standing at the top of a race course knowing that shortly you would have poles whizzing past your head and praying that you wouldn't 'dob out' before your time had been logged. The improvement on times during the camp was extremely encouraging for the team manager. I am sure that many were spurred on by the presence of the Swiss National Men's team!!

Once skiing was completed for the day it was then running, swimming, hiking or roller-blading (which I never got to grips with–where were the brakes?)–to keep you busy. The chalet we lived in was divided into three floors with each floor cooking for themselves–anybody considering going should definitely take a recipe book. A winter camp is also held in Zermatt for four weeks starting at the end of November. The ultimate goal of the Ladies Team Programme is to produce a team to compete against the Navy and the RAF. The team also competes in the Divisional, Inter Services and Army Championships each year. The camp is an excellent opportunity to improve on technique and race skills and anyone interested in joining the programme, who is up to the correct standard, should contact the Army Winter Sports Association or **Maj Paul Ford** on Sutton Coldfield Mil 2407.

SWIMMING & WATER POLO

ROYAL SIGNALS V RAF SIGNALS SPORTS DAY–3 JULY 1997
by Capt Langford

The Annual Sports day fixtures were held on 3 July 1997 with the Swimming and Water Polo being contested in Colerne. This year, for the first time, female swimmers were entered in a number of the Swimming events.

In the Swimming we agreed on eight individual events and six relays. In the individual races the RAF proved very strong by winning the first three individual races, with **Sig** 'Ollie' **Oliver** in the 100m Freestyle, **LCpl Sarah Fursman** also in the 100m Freestyle and **Sig Jack Homer** in the 50m Freestyle all finishing second. **Sig Matt Lee** then changed the fortunes of the Corps by winning the 50m Breaststroke. That was followed by successes for **LCpl Lucy Mason** in the ladies 50m Breaststroke and **Cpl Dave Robins** in the 50m Backstroke. This left the teams tied on nine points each with two individual events remaining. Unfortunately **Cpl Ivan Oakley** in the 50m Butterfly, his speciality, and **LCpl Lance Barr** in the 4 x 25m 1m finished in second therefore giving the RAF a two point lead at 13-11 entering the relays. In the relays the Royal Signals proved too strong for the RAF and won all six events comfortably. They were 4 x 50m Freestyle for both male and females, 4 x 50m Breaststroke male, 4 x 50m Medley male, 8 x 25m Freestyle male and finally 8 x 25m mixed Freestyle. The final score was Royal Signals 35 points and RAF 25 points.

In the Water Polo the RAF again started well holding us to 1-1 after the first quarter, with the Royal Signals attacking the deep end. The 2nd quarter saw us start to work as a team and managing to finish the quarter with a slender 4-3 lead. In the 3rd quarter we built up a 8-4 margin and in the final quarter extended the winning margin to 12-7. Our goals were scored by **SSgt Graham Weavers** (5), **WO1 (RSM) Pete Griffiths** (4) and **Capt Tim Langford**, **Cpl Rob Love** and **Cpl Dave Robins** all contributing with one each. My thanks to **SSI Roberts** and his staff in the Gym and to all the swimmers and Polo players who represented the Corps; especially the ladies and the 7 Sig Regt Team who donated the majority of our competitors.

TRIATHALON

ARMY TRIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS–25 JUNE 97
by WO2 (YofS) K. E. Emmerson

The Army Sprint Triathlon Championships were held, this year, at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The event was open to all–from novices to the elite. As you would expect with the assistance of the officer cadets and Gurkhas, the organisation and marshalling of the competition was excellent. Being a 'sprint' Triathlon the distance covered was 500m swim, 20km cycle and 5km run.

Triathlon is an expanding sport, particularly within the services and it promotes personal fitness coupled with endurance and mental toughness as well as developing skills within each discipline. You are able to compete not only against others but against yourself. This has been recognised and Triathlon will be included in the next Olympics in Sydney (Olympic distances are 1.5km swim, 40km cycle and 10km run). What about us mere mortals? Some of us, remembering the sense of achievement gained on completion of a Triathlon, volunteered; others either naively volunteered or were press-ganged. Of course it would be unfair to say which members of the team fell in to each category. After some excellent race preparation the night before (namely carbo loading in the form of beer, chips and the obligatory kebab) we were all ready to go.

Lt Paul Griffiths, being a strong swimmer, made his start with all the 'movers' and he really appreciated being over taken by all the fast athletes on their expensive bikes. Perhaps you should give the butcher his bike back now! What do you mean you borrowed it from the RSM? Another fish in the team, **LCpl Steve Birchall** pedaled his way round on a mountain bike. He did however complete his first Triathlon in a respectable time and was heard to say, 'That was all right, I'll do another one–but not today'. A special mention to **Cpl Lisa Fox** (AGC) who, after some gentle persuasion from **WO2 (FofS) Mark** 'highest paid PTI in the Corps' **Edwards** decided to try. Some more training in the pool and **Cpl Fox** will be challenging at the top of her level. **Cpl C. J. Barker** (602 TACP) enjoyed his day out. CJ went well in the pool and on the run but was let down by not being able to use a racing bike. **Cpl** 'Loggy' **Wright** (another Tri-virgin) who, once he had completed his swim, made good progress on his bike and finished very strongly on the run and had a good first triathlon. Being a technician I am sure he will have the Gucci Tri gear next time and will beat all of us 'No Fear' the old men of the team, the YofS and FoS, duo did OK and just about managed it round with the also Tri-ed!!

FofS Mark Edwards, Cpl CJ Barker, YofS Keith Emmerson, Lt Paul Griffiths, Cpl 'Loggy' Wright, Cpl Lisa Fox and LCpl Steve Birchall

TUG OF WAR

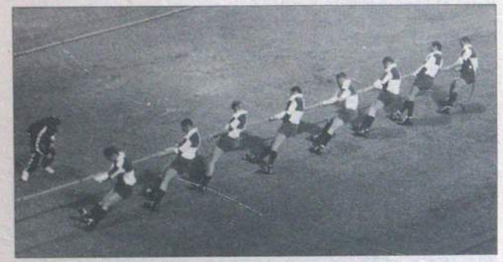
TEAM WITH REAL 'PULLING POWER!'

The successful HQNI and 15 Sig Regt Tug of War Team have been nominated for the prestigious Birtwistle Pennant for sport. They are currently in serious training for the end of season Braemar Games in Scotland early in September. The coveted pennant is presented annually to the Royal Signals unit with the most outstanding achievement in sport. Team Captain and coach, **WO2 (SSM) Chris Hymas** is delighted that his team has been short-listed, 'It's very encouraging and great for the morale of the team.'

The talented bunch is based in Lisburn at the Army HQNI. Formed just two years ago, the team has enjoyed a large number of successes. Their achievement in recent months has led to the entire squad being selected for the Royal Signals Corps Team. Three members have also been awarded the Combined Service Colours, they are **Sgt Mick Openshaw**, **Sgt Mick Concepcion** and **WO2 Chris Hymas**. Suffering surprisingly few teething problems in their first year of existence, the octuplet came third in both the 1996 Princess Royal Inter-Service Tug of War Championships at Windsor and The Royal Tournament. In the same year, the strapping soldiers reached the semi-finals of the Royal Braemar Games.

Team Coach **WO2 Chris Hymas** commented, 'This year the team has gone from strength to strength. We were the first Royal Signals team in ten years to make the final at Windsor, and were presented with our medals by The Princess Royal in the main arena. We won the Morrison Cup and came third in the Army Championships.'

WO2 Hymas continued, 'We have recently returned from The Royal Tournament at Earls Court with 2nd places in the 620kg and 640kg events and 3rd places in the 600kg and 660kg events. We are now setting our sights on The Braemar Games, where we will be competing against 12 other teams.' The team's achievement is even more impressive considering that they are an operational unit. As CO, **Lt Col Rowlinson** explained, 'Commitment to training can be difficult to achieve when serving in an operational post. The team get-together in their own time when they can fit it in, but the dedication they have shown is tremendous. They fully deserve recognition for their successes in such high profile events.'



HQNI & 15 Sig Regt in the final of the Royal Tournament at Earls Court

With the end of season fast approaching the team are pushing hard for a final victory in Scotland. Anchorman **Cpl Lance Beaton** commented, 'We've been, training very hard lately. Most of our time is spent working on the Gantry (tug of war simulator) and that's how we got our nickname 'The Gantry Dogs' because we're always sniffing around there! We also do aerobics, weight training, individual work on static ropes and resistance training, which involves running around the athletics track carrying sandbag–tough going!' The most important side of training, however, is the diet, as **WO2 Hymas** (fondly referred to as 'The Pie Master' by his team) explains. 'The Squad are on a very strict diet, and must keep their weight under control. In the competitions there is a set team weight on the rope, so no member can ever be ½lb over weight.'

Why do they do it? **Sgt Maxwell** explains, 'It's the best sport in the world when you win, because it's eight guys against eight guys, there are no advantages. When the team really gets it together and goes for it, it's the best feeling. There's no room for individuals, success involves eight guys doing everything together at exactly the same time'.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig C. T. Garton Area 1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3; Brig K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans CBE Area 5; Lt Col J. G. Billingham Wales; Maj R. Sampson CBE Scotland

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Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.
All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

NEWS FROM THE AO's DESK

News from the Branches: The Bradford Branch now meet at 1pm on the 3rd Monday in the month at the Polish Club, Shearbridge Rd. **Mr Barry Greenwood** has been elected secretary of the East London Branch. Barry's contact address is; 5 Merlin Grove, Hainault, Ilford, Essex IG6 2QX. Eastbourne Branch have elected **Ron Brody** as secretary, Ron can be contacted at; 'Rosewood', Maynards Green, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 0BU. The Colchester Branch now has **Mr W. I. M. Allan** as its secretary. Mr Allan can be contacted at 5 Foxhead, Rivenhall End, Witham, Essex. After a long absence, we have recently heard from 602 Sig Tp OAF. **Michael Hope** is the secretary and his address is; 9 Hoyland Close, Millhouse Green, Penistone, Sheffield S30 6NJ. I am sure that **Michael** would like to hear from former members of the Troop.

CALLING ALL MEMBERS IN THE PLYMOUTH AREA.

Maj (Retd) Vic Prees is trying hard to resurrect the Plymouth Branch. **Vic** fully understands the problems over getting to monthly meetings, but would like to hear from any former Signallers who are interested in regular (or occasional) get togethers. Please contact **Vic** (phone or fax) on 01841-540570.

1ST LONDON CORPS SIGNALS OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

Mr S. G. Romer, Treasurer of the 1st London Corps Signals OCA has informed RHQ that, due to the elderly age of its members, they have disbanded. Although not an affiliated Branch of the RSA, they have generously donated their remaining fund of £334.32 from their account, to the Benevolent Fund. This donation is most gratefully acknowledged.

1997 REUNION

The rain held off for the weekend at Blandford for everyone to enjoy the Reunion. Around 900 attended, but with wives taken into account, I would say that there were about 650 members there. Congratulations to **George Riley** of the Coventry Branch for winning the standard bearers competition and to **Barry Moody** from Scarborough Branch as runner up. The results were very tight and **Mr Bob Hendry** our guest judge from the Royal British Legion Standard Bearers Association commented on the fine effort put in by all our bearers. One thing is for sure, next year, with all the building work at Blandford completed, accommodation will be even more scarce. Even those Branches to whom accommodation will be allocated, could be severely restricted in their number of bed spaces. My advice is to do what a lot of members did, and book local B & B or hotels. Finally on the Reunion, may I pass on thanks to **WO2 (RQMS) Dave Forbes**, **SSgt (SQMS) Ann Wilde** and **SSgt (SQMS) Dave Old** for all their hard work and co-operation in getting our members into the accommodation.

WHERE DID YOU SERVE?

Following requests from several members, a trial scheme has been started, to make a register of who served with each unit in the Corps. The idea is that this register would be made available to members in order that they might see who served in any of their old units, possibly with a view to finding old pals. (Eventually a list of any specific unit could be printed) The service will be restricted to Life Members and then only those who are willing to participate in the scheme (ie, do not ask for the service if your details are not registered). Anyone wanting to participate should contact their local Branch secretary, or RHQ, for a registration form. It should take about a year for a reasonable database to be formed (so no requests for lists just yet please). The initial response is very encouraging. All detail will be stored under the protection of the Data Protection Act and no address will be divulged without permission.

EMPIRE FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

A reminder that **Her Majesty The Queen Mother** intends to open the Empire Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey at 1100 hours on Thu 6 Nov. As is customary, RHQ has arranged for a cross to be planted on the Corps plot (No 57) on behalf of all Branches. All members are welcome to attend the ceremony and are invited to join the Chairman for a buffet lunch afterwards in the Officers Mess, Mercury House, Duke of York's Headquarters, Kings Rd, Chelsea (by kind permission of 83 Sig Sqn (V)). To assist with the catering, please let me know if you plan to join us for lunch, for which there will be no charge.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE

Christmas seems a long way off as these notes are penned amidst the summer sun. However a timely reminder that all members of the Association and serving Corps are invited to come along to the Corps Carol Service, which will be held at St Stephen's with St Johns, Rochester Row, Westminster on 18 December. The service, which is our 10th, will start at 1800 hours and everyone is invited to the nearby Napier Hall afterwards, for sherry and mince pies. The service is a really enjoyable event and well worth the effort to attend. Again purely for catering purposes, please let me know if you plan to attend.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members who joined The Association since the June issue of *The Wire*. It is hoped that some of those under the 'RHQ' Branch will by now have become members of their local Branch:-

Former Rank	*Name*	*Branch*	*Served*
Sgt	J.S. Griffin	Royal Hospital, Chelsea	1956-60
Sig	W.H. Burgess	Chester	1944-48
WO2	B.F. Temmen	Preston/Blackburn	1963-88
Cpl	C.I. Walkham	RHQ	1957-66
Sig	R.E. Leech	RHQ	1946-48
Sgt	W.F. Baron	RHQ	1947-53
Sig	M.C. Pavely	RHQ	1948-50
Sgt	D.G. Wilson	RHQ	1973-97
Sig	A. Miller	Dorset	1961-65
WSgt	W.G. Aitken	Dorset	1975-84
Capt	W.H. James	Hull	1939-46
Sig	P. Good	Bradford	1960-69
WSSgt	P.T. Smith	Middlesbrough	1946-48
WPte	M. Medhurst	Middlesbrough	1945-48
Cpl	B.P. Hyndman	York	1969-78
WO2	M.T. Gue	RHQ	1963-85
Sgt	A.H. Kirche	RHQ (Australia)	1949-68
Sig	A. Pule	East London	1969-76
LCpl	A. Latham	East London	1970-78
Sgt	R.W. Mackay	East London	1961-74
LCpl	J.E. Drake	Torbay	1948-50
LCpl	L.J. Stone	Torbay	1951-53
Cpl	B. J. Whittle	Birmingham	1974-91
WO2	C.J. Whitehead	Birmingham	1968-97
Cpl	D. Fallowfield	Birmingham	1980-89
LCpl	M. Tombs	Birmingham	1984-89
SSgt	R. Evans	Birmingham	1967-93
Sgt	D.W. Bentley	Birmingham	1967-91
Sig	A.R. Wiseman	RHQ	1986-96
LCpl	D.J. Merricks	RHQ	1977-89
Sgt	W.G. Saffin	RHQ	1950-62
Sig	T.W. Dite	RHQ	1952-55
Cpl	L.E. Weston	RHQ	1983-97
Cpl	K.R. Ward	RHQ	1971-80
LCpl	W.C. Hill	Southampton	1938-46
WPte	J. Hill	Southampton	1942-46
Cpl	R. H. Bailey	Southampton	1942-46
SSgt	C. R. Bough	RHQ	1973-97
WO2	B. W. Mazey	RHQ	1972-97
Sgt	G. P. Hopkins	RHQ	1942-46
SSgt	G. J. Gardner	RHQ	1975-97
Sig	E. G. Lofts	RHQ	1961-69
Dvr	S. S. Goodenough	RHQ	1950-52
SSgt	S. J. Driver	RHQ	1974-97
SSgt	M. Knights	RHQ	1965-89
Cpl	P. R. Garvin	Preston & Blackburn	1980-85
SSgt	A. C. O'Shea	RHQ	1975-97
Sgt	C. L. Jones	RHQ	1940-47
WO2	P. Smyth	RHQ	1966-96
LCpl	D. T. Robson	Hull	1987-96
Sgt	L. Cowling MBE	Bournemouth	1944-47
Cpl	A. Peat	RHQ	1941-46
SSgt	S. R. Kent	RHQ	1964-89
WPte	J. L. Simpson	Leeds	1946-49
LCpl	S. Smith	RHQ	1990-97
Sig	J. L. Miller	RHQ	1945-48
Cpl	D. Brown	RHQ	1964-79
Sig	D. Artliff	RHQ	1959-61
WPte	J. Neave	RHQ	1976-78
Sgt	N. D. Tipton	Manchester	1965-78
Cpl	M. C. Luckes	RHQ	1975-97
LCpl	W. C. Hogg	RHQ	1944-47
Cpl	P. Long	RHQ	1950-59
WO2	T. G. Fitzgerald	Swindon	1928-46
LCpl	D. S. Friend	RHQ	1983-95
Cpl	D. Thomson	RHQ	1968-80
Sig	R. P. Millard	Bristol	1950-52
WPte	J. Nicholls	RHQ	1966-68
Sig	H. F. Head	East London	1956-58
SSgt	J. P. Ogburn	RHQ	1972-97
WO2	B. Sinclair	RHQ	1973-97
Sig	F.D. Isaacs	RHQ	1954-57
LCpl	L.A. Usher	Dorset	1939-46
Sig	W.T. Price	Cardiff	1956-58
Sig	A.G. Pledger	Torbay	1953-55
Sgt	H.G. Vennall	Torbay	1942-47
Sgt	C.G. Warnes	RHQ	
Lt	P.C. Hoare	RHQ	1940-46
WPte	B. Hammond	RHQ	1943-46
LCpl	E.H. John	RHQ	1947-49
WO2	A.N. Fleck	RHQ	1963-94
SSgt	B.M. Copsey	Middx Yeomanry	1986-date
SSgt	F.A. Smith	Middx Yeomanry	1960-85
Sgt	G.O. Pope	RHQ	1982-97
Cpl	R.J. Bunn	RHQ	1945-48
WLCpl	C.E. Stephenson	RHQ	1944-47
Sgt	M.A. Moorhouse	Indian Signals Assn	1944-53
SSgt	S.J. Hawey	RHQ	1966-91
Cpl	J.R. Lee	Nottingham	1969-79
Sig	D.P. Marriott	Nottingham	1950-56
Sgt	J.E. Hadley	Nottingham	1958-?
WLCpl	F.M. Cusick	Nottingham	1981-87
Cpl	J.J. Neagle	Nottingham	1968-75
Sgt	N.G. Timms	Nottingham	1982-92
Cpl	M.W. Colebourne	Nottingham	1970-77
Cpl	A.E. Thurling	RHQ	1947-53
Sig	M.A. Walker	RHQ	1953-55
LCpl	A.O. McMorran	RHQ	1988-97
Sig	J.H. Gayton	Torbay	1952-54
Cpl	R.D. Leach	RHQ	1963-87
Cpl	J. May	Bristol	1952-55
SSgt	S.S. Kent	RHQ	1973-97
Cpl	D. Lee	RHQ	1973-97
SSgt	D.G. Hughes	RHQ	1967-91
Maj	R.W. Lockwood	Lincoln	1961-97
LCpl	H.W. Cooper	RHQ	1947-49
LCpl	E.A. Gilley	Lincoln	1955-57
Cpl	J.W. Collier	RHQ	1957-74
Sig	C.D. Hewlett	RHQ	1949-51
Sgt	A. Harbord	RHQ	1983-97
SSgt	R. Hill	RHQ	1968-90
Cpl	T. Motley	Sheffield	1954-56
WPte	C.P. Dewney	RHQ	1946-48
Sig	H.G. Miller	12,15,18 AF Sig Regt	1946-48
2Lt	M.S. Adams	RHQ	1945-48
WO2	P.A. Cox	Dorset	1981-97
WO2	J.E. Stanford	RHQ	1973-97
Cpl	R.I. Pryde	RHQ	1949-55
Sgt	A.W. Legg	Torbay	1939-46
LCpl	C.W. Taylor	Torbay	1952-68
Dvr	J. Ashcroft	Liverpool	1953-56
WO1	R.A. Downie	RHQ	1975-97
WO1	B.H. Garner	RHQ	1961-97
Sgt	D.J. Thomas	RHQ	1940-46
Cpl	S.M. Hedicker	RHQ	1973-97
Sig	R.V. Baughan	RHQ	1940-46
Sig	J.C. Hill	RHQ	1950-55
LCpl	G. Taylor	RHQ	1943-48
LCpl	M. Redwick-Jones	Cardiff	1974-81
LCpl	N.P. Green	RHQ	1985-97
SSgt	S. Brennan	RHQ	1973-97
Sgt	C.J. Rumney	RHQ	1972-97
Cpl	K.G. Bownes	RHQ	1989-97
WSgt	A. Niblett	RHQ	1984-97
WO1	M.R. Widdicombe	RHQ	1974-97
Cpl	P. L. Bawor	RHQ	1974-97
SSgt	S.L. Graveson	RHQ	1985-97
LCpl	D.E. Parker	RHQ	1990-97
Sig	C.J. Hyde	Swindon	1945-48
WLCpl	S.M. Donaghy	RHQ	1989-97
WO2	J.M. Besant	RHQ	1960-97
Cpl	G. Longson	RHQ	1982-97
Sgt	G.J. Smith	RHQ	1973-97
WPte	G.H. Greenwood	RHQ	
Sig	D.J. Howard	RHQ	1947-49
Cpl	B.J. Fuller	RHQ	1962-84
Sig	J.P. Prigent	Sheffield	1989-97
WPte	G.L. Henderson	RHQ	1945-48
Sig	L.E. Hilton	Birmingham	1947-49
Sgt	R.C. Knights	RHQ	1951-63
Sig	J.P. Thornton	Spennymoor	1992-96
WLCpl	C.D. Hill	RHQ	1989-97
WCpl	B. Coupar	Norfolk	1942-45
Sig	S.M. Lake	Cotswolds	1985-97
Cpl	M.J. Bowkett	Bristol	1959-77
Sgt	D.F. Hall	Bristol	1940-46
Sig	R.W. Williams	Bristol	1949-51

WPte	E.M. Morris	RHQ	1942-45
Dvr	M.D. Weir	RHQ	1943-47
WCpl	M. Knox	RHQ	1945-52
Sgt	L.A. Plummer	RHQ	1959-96
Sgt	M.A. Bennett	Catterick	1957-66
Sig	D.W. Henson	Loughborough	1946-48
Capt	J.C. Bolton	Derby	1989-date
Cpl	D.C. Bowen	Swindon	1947-59
LCpl	S.J. Manley Hudson	RHQ	1985-97
WCpl	V.E. Hopkins	RHQ	1992-97
Sig	R. Walsh	RHQ	1940-46
Sig	G. Knowles	RHQ	1954-56
WO2	C. Doughty	RHQ	1973-97
Cpl	S.M. Clegg	RHQ	1990-97
Sig	H. Launder	Cardiff	1942-47
Sig	N. Pettit	Chesterfield	1941-47
Cpl	S.J. Shaw	RHQ	1983-97
WO1	W. Gray	RHQ	1972-date
Cpl	B.J. Heanes	RHQ	1989-97
Sgt	M.S. Momtgomery	RHQ	1981-97
SSgt	S.M. Honeyman	RHQ	1980-97
Sig	W.A. Butler	RHQ	1933-46
Sgt	R.A. Graves	Liverpool	1939-46
Sgt	N. Stewart	RHQ	1983-97
LCpl	B.A. Collinson	RHQ	1986-97

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

We are very proud of our President, **Maj Gen Henry Hild** who has been awarded the Princess Mary Silver Medal. In congratulating him we also express our thanks for the enthusiasm with which he and **Janet** support all the activities of the Branch.

In July, inspired by a talk earlier this year by the warden, we visited the ruins of Basing House that stands an high ground in the village of Old Basing and was the site of one of the longest battles of the Civil War. Although for the past three centuries ours has been a Royalist army it is interesting to reflect that it is the product of Cromwell's New Model Army, who were the victors at Basing House. However, we saw no ghosts and prior to our visit enjoyed a leisurely and very pleasant pub lunch in a garden by the river.

In August we attended the Final Dress Rehearsal of the Sovereign's Parade at the RMA Sandhurst, which **Col** 'Paddy' **Verdon** has been good enough to arrange for us to attend for the past five years. This year saw our largest attendance. We were delighted to welcome not only friends from the West London and Reading Branches but no less than ten from East Kent Branch, who had left home at crack of dawn to be with us. Among these was our Area Representative, **Roy Andrews** with his wife **Pat**. As the Men and Maids of Kent included **Maj Tony Bewsey** and **Doris** we also can claim attendance by the Indian Signals Association, of which **Tom** is a hard working Committee Member. Their son **Peter** and his wife **Ann** accompanied them. They already were acquainted with some of our members and as they recently have become resident in our area we hope they will join us on future occasions. After the Parade we retired to enjoy our picnic at a venue by the lake where **Maj Hank Langford** with his usual efficiency had organised a Signals Bar and where our guests were as delighted as we to meet the WOs and Sergeants of the Signals Wing.

On going to press, sad news has reached us of the death of **Col Freddie Winter**, a Member of this Branch for many years. Our deepest sympathy goes to **Faith** and to their family.

DERBY BRANCH

SEPTEMBER 1996

Three members of Derby Branch were invited to spend a few days with 46 (City Of Derby) Sig Sqn (V) during their Annual Camp at Redford Barracks, Edinburgh. After a leisurely drive and an overnight stop in Moffat, we arrived at Camp in time for lunch. Trips out to Edinburgh, Stirling and Portobello were organised. Members attended the WO's and Sgts' Mess Regt Dinner complete with Piper. We were all made very welcome and our thanks are extended to the OC, **Maj Szulakowski** and the RSM, **WO1 Boyd** and to all who made our stay so enjoyable.

NOVEMBER 1996

With the permission of the OC, **Maj Szulakowski** we held our usual Parade in the Main Hall at Kingsway TA Centre. Our guests being 222 Heavy Ack Ack Battery. The Salvation Army bugler played the Last Post and Reveille. Wreaths were laid at the Memorial by the Signals Association, by a serving member and a retired member and by the Royal Artillery TA. Our President, **Col A. Hawksworth TD DL, Capt T. Yard** and **WO2 (SSM) A. Whittaker** took the Parade, after which the Admin Officer **Capt C. Webb** provided lunch. Our new Standard, kindly donated by RHQ, and refurbished with donations from Association Members, was paraded for the first time, the Standard Bearer was **Sgt G. Allman (Retd)**.

DECEMBER 1996

As in previous years several of our older members were invited to attend a Christmas Lunch at a local restaurant. This is now an annual event paid for by the profit from the raffle held at our Annual Dinner Dance. Older members prefer this annual lunch at Christmas rather than individual gifts as it enables them to keep in touch with old comrades.

MARCH 1997

We held our Annual Dinner seating 125 members and guests. Our guests of honour were **Maj Gen P. Cavendish CB OBE DL, Col K. Hobbs, Maj P. Williams** 2 IC 38 Sig Regt (V) and **Mrs Williams**. The efforts of the Committee and the attending staff provided by 46 (City of Derby) Signal Squadron (V), 106 Air Cadets and the chefs provided by 46 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn made a very enjoyable evening. The 1998 Dinner Dance is on 21 March 1998.

With regret we announce the deaths of two supporters of our branch. **Kathleen** wife of **Lt Col Wright** a past President of our Branch and **Meg** wife of **Capt Ernest Williams** our Treasurer. **Meg** supported **Ernest** with his work for the Branch and was a regular attender at all our social events.

NEWS OF SERVING ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Capt Tomlinson and **Sgt D. Fletcher** both members of our Branch have during the past year both served with IFOR in Bosnia. Congratulations to **WO2 Steve Bolton** a former Senior PSI at Derby who has recently become engaged to **Capt Julie Bridge**, 2IC 46 Sig Sqn.

OTHER EVENTS

The Chairman and Secretary of Derby Branch attended a Service of Thanksgiving to mark the term of office of **Councillor** and **Mrs John McGivern** who were during their year of office as Mayor and Mayoress of The City Of Derby Guests of Honour at our Annual Dinner Dance. We have become affiliated to the Derby and District Ex Services Association and its meetings are regularly attended by our Vice-Chairman, **Sgt G. Allman**. This Association was set up to represent the views of the ex service community of Derby to the local authorities, to the media and others. This year it has paid for a memorial plaque to the late **Col Sir Peter Hilton** Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire 1978-1994, who had supported many local forces associations. Several members of our Branch attended the dedication.

SICK VISITORS REPORT

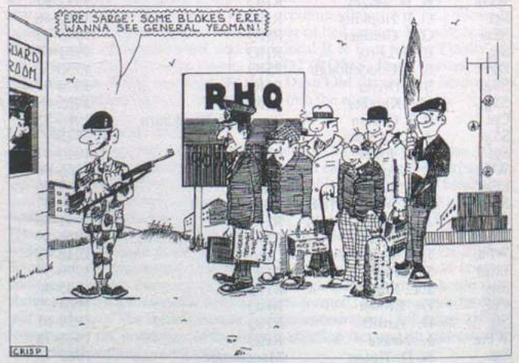
Our sick visitor **Sgt G. Allman** has made several visits this year to members who have been ill or in hospital to take a card and flowers or fruit and to generally let them know that we are thinking about them. One such visit made was to our own Chairman, **WO2 (Retd) D. Williamson** who wishes through this report to personally thank all those members of the association and of 46 Sig Sqn who visited her in hospital and sent cards and flowers and other gifts. We are glad to say that she is now recovered.

LATE NEWS

An anonymous donation has been made to the association of £50 and with this we are taking some of our older members for a meal within the next few weeks. Thank you to all those who have supported the Committee and Branch during 1996/7.

EAST KENT BRANCH

On Sunday 8 June despite the obvious attraction of staying at home to watch the final stages of the defeat of Australia about fifty members assembled at the Weald of Kent Golf Club to hear a talk given by **W Comd Michael Richardson**, CO of RAF Manston. He had brought (not only his wife **Kate**) but a drum full of photographs going back to the first days of Manston as a Naval Air Station in 1918. His talk took us all through the war years-the most bombed airfield in the UK-up to the present day as a combined military and international airport. His talk ended in a well deserved round of applause, a carvery lunch followed, at the end of which the Raffle although organised by **Eadie Thomas**, was kindly run by **Bernadette Cooper** and **Chas Hughes**. At the AGM **Gen Yeoman**, Chairman of the Association, emphasised the importance of benevolence and the need for Branches and individuals to donate now that the serving Corps is diminishing and the One-Day Pay Scheme consequently reduced. He went on to say the that the Corps is now 1,200 men short and to redress this shortage the Corps is calling on retired signallers (both regular and TA) to re-enlist, which prompted yet another cartoon from **Donald Crisp**.



NEWS OF MEMBERS

Gordon Alexander suffered a stroke at the end of June and was admitted to the QEH, Ramsgate. He was partially paralysed down one side but is gradually getting the feeling and speech back. He's now in Ramsgate Hospital where **Jennie** spends much of her day. Everyone wishes him a speedy recovery.

Don Prescott has just taken over as the Hon Sec of the Kent Invicta Branch of the British Korean Veterans Assoc. and attended the memorial service in St. Pauls Cathedral in the presence of the Ambassador of South Korea and the Military Attache. **Gen Archie Gibson** has taken over as President.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome **Mr Mick Lloyd-Williams** of Minster Nr. Ramsgate who served as a regular from 1966-1996 (1988 to 1996 on LSL). Apart from his service with 260 Sig.Sqn, nearly all was in Germany with 2,4,7 and 22 Sig Regts. We look forward to seeing him at one of our future functions.

A sign of the growing up of the Corps came in 1935 when **King George V** chose the occasion of his Silver Jubilee to appoint **H.R.H. Princess Mary The Princess Royal** to be Colonel-in-Chief Royal Corps of Signals. Up to this time a Colonel Commandant had filled this role. The earliest were members of R.E. Signals, some of whom had transferred to the Corps on its formation.

The Princess Royal had been a serving officer in the ATS during the war years. She was a reserved and kindly person whose many visits to units from the Mediterranean to the West Indies were carried out in the military fashion of the day and perhaps owed something to the fact that she was a serving Officer. There would be formal inspections with shining boots and polished brasses, which had some younger Signalmen quaking in their boots, she also had a chance to meet some of the more senior officers.

This year marks the centenary of the birth, of **Princess Mary the Princess Royal**, the only daughter of **King George V** and **Queen Mary**.

It is being celebrated with an exhibition at Harewood House, Nr.Leeds, Yorkshire. **Princess Mary** married **Lord Harewood** in 1922 and adopted Yorkshire as her home from 1930 until her death in 1965. The exhibition covers her childhood at Buckingham Palace and Public Duties through two World Wars, but many visitors will be most intrigued by the glimpses into her private life at Harewood, featured in paintings and photographs taken there.

The exhibition is on view from June until October 5 1997. For further details ring Leeds 0113 288 6331.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Eight members attended the Annual Reunion at Blandford in June and the parade at the re-dedication ceremony of the Corps Memorial. All took place in the march past. **Bill McNamara** was the Branch Standard Bearer and took part in the Standard Bearers competition.

The members were able to visit the museum on the Saturday. On Sunday they paid a further visit when it was not so busy, which gave them time to look further, at the exhibits and read the details appertaining to the items on display. Many items were recognisable as being used during service pre, during and post WWII. The improvements in equipment as the war progressed, and operations since 1945 made it an interesting and enjoyable visit. The medal department is well set out, and one can get a cup of char to boot, and rest weary legs.

The members agreed that with a large team the White Helmets gave an excellent display, and the Old Un's still had the energy to enter the display. I remember, seeing them at Earl's Court in the Royal Tournament in 1937 and was determined to become a DON R. Unfortunately or fortunately a Captain decided he needed OW/L's more, after I had signed on of course.

Unfortunately Ivana Hamilton had to leave early so was unable to be present for the photograph

The musical selection and the playing of Retreat was enjoyed, it was especially so for our members as the band included members from 32 Sigs Regt (V) with whom the Branch has a very close association. The personnel of the Corps made us very welcome, this made our weekend very enjoyable. The Trainees addressed our members as Sir and this was appreciated as a mark of respect from the young soldiers to the old soldiers. The members thank **Mr Peter Cuckow** who, with our Chairman **Bill Taylor** and our Secretary **Ivana Hamilton**, made the arrangements to allow our members to attend from such a distance. We also thank the President and members of the WOs' and Sergeants' Mess for their hospitality.

Well, we made it a memorable first time visit to the Blandford Reunion and the new museum. It is envisaged it will not be the last, now we know the way. Discussions were already under way on the return journey as to how we will make it in 1998.

HULL BRANCH

Hon. Secretary: **Mr J. Brown**

The Hull Branch moved to the Halifax Barracks during 1996, changing the monthly meetings from the last to the first Thursday of every month. The meetings start at 2000hrs. We would like to thank **WO2 Alan James** and the Troop members for making us welcome.

Our monthly luncheons have seen us visiting some new and not so new venues, but it is pleasing to note the rise in numbers of members attending. Eight members attended the 1996 Blandford Reunion. We all had an enjoyable weekend and it was interesting to see the improvements being made to the Camp. November saw a good turnout at the Remembrance Service in Hull which was followed by a buffet at the barracks. The annual Christmas Dinner was a combined effort with 32 Association and Troop Members and we all enjoyed an excellent meal. The setting, once again, being enhanced by the Regimental Silver.

The AGM saw a change in roles for **Mr Roy Drewery** from Hon. Secretary to Chairman and for **Mr Jim Brown** from Chairman to Hon. Secretary. The Branch would like to thank **Roy** for all his hard work during his role as Hon. Secretary. Members who have recently joined the Association via HQ have been contacted and it is hoped that they will come along to swell our ranks.

Ending on a sad note the Branch would like to pass on its condolences to **Bob Stephenson** whose wife **Betty** recently passed away. **Bob** is one of the founder members of the Branch and **Betty** was a great supporter of the Association. She will be sadly missed

NORFOLK BRANCH

Secretary: **Brian C. Gibbs**

We of the Norfolk Branch are still enjoying a very good year and also a very busy one. In April myself and three other members, attended the Reps meeting at Donnington which also included the A.G.M. This proved to be a well organised event and a very enjoyable one. We met many old friends and made some new ones. The same month included our Branch A.G.M, which went very well, all the reports from the Branch Officers confirmed that the Branch is in a healthy state and thriving. Branch President, **Don Ellingworth** took the Chair for the election of Officers and various committees. He then handed the Chair back to Chairman, **Maurice Swetman** to carry on with the meeting. In June, 12 members of the Branch travelled to Blandford to attend the reunion which we all thoroughly enjoyed. We arrived on the Friday and after booking in went along to the Sgts Mess to relax and enjoy a drink with lots of old friends. On Saturday we all enjoyed the static displays and the arena events. The Corps Band were their usual magnificent selves along with the Pipes and Drums of the 32 Sig Regt. We all thought that the White Helmets were especially good this year all in all a very good display culminating with the Retreat Ceremony. On the Sunday we all attended the Church parade along with our Branch Standard carried by our deputy Standard bearer **Peter Basted**. Our thanks go to the RHQ Staff that organised the reunion. It is appreciated all the hard work that goes into these events.

On 19 July we are having a barbecue at the TA Centre in Norwich for, members, families and friends. We are again being visited by the Southwold Youth Band who gave us a excellent display last year, the Band is organised by Vice Chairman, **Frank Mortlock** he does a great job and the barbecue is being, arranged by Vice President and parade Marshal, **Gordon Royall**.

Our bowls team has several matches to play this year. We have made a steady improvement since we started and actually had a win last year. It was a first step but a step in the right direction. We are open to any challenges from other Branches.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

The Blandford Reunion is over for another year and once again Branch Chairman, **Tom Maguire**, led a party of Northern Ireland members to the festivities. Hon Sec, **Ian Wolfe** will not forget this one for a long time. Previously it had been possible to arrange transport by minibus (and ferry of course) and the party would travel together. This time the reunion clashed with 40 Sig Regt TAVR Annual Camp which meant that our serving TAVR members had to head straight (more or less) from camp to Blandford, some others decided to take their own cars and some decided to delay their return for personal reasons. All very confusing but **Ian** got it sorted with his usual efficiency. Then came the bombshell. He was informed that all those attending must be Life Members. We have been represented at the Catterick/Blandford re-union since its inception by both ex-service and serving TAVR (Life and Annual Members) and had never

heard of this ruling before. Once again **Ian Wolfe** pulled out all the stops, contacting those concerned (goodness knows what his phone bill will be like), arranging Life Membership applications in a hurry (in the circumstances we offered this at half fee). Thanks to **Ian**'s diligence all eventually worked out and the members who attended have nothing but praise for those who looked after them at Blandford particularly **WO1 Bill Ogden** who is still one of our Branch members and **Mrs Ogden**. Due to the long journey to the ferry the Northern Ireland party had to miss the Sunday parade. This was unfortunate but unavoidable. The Branch has since decided that a sub committee will take the arrangements for Blandford 1998 off **Ian Wolfe**'s shoulders and members are already looking forward to it.

The next item on our busy agenda is our annual Formal dinner to be held in September (it will probably be over by the time this is printed) and **Ian** and **Debbie Wolfe** are busy making final arrangements. In previous years we have been fortunate to have had the Royal Signals Band with us at our Formals. This year the dates are unsuitable so a local prize winning Flute Band will play during the meal. I understand that **WO1 Bill** and **Mrs Ogden** will be attending the Formal Dinner. We look forward to seeing them again. Our long serving and well known (50 Year Badge) member **Harry Stanley** was for the first time unable to go to Blandford due to ill health. We wish you well **Harry** and a speedy return to good health.

Don't forget, all ex and serving Signallers (Regular and TAVR) you will be most welcome at our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast.

READING BRANCH

Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), 1944/45 The Royal Signals element of the above Headquarters was concentrated mainly in 5 HQ Signals and 18 Air Formation Signals. These Units were assigned to SHAEF during the early months of 1944 in preparation for the Normandy Landings and the first move of SHAEF Forward to Normandy. 5 HQ Signals included a variety of Sections (Sections were redesignated as 'Troops' in 1946) including COMCEN, Cipher, Medium Wireless and High-Speed Wireless (Golden Arrows). Also probably Line and Dispatch Rider Sections. Virtually all Signals trades were represented and personnel came from the Corps and the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS). The British Signals worked alongside the 3118th US Signal Service Group who, among other things, ran the Staff Message Control (SMC). As the Allied Forces advanced through France towards their ultimate goal in Germany, SHAEF Forward moved from Normandy, firstly to the Paris/Versailles area in August 1944 and thence to Rheims in February 1945. The Supreme Commander at Rheims accepted the unconditional surrender of the German High Command at 0241 hrs on 7 May 1945.

The British SHAEF Association was formed only three years ago, roughly patterned on the American SHAEF Veterans Association which has been in existence for many years and has a few hundred members. The problem of the British SHAEF Association is achieving success in making contact with former servicemen and women from SHAEF. We are still finding them and have enrolled three new members in the past month. We now have 60 full members, a high proportion of whom served in one or other of the two Royal Signals units mentioned above. (All inquiries and information, please, to **Alan Foot** of the Reading Branch, Royal Signals Association.)

In May 1997 a representative party of British SHAEF Association members travelled by coach to re-visit some of our old haunts in the Paris/Versailles area and the following report was prepared by one of the party (**Arthur Thomas** ex-18 Air Formation Signals):

No: 1 (Senior) Signals Section
British SHAEF–Operation 'Bon Retour'

CO	**Maj (Retd) Frank Chadwick**
21C	**Hon. Maj Alan E. Foot**
CSM	**WO2 Lucia Whitehead, ATS**

Planning for Operation 'Bon Retour' started in October 1996 during an operational sortie to Plymouth-

Day 1	Deployment
Day 2	Patrol and Reconnaissance
Day 3	Diversionary Exercise
Day 4	'Bon Retour'
Day 5	Return to Base.

An agent sent out sealed Orders, detailing movement orders, to all members of the Section.

Day 1–12 May 97: Acting on instructions, personnel converged on the agreed assembly area, from home bases located in the North and South of the country. Medway Services on the M2 codenamed 'Farthing Corner' was chosen for the assembly point to enable the group to meet the two civilian guides selected for their local knowledge of the exercise area. Identified to members as **Steve** and **Ken**. Roll call was taken, kit was stowed and we enbussed to set off to Dover to join the P&O Ferry to Calais at 1815 hrs. Watches were adjusted forward one hour to bring us into line with French time. Our 75-minute crossing time enabled section members to queue NAAFI-style (all part of our training schedule) to partake of what was to be our evening meal. On arrival in France we cleared Customs quickly and made our way to the A26 for our three and a half hour drive to our operational base near the Boulevarde Penpherique at Porte de St Ouen. Self-service was necessary to stow our kit in our temporary quarters and a few grumblings were heard as to the space allocated but it was generally agreed that anything was better than 1944 on 'Juno' and 'Omaha'.

Day 2–13 May 97: On parade at 09.30 hrs. A civilised time compared to 07.30 at Catterick, With traffic signs indicating 'FLUIDE' we made our way under the guidance of **Ken** and **Steve** whose local knowledge proved excellent. We drove to Porte de Bercy where we headed in towards the centre of Paris via the Gare d'Austerlitz. Place-names familiar to us in 1944/45 flowed smoothly from the lips of **Ken** as we made our way to La Place de l'Opera where we were allowed a 2-hour period of 're-orientation'. Success for some in finding the Paris Branch of the R.B.L. at 8 Rue Boudreau, and places like Rue du Mathurin, Rue Auber, etc., not forgetting Les Galleries Lafayette. Queuing NAAFI-style again, a meal was taken in the Cafe Moulin Rouge (NOT NAAFI prices), followed by a short stop to see the Sacre Coeur. Then we continued to the River Seine for an hour-long trip on a Bateau Mouche. It was a pleasure to sit back in warm sunshine as we reconnoitered the Ile de la Cite–an activity not available in 1944.

Day 3–14 November 97: With the connivance of our guides a diversionary plan was evolved to send a detachment to Chartres. Meanwhile others took the opportunity to seek out old contacts or prepare for the evening 'd'Amitie' at the Paris Branch of the Royal British Legion, arranged by our 21C, **Alan Foot**. All personnel that were instructed to parade outside billets at 1730 hrs equipped to move off for an 18.00 hrs rendezvous at RBL. Due to unforeseen activities in Chartres, the return of the party sent there was delayed. A depleted force under **Maj (Retd) Frank Chadwick** and **CSM Lucia Whitehead** made their way to No: 8 Rue Boudreau, having taken the precaution of sending the 21C, **Alan Foot**, on in advance to pay for the first round of drinks. This proved to be unnecessary as our hosts at the RBL decreed that the first round was free. **Richard Doggett** (Chairman) and a group of his fellow members welcomed our party. An interesting exchange of wartime experiences then followed as we enjoyed the hospitality of our fellow RBL members. Our visit of friendship was marked by the presentation by our OC of a British SHAEF Shield bearing the famous SHAEF Flaming Sword emblem to commemorate our visit and our service in the area 1944/45. **Richard Doggett** reciprocated by presenting Paris Branch ties to the men in our party, with badges for our lady members. Regrettably our visit was all too short but we left with an invitaton to visit the Paris RBL whenever we are again visiting the city. We then deployed back to billets for a memorable drive round the City of Paris to see the many examples of the finest of Historical Buildings under floodlit conditions. Our final recce and now is all set for Operation 'Bon Retour'.

Day 4–15 May 97: VERSAILLES–A Journey back in time. We enjoyed a pleasant journey to Versailles and the sun was shining as we debussed on the huge parking area in front of 'Le Chateau'. Gathering our bearings our Section quickly dispersed in small groups to revisit the places in which one or another had seen service from early September 1944 until the end of hostilities in Europe (or until moving on to Rheims in February 1945). Les Petites Ecuries, les Grandes Ecuries, L'Hotel Trianon–these were the buildings in which SHAEF Versailles was established. It was particularly exciting for **Cipher Clerk Joan Garton** and **Sgt Frankie Hobden**, who actually found the house in which they were billeted whilst serving in the ATS and were able to take photographs both inside and outside the buildings. **2IC Alan Foot** retraced his footsteps to where his High-speed Wireless van was located in the cobbled yard of the Petites Ecuries. **LCpl Arthur Thomas** visited l'Hotel Triainon to point out to his wife (**Betty**), the place where the two Queen Mary Teleprinter vans were located and for the first-time visitors to Versailles there was the Chateau itself with its wonderful gardens to explore. It was rewarding to realise that the small part we had played in the years of 1944/45 had made it possible for the Armies of Tourists from all parts of the world to come to Versailles to admire the Palace built by Louis XIV. It was so different 53 years ago. However, we had achieved our objective and slightly footsore we returned to our coach to drive back to our billets.

On the way our guides, **Ken** and **Steve**, outlined details of timings for our return to UK the next day.

Reveille	0400 hrs
Kit outside	0430 hrs
Breakfast	0445 hrs
Depart	0515 hrs.

Taking the one-hour difference off these times we wondered whether it was worth climbing into our bunks and with a thunderstorm to contend with our otherwise sturdy group began to wonder why they had come!

Day 5–16 May 97: Despite all the hardships, our Section were all up and ready to go at 0515 hrs, happy to have taken part in Operation 'Bon Retour', and as smart as ever. There was an uneventful journey from Calais to Dover with 'duty free' rations to collect. With a short wait to clear customs, we arrived back at our Medway Services assembly area where we bade farewell to our excellent local guides **Ken** and **Steve** and in true Army style we quietly set off for our home bases. This time there was no demob-suits or gratuities, just happy memories of Paris and Versailles re-visited.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

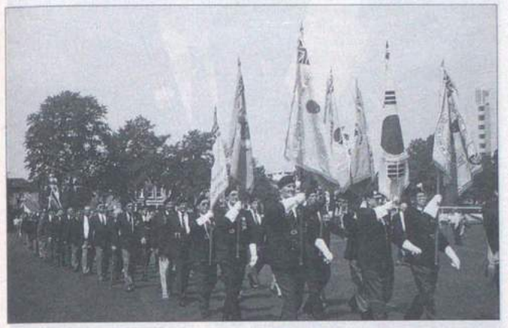
At the end of June the Branch enjoyed their annual visit to the Tower of London, undaunted by the fact that it was the night prior to the Blandford Reunion. The evening was fine and after a tour of the Tower with graphic and gory details of it's history, retailed by our Yeoman Warden host, and the impressive Ceremony of the Keys we enjoyed a buffet in the Yeoman Warders' Club. A few doughty members survived the late night to attend the Reunion the following day.

REUNIONS

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

THE THIRD ANGLO KOREAN FESTIVAL

The event took place at the Fairfield, Kingston-upon-Thames on Saturday the 12th July 1997 in glorious weather. Invited were members of the BKVA, British Korean Veterans' Association. Many Branch standards were paraded also there was a good attendance of ex-Royal Signals personnel, who had served in the Korean conflict.



BKVA veterans on March Past

Leading the parade were the BKVA veterans, marching to the music of The London Irish Rifles, Pipes and Drums, by kind permission of **Maj J. MacLeod TD**. The salute was taken by **Maj Gen P. A. Downward CB**, DSO, DFC . . . the retiring president of the Association. Our new president will be the recently retired Master of Signals **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle CB, CBE, OBE, DL.**

There were many colourful events during the afternoon, Korean dancing, a traditional Korean wedding, later **John Boyd**, secretary of the Colchester Branch, and myself had a photograph taken with the happy couple. **John** served with 'K' Troop, 28th British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade.

(*L-R*) at rear: Reg Briggs and John Boyd

Other events were Tae Kwan Do, Irish step dancing, sword dance, food stalls, souvenirs and various exhibitions. Either side of the Fairfield are The Cricketers and The Albion, where we were made very welcome.

Any Korean Veterans reading this and wanting information on joining the Association please write to the General Secretary **Frank Ellison BEM, JP** at: 12 Fields Crescent, Hollingworth, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 8JR or telephone 01457 763699.

LANGELEBEN REUNION BRANCH

Secretary **Frank Mitchell** has single-handedly built up the Langeleben Reunion Branch of the RSA. He has traced those who served in Langeleben Camp by personal contact, searching through telephone directories and placing notices in newspapers. Membership now stands at 272 and **Frank** is hoping to increase it to 300 by next year's reunion.

For further details contact **Frank Mitchell**, Branch Secretary, Langeleben Reunion Branch, Royal Signals Association, 6 Derwent House, Timber Street, Elland, Halifax, HX5 ODH. His telephone number is 01422 376915.

ARMY VETERANS ON PARADE

Old soldiers wearing blazers with badges of the Royal Signals, Intelligence Corps, REME and Army Catering Corps marched through the town of Königslutter to the cheers and waves of local people. These were men who had served with 2 Sqn, 13 Sig Regt (later 225 Sig Sqn) at the local Langeleben Camp before it closed. Most traveled from Britain but some came from as far away as South Africa and Switzerland.

Maj Gen Peter Baldwin, who is President of the Langeleben Reunion Branch of the Royal Signals Association, led the March. Their reunion in Königslutter, which is near Brunswick, coincided with the local Volks und Schützenfest. The town invited them to take part in the procession along with the brass bands, shooting clubs and other uniformed organisations. **Bürgemeister Arnulf Baumann** addressed their annual meeting in English saying: 'It is a great pleasure to welcome you to our nice and beautiful town.' He added that the three most important events in his life were:

- First of all the presence of the Forces who had provided more than 50 years of peace in his country.
- The uniting of Germany into a single country.
- The twinning of Königslutter with Taunton who, as reciprocal guests and hosts in two different countries, helped to make a better Europe.

Gen Baldwin presented him with a Royal Signals Regt Shield. In return **Bürgermeister Baumann** gave the General a town plaque of Königslutter. The Branch adopted a banner incorporating the Königslutter town crest of a lion and river with the name 'Langeleben'. This motif was also used on their new official tie, which was worn on the parade. The 2 Sqn of 13 Sig Regt and 225 Sig Sqn (both forerunners of the Communications and Security Group) were based at Langeleben Camp from 1951 to 1990. About 70 married local German girls, including **Gordon Banks**, who was a driver at Langeleben and later goalkeeper with the triumphant England team who beat Germany in the 1966 football World Cup. Many even settled in Germany, several working at the Volkswagen factory.

A Schützenverein (shooting club) banner is admired by members of the Langeleben Reunion Branch of the Royal Signals Association. Pictured left is Branch Secretary **Frank Mitchell**, who comes from Halifax, and right **Mick Forrester**, who flew in from his home in South Africa especially for the reunion.

THE MUSEUM SHOP

Since the closure of PRI the Museum Shop now stocks the following items:
Stable Belts • Badges of Rank Slides
Embroidered Beret Badges

THE MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

It seems ages since the 'Selbourne Lunch' on 10 June, but then time does fly when you are enjoying yourself. The lunch was very well attended and very well organised by our Membership Secretary, **Ted Hawkins**, ably supported by his wife **Marion**. The guest of honour was **Mrs Ray Collins**. After lunch a convoy of cars led by **Col Ted Scarlett** made their way back to 'Hawkins Manor' for tea, the same again next year please.

Ted Hawkins and his wife Marion (right) chatting to Maj Fred Ruthven and his wife Betty

Several members of the Association attended the 800th Anniversary Summer Ball at Uxbridge TA Centre. A lot of effort went into the preparation of this event by Squadron members. Well done everybody and thank you. By the time you read this, the Association's Annual Dinner, at the Duke of York's HQ will be there or thereabouts. A more detailed account will be given at a later date.

The Military Band continues to function, albeit at reduced capacity these days. **Band Sergeant Major Bob Lowe** keeps the Association up to date with events and engagements. **Col Bill Williams** keeps the BSM up to date from his end of the telephone. The band are a very good advertisement for the Association and the Squadron when they are on parade or in concert. On that note I will polish my trumpet and march off!!

COMBINED EX SERVICES ASSOCIATION 16TH ANNUAL REUNION & CONFERENCE

The above was held at Bridlington in the Civic Ballroom of the Spa Royal Hall and the church service at The Priory Church. There was a limit on tickets some 800 being sold. 80 standards were on parade. A splendid sight to see. Around the balcony of the Spa Royal Hall, that reminded me of the Blackpool Tower ballroom, were the badges of every Regiment and Corps of the British Army, including the old type Royal Corps of Signals Badge. Also there were the names of hundreds of HM ships and RAF Squadron badges.

I have in the past, when writing to *The Wire* mentioned I did not see many wearing the Corps tie or badge. This time I had to eat my words. Four ex Corps members came up and spoke to me, their ages were 72, 72, 74 and 79. The MC for the evening, also the town crier for the East Riding of Yorkshire was a **Mr Michael Wood**, he had served 22 years in the Corps, well done I thought . . . the Corps uses satellite communication but how nice to see an ex member using the earliest form of communicating information to the public, a loud voice.

The Saturday evening saw the parade of standards in the ballroom, we were entertained by an 11 piece band and singer. In the interval The Church Lads Brigade Marching Band entertained us. They were very good. The old soldiers must have thought so too as they collected £534 for them. The Priory Church was packed to capacity on the Sunday and after the wreath laying we marched through the town to conclude events at the Spa Royal Hall. Those who were not returning home on the Sunday evening were then entertained at the Bridlington RBL club and credit must go to the Royal Navy for the entertainment, we were doubled up with laughter.

Through the medium of your magazine, which is read world-wide I would thank all concerned for this wonderful weekend. No matter what the ages of ex-servicemen are they can still mix and enjoy themselves. My wife **Margaret** was with me, her weekend was made when the grand old lady of the East Riding **Hannah Hauxwell** was there and she got in conversation with her. We also had another surprise, we got the full load when a seagull dive-bombed us, I had to buy another shirt immediately.

Reg Briggs, Peterborough Branch RSA

Mr Michael Wood (ex- WO1 YofS1972/94), Town Crier and Mr Reg Briggs

3RD DIVISIONAL SIGNALS REUNION CLUB

Once again 3rd (UK) HQ and Sig Regt extended its hospitality to the Reunion Club and over 40 members and guests accepted the kind invitation of **Lt Col Graham Leach**, the CO of the Regiment, to visit Picton Barracks, Bulford for the Regiment Weekend and Fete. I wonder if any other Sig Regt or Squadron maintains such close links with it's past members? It is certainly an arrangement of mutual advantage.

We assembled at Bulford on the afternoon of Friday 25 July to the usual warm welcome in the Sergeant's Mess, were allocated our quarters and then the feeding. I've said this before but it must be repeated that the Army, not withstanding cutbacks and financial restrictions, still knows how to entertain its guests and take evident pleasure in doing so. **2Lts Liz Allen** and **Alan Hawes** were our official hosts and were most attentive, particularly in the case of **Harry Palmer**, better known as Pedler. A lesser man would have let it all go to his head but Pedler just accepts it all with a smile. The fact that he's a bit 'mutt and jeff' may account for it. After the formal welcome by the CO and the RSM, **WO1 Kevin Fitzpatrick**, we retired to our rooms to wash, brush up and gird our loins for the evenings get together in the Sergeants Mess. Which is, as I'm sure you will all agree, a test of one's stamina equivalent to a 9 mile bash. It was in fact a very pleasant evening where one, in that hackneyed phrase, met old friends and made new ones, but if you can come up with a better or more succinct one please let me know it. Then I shall soon make it hackneyed. I shall not dwell on the activities of the evening except to report that with the exception of the second youngest Club member present, **Graham Perkin**, all were present and correct eating a hearty breakfast at 0800hrs on the Saturday morning.' Nuff said.

First stop on Saturday was a visit to Div HQ to view the window, subscribed to by members and ex-members of the Division, first installed in the church at Korbecke, and now brought back to the UK and installed in a prominent position in Div HQ. Then down to the Officers' Mess for a presentation of Ptarmigan and a demonstration, by members of 222 Sig Sqn, of the equipment and it's use. These young Signallers impressed me with their professional efficiency, and their tact. In that they listened with apparent interest to my story of the rudimentary form of battlefield communications 4th Div Signals tried out, using rebro stations, back in 1963/64, before most of them were born, without allowing that glazed look, indicative of boring, boring coming into their eyes. Next was a visit

to RHQ to see the Op Resolute Room, full of Bosnia memorabilia and the Brett Room which, under the new RSM, has come on apace. Prominent on display was **Ernie Bayley's** scrap book, revamped in a fine new cover, and set out in a fashion he would have been proud of. Then it was time for lunch.

The new Master of Signals, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE**, joined us at lunch. He was making his first visit to the Regiment since his appointment. The weather, which during the morning had been damp and gloomy, started to clear up during lunch and by the end the sun was shining and the Master was able to declare the Fete open in fair weather with the Corps Band giving it's usual impeccable performance. The rest of the Fete I shall leave to the Regiment to describe only mentioning that the Ernest Bayley Award was presented to **Cpl Graham Beswick,** for his outstanding contribution to Regimental life, by **Brig Ronnie Stonham**, our President. The Club, and the Regiment, were particularly pleased to be joined at the Fete by **Mrs Jean Brett** the widow of our late President, **Brig Bertie Brett**.

Saturday evening saw us enjoying the entertainment in the Sergeants' Mess Annexe with music provided by a pretty good band with a most attractive singer. Sad to relate the only Club members to make use of the good dance music were **Bill** and **Margaret Barnard** and the irrepressible Pedler. For my part I finished the evening sitting outside in the cool putting the world to rights with **Stan Perkin**. After breakfast on Sunday morning we gathered at the side of the Regimental Square to watch 13 Officers, 5 WOs and 200 Rank and File (I know these figures are correct as I heard the RSM report them) form up ready to march to Church. Our President took the salute. It was an impressive display by some very smart young men and women. It is times like that which make you snort and paw the ground till you remember it was all a long time ago and you are past it. The Church service was what we have come to expect at Bulford, rousing hymns, apposite prayers and a good brief sermon. Then back to the Mess for the final event, the Curry Lunch. Just before lunch **Brig Ronnie** made another presentation to **Cpl Beswick**, this time the award of the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. **Cpl Beswick**'s wife and family were there to see the presentation. After lunch it was time to go home.

It only remains for me to thank **Lt Col Graham Leach**, who sadly missed the later part of the weekend as he had to go into hospital having sustained a nasty accident at the Fete, his Officers, WOs, Sgts, Soldiers and their families for a most enjoyable visit.

LOST COMMS

Mr Bruce Rhodes of Gloucester is looking to hear from anyone who remembers his father, whose details are: 14390162 **Sig L. Rhodes** attached to 3 Sqn (Rear) 8 Corps Signals. Enlisted at Catterick in December 1942. Served in France and NW Europe June 1944/45. MEF in Palestine from September '45 to June '46, was hospitalised in UK and discharged in February '47. He may have served with 6 AB Div at the Rhine crossing. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Bruce** on 01452 613869

Mr P. W. Priest of St Ives, is seeking the whereabouts of his old friend **Peter McManus** from Sheffield. **Peter** served as a National Service Lt in the Corps from 1955/57. He served in an Air Formation Signals unit at RAF Changi Singapore. Anyone who can help please call **Mr Priest**: 01480 492687.

W. E. C. Delhi 1942/46. Seeking Royal Signals personnel who were in 'E' Section at the Wireless Experimental Centre, Anand Parbat, Delhi, India. **Maj R. (Bob) Salisbury** already located. Please telephone 01509 263865. (From **Doug Marshall**–former Sgt, RAF).

Mr Christopher Riley of 22 Pinewood Gardens, Hemel Hempstead in Surrey is seeking help in tracing some former Royal Signals personnel. All were NCOs who served in the Peloponnese in southern Greece during late 1943 and early1944. They worked as w/t operators attached to British Liaison Officers, sent to that part of Greece by the SOE in Cairo. The first five names have been confirmed as being R Signals but the following six only may have been R Signals personnel:

Sgt Henderson (no Initials available)
Sgt J. P. Demellweek
Cpl E.A. Scarlett
Cpl S. J. Thorpe
Cpl W. Spivey
Sgt R. F. W. Taylor
Cpl A. Robertson
Cpl K. Faulkner
Cpl E Farelly
Cpl B Kerrigan
Cpl F. J. White

Mrs E. I. Smith of Southend on Sea is trying to trace a friend of her late husband. Anyone who can help **Mrs Smith** trace **Mr John Henry Rich** who was a National Serviceman 1948-1950 and served in Herford, Germany, is asked to call her on 01702-616743.

CALLING RICHARD JAMES HOLMDEN

Anyone knowing the present whereabouts of **Richard James Holmden**, is asked to call his brother **Charles** on 0043 5213-5205 (Austria). **Richard** was an apprentice in 1960 and left the Corps in about 1980.

Mr Doug Mitchell is seeking two members of the 5 TRR football team. From Catterick, Somme Lines in 1946. They are **LCpl Newton**, last heard of in the Hartlepool area, and **Sig Robinson**, last heard of in the Middlesborough area. Anyone who can help, please call **Doug** on 01472-873704.

Eric Jones is trying to trace a **Sig W. Fradgley**, who lived at Brierley Hill near Birmingham. He served in Berlin (11 AFS Regt) 1947/48. Anyone who can help, please contact **Eric** at 17A Kenilworth Ave, Gloucester GL2 0QH.

Mrs Frances Leeland is seeking anyone who served with or remembers her great uncle, the late **Maj Robert Henry Tricker MBE**. A Royal Navy man, he was seconded to the Corps at the beginning of WW2 and served for some time at Bletchley Park. He may also have served in Norway with the Special Forces. **Mrs Leeland** can be contacted on: 01252 870031.

CALLING

Former members of The Royal Signals Arms Wireless Chain Sig Sqn

Mr Roy Hunt is trying to locate former members of the football team from the AWCSS in Nairobi in 1953. The names of the players are; **Paddy Dlarcy, Peter Fourie, Billy Wales, Len Pachmore, Maurice Willis, Bill Morton, Dave Ready, Ken Warner, Dave Warren, Peter Brunsdon, Jock Bell, Paddy Shiel** and **Sig Moss**. Anyone who can help locate these and any other members of the Sqn, please contact Roy at; 9 Milton Str, Kingsley, Northampton NN2 7JG.

I am trying to organise a Reunion of

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Napier Barracks, Dortmund, W. Germany

for those that were there in the late 60s and early 70s.
Please contact as soon as you can:
Eddie Ridley
127 Hall Lane
Willington
Co. Durham DH15 0QD

I am trying to locate a few old colleagues of mine.
We served together in West Germany in the early 1980's, at 1 Sqn, 14 Sig Regt (EW), BFPO 33, in Langeleben.
The four people I want to get in touch with are:-

Paul Anderson, Alan Churchward, Mick Hurn and **Steve Russell**

I have recently heard **Paul** was seen in Catterick on his pre-pot-YofS, or YofS course back in 1988. I went to **Alan**'s wedding, in Yorkshire, about 10 years ago. He was then a Sgt. Was it really that long ago! I bumped into **Steve**, when I was at 13 and he was at 16. Then again, on the day I was signing off at Catterick in 1986. I haven't heard anything of **Mick**'s whereabouts.
If any of you are reading this, or anyone knows of their whereabouts, I'd be grateful if you could contact me:
John Holt on 0181 2446693 or 0171 5681383

CALLING

Sgt 'Duggy' **Douglas**, Ship's Signal Troop, Malta, 1955/58.

Don Crisp, at that time Troop Sgt, MSS, with whom you circumnavigated Malta on foot, would like to hear from you. Several members, of the East Kent Branch of the RSA, ask after you. Please write to me at the following address:

Don Crisp
65 Howard Drive
Allington
Maidstone
KENT ME16 0QF

We are currently researching material for a book on the role of Pye of Cambridge in the development of military radios, WS 18, 19, 22 & 62 used in World War II. If any readers have interesting recollections (good or bad!), printed material, anecdotes or photographs of serviceman with or using any of these radio sets, I would be most grateful if they would be kind enough to make contact.

Nicholas Stanley
19 Holland Park
LONDON W11 3TD

ANYONE

knowing the present whereabouts of

Sgt George Johnson

who served at 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, Bulford in 1966/68, is asked to contact **John Templeton** (Sec. of 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club) on 0181 654 8408

WHERE ARE YOU?

Urgently seeking **Captain Edward Michael Kelly** (nicknamed **Ted** and **Irish**).
He served with the Royal Corps of Signals and was stationed in Edinburgh Castle until 1946.
Anyone with information please call
Lorraine: 01383 852039.

CALLING

the former **Cpl Don Collen**

Mr G. Stock of Luton is trying to trace his old pal **Don Collen**, who served in Korea as a DR. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Mr Stock** on 01582 735146

Mr Donald Simpson is researching the history of **2nd Army Signals** (later called **2nd Army HQ Signals**) and in particular **91 Telegraph Operators Section** during the period 1941 to 1946.

Anyone who thinks that they can help is asked to call Mr Simpson on 0181 7449895

Mr. Le Lacheur is trying to trace a former member of the R. Signals, a **Capt J. Fisher**, who served at AA Coll Harrogate in 1967. **Mr Le Lacheur** can be contacted on 01633 450585.

Mr Frederick Dean is seeking the whereabouts of his former pal **Len Wigham** from their days together in Tobruk during WW2. Anyone who can help is asked to call: **Mr Dean** on 01304 368608

Mr E. W. (Jim) Halling is seeking the whereabouts of his former WW2 pals **Sgt Dickie Davies**, **Bill Kitchen** and **Don Rendell** (believed taken prisoner at Tobruk). Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Jim** on 01793 762646.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Lt Col John Montague
Dear Editor,

In the 'Correspondence' section of *The Wire*, June 1997, Mrs Jane Stockhill is enquiring for the address of **Maj Keith Reggler**. I have just spoken to his brother Maj Mike Reggler and have the address. It is as follows: **Maj K.A. Reggler**
20 Fogarty Street
Cleveland
Queensland 4163
AUSTRALIA

Yours Sincerely

From: Mr A. Cunliffe
101 Wolsey Road
Newark.
Notts
NG 24 2 AZ

Dear Editor,

I served in the Royal Signals from April/May 1942 until August 1946 and was claimed from the West Yorkshire Regt by my brother who was at the time in 3rd (Ist London) Corps Signals. That Unit having been evacuated from Dunkirk was for a time in Lisburn, Ireland before moving to Lurgan. From Lurgan, the Unit moved to a camp in the Delamere Forest near Northwich and thence by troopship from Liverpool to the P.A.I.Force.

The Unit was camped on the side of a mountain in Kurdestan near Kermanshah, Iran, (then called Persia). Early in 1943, the Unit moved to Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt before moving to a transit camp at Taranto, Italy. From here they moved to Greece where the task was to repair and rebuild the telegraph routes from Patras to Corinth, Corinth to Athens and Athens to Salonika from December 1944 until 1946. The retreating German Forces had drastically sabotaged the telegraph system.

I have unsuccessfully tried to contact old comrades from the Unit mainly as I went back again in 1974 until 1979 to Iran and took many pictures of the old camp site and surrounding area which would possibly be of nostalgic interest to anyone surviving. Incidentally, the Unit had a change of name and was known as 118 Construction Section, 18 L of C Signals whilst in Greece.

Yours Sincerely

From: Mr D. R. Stanforth (Sec. Southport & District RSA)
Dear Editor

I refer to the current issue of *The Wire*, June 1997, Vol. 51, No. 3. Page 237 gives the RSA contribution by the S & D Branch. Copies have arrived with the membership since our return from the Blandford Reunion. So, at our last meeting I ran into a great deal of flak. The first paragraph has a portion missing, which makes the Secretary **John Reaney** etc. etc. Thus the text does not make sense. A further printout copy of the text is attached showing the missed wording. The Branch is asking, 'Is a correction possible?'

(*Editor: The correction is after Secretary on line 7–add* ***Roger Stanforth*** *proposed the toast to Absent Comrades, Chairman John Reaney . . . etc.*)

The next lot of flak I received was, 'Where is the group photograph? Did I send it?' Obviously they say this, as obtaining a coloured photograph from the local press is expensive. I have replied that it was indeed sent, but there is what is known as 'Editorial Licence'. Although in the past *The Wire* has solicited Branches to forward photographs of their activities, there is now an element of doubt whether this is a useful exercise.

(*Editor: It is still, most certainly a useful exercise. It is just that June was a very full* Wire.)

Thus may I ask what explanation do I give to the next meeting?

Our kindest regards

From: Mr A. F. N. Curnow
Dear Editor,

On behalf of **Mr J. Curd**, and myself, I would like to thank you, and everyone who participated in the RSA Reunion weekend and made it, what John and I considered to be a very enjoyable and informative occasion.

This was the first time I had been back to Blandford since I left there in 1980. I had always said that it was a chapter in my life that had passed and I would not look back, I had had 22 years that have provided me with wonderful memories of a very enjoyable period in my life. Had it not been for **John** wishing to go, but having no transport or anyone to take him, I doubt that I would even have known about the occasion. However, as it turned out, I am very glad I did go, for both our sakes.

I know from previous experience, that the weekend takes a tremendous amount of thought, organisation and hard work. In my opinion, everyone involved did a magnificent job and they are a credit to the Corps that I am very proud to have served with. I did make a point of talking to the soldiers who were on duty as ushers, selling raffle tickets, directing traffic etc. and was most impressed with their courtesy, self-confidence and honesty, so refreshing when compared with the average civilian youth! Three of those with whom I spoke had only been in the army a few months, having come down from Arborfield. It reminded me of my tour with the Apprentice College at Harrogate, the most rewarding time of my career.

My very sincere thanks to you all for your very hard work and my congratulations to those involved with the training of the young soldiers. You have all done credit to the proud tradition of the Royal Corps of Signals. I look forward to 1998.

Yours Sincerely

From: Mr D. Ellingworth
Dear Editor,

My late father was recalled to the Royal Navy at the start of WW2, and as one of the few experts on mines and torpedoes, he went to HMS *Vernon*, a shore base in Portsmouth. It was not long before he was in action with a **Lt Cmd Ryan**. They worked together rendering many lines safe. It was during the Blitz, in 1940, that they had to work in London with other teams. They did what had to be done. I believe that they had cleared their area and were in the office, when a telephone call came in to say that there was a mine hanging in a warehouse in Dagenham. As they were on hand they were given the job, which unfortunately was to be their last. Leaving the rest of their team in a safe place, they went to assess the potential danger. They did not know how much time was left on the fuse clock, but they ran when it began to tick. As one of the team told me, 'They had 10 seconds to run 400 yards.' Even Linford Christie could not run that fast. The mine exploded and cleared the area, taking two men's lives at the same time. This was on 21 September 1940.

It was at about this time that **King George VI** and the Prime Minister decided that a civilian bravery award should be introduced and The George Cross was born. Both **Lt Cmd Ryan** and my late father were awarded with a posthumous G.C. on December 20 1940. My late father was the first lower deck rating to be so awarded, at the time all other G.C.s went to officers, so it was quite an honour. The following year I went to the Palace with my stepmother, to be presented with the G.C. and that was the first and last time I saw the G.C. I had thought that in time the G.C. would come to me but on the death of my stepmother I found that it had been sold in 1968. I found the dealer who had sold the G.C. but they refused to tell me who had bought it. I then started a search of dealers, medal magazines in fact anybody whom I thought might be able to help, but all to no avail.

In 1995, when the celebrations of the end of WW2 were taking place, I wrote to The Imperial War Museum asking if they would accept copies of my late fathers' medals to put on display, to give him some recognition, something which had not happened in 55 years. The answer was no. I accepted that answer in respect of the donors who had medals on display. However, in February 1997 I had a phone call from a lady at the Museum, saying that my late father's G.C. was for sale at a dealer in Bridlington. I rang my son, who was as happy as myself, 'Go for it. Use all the Pools winnings,' he said. (I had won £10,000 on the Pools a couple of years earlier.) When I rang the dealer he told me that he had sold them. I asked him if he would ask the person he had sold them to, would they sell the G.C. back to the family. Two hours later he telephoned to say that the medals had been sold to someone in Canada, but for a price the medals could come home. I asked what that was and agreed to the £8,500 that they wanted. It was some eight weeks later when, being rather worried, I telephoned the dealer to see if there was any news. He told me that when the other person had sent the set of medals to him, he would let me know. He finally called to say that he had them, they were the originals and he would send them off to me that day. On the Saturday morning the post arrived, a large registered parcel. My hands were shaking and my heart was thumping. I opened it and to my dismay, a rather dirty set of medals were on view. I never thought I would see them like that. I know that if I had had medals in that state in the Army my feet would not have touched the floor! I was on my way to my Branch meeting, where I told them of the good news and let all there see them. I showed them to my son and his family, also to all my friends who wanted to see them. It was a truly happy day.

I was in touch with the Museum all through the eight weeks of waiting and it was agreed that the G.C. would go on display in the new V.C/G.C. Room. When I took the medals to the museum I was given V.I.P. treatment. **HRH Prince Charles**, who had many of the donors presented to him, opened the new V.C./G.C. Room. I was first in line, not by choice, but he had done his homework. After a few minutes he said, 'Ah! You are a Pools winner, jolly good show, you have spent the money well.' After all the speeches were over the assembled people visited the V.C./G.C. Room. They have done my late father proud. It was a little humbling to hear people saying, 'Ah! The Ellingworth collection, his son did well getting them back.' For me it was a happy ending to a long hard search.

Yours Sincerely

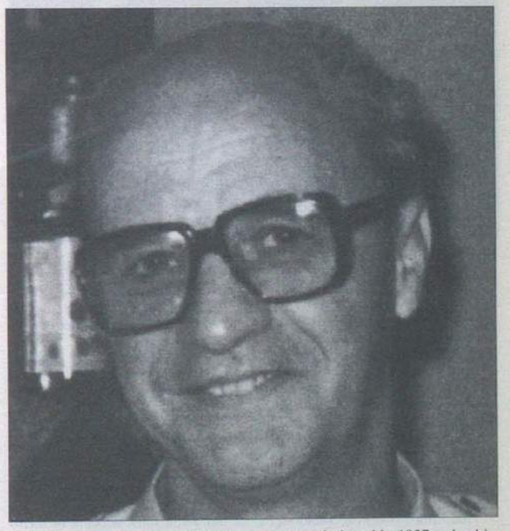
DONATIONS

Frank Chadwick In memory of Ken Hart.....£25.00
Lt Col (Retd) & Mrs Skelly In memory of Maj F. Oakes £20.00
Mr J. E. Brice In memory of his mother Mrs Frances Brice.....£118.00
Maj W. J. Thomas In memory of WO2 (RQMS) G.M. Birrell.....£ 32.00
Certa Cito Lodge £10.00
49 (WR) Sig Sqn Church Parade £55.00
Birmingham RSA £50.00
Winchester RSA £300.00
'Tarrant Valley 10 Race' £400.00
Collection at Church Service Reunion weekend.....£510.00
Mr Watson.....£10.00
Mr R.V. Baughan.....£20.00
Bournemouth RSA
for the Gurkha Bde Assoc Trust for the Statue Appeal £30.00

LAST POST

Archer–W/LCpl M. Archer	Served 1941/45	Died May '97
Ashcroft–Sig H. Ashcroft	Served 1939/46	Died 30/06/97
Baker–Col A.P. Baker	Served 1946/80	Died 23/06/97
Birrell–WO2 (RQMS) G.M. Birrell	Served	Died July '97
Bonner–Sig R. Bonner	Served 1951/68	Died 21/07/97
Buckeridge – Lt Col R. Buckeridge	Served 1925/61	Died 07/07/97
Chilvers–Maj (QM) P. Chivers	Served 1942/74	Died 27/07/97
Dart–SSgt R. Dart	Served 1959/75	Died 28/05/97
Elson–Cpl P.A. Elson	Served 1983/97	Died 09/08/97
Gray–Sgt L.A. Gray	Served 1938/55	Died 11/05/97
Grimes–Sig W. Grimes	Served 1956/59	Died 09/08/97
Heap–Lt Col (Rev) E.J.F. Heap OBE	Served 1927/53	Died 20/08/97
Jordan–Lt Col H.R. Jordan MBE, TD	Served 1928/68	Died18/07/97
Leiper–WO2 G.A. Leiper	Served 1952/75	Died 27/06/97
Leslie–Cpl R. Leslie	Served 1941/46	Died 30/07/97
Livock–Sgt R. Livock	Served 1938/50	Died 27/05/97
MacDonald–Capt G.S. MacDonald	Served 1945/79	Died 03/12/97
McCreadie–Maj A.R. McCreadie	Served	Died 17/07/97
Munro–Cpl J.E. Munro	Served 1939/45	Died 25/05/97
Page–Mr W.G. Page	Served 1959/81	Died 28/07/97
Parrish–Sig R.A. Parrish	Served 1940/46	Died Dec '97
Smith–Mr Phillip Smith	Served	Died 01/08/97
Taylor–Sgt R.D. Taylor	Served	Died 26/07/97
Williams–Cpl Tont Williams	Served 1961/67	Died 17/06/97
Winter–Col F.M.S. Winter MBE	Served 1941/73	Died 12/08/97
Wythe–Lt Col A.R. Wythe	Served 1934/64	Died 16/07/97

Macdonald–Graham died on 3 December 1993. He was born in Dundee, Scotland on 24 October 1931 and joined the Royal Signals when he was only 14 years old. He worked his way 'up the ranks' and served in many overseas posts, including North Africa. His service was acknowledged in Dispatches several times. His first wife died of cancer in 1972. He was medically discharged from the service in 1979 having served for 34 years. His last posting being to Donnington, Shropshire, where he served as QM. In 1977 Graham married again and his son Murray, from that marriage, is studying engineering at Strathclyde University, Glasgow. Murray intends to follow in his father's footsteps and is hopeful of joining the Royal Signals after his graduation. Anyone wishing to contact the family please telephone 01250 874929.



Galloway–Tony, who died recently, was commissioned in 1937 arrived in Catterick for his Q Course, which was one later than mine. Shortly after his arrival a bright blue Bugatti appeared in front of the Mess. This was his first purchase, a car well known in racing circles open to the winds. I forget if it was a 'monoposto' or did have a second seat. Shortly afterwards an old Bentley appeared to increase **Tony**'s stable. Unfortunately funds ran out and he discovered that he could not afford to licence either car. At this date quality cars of a certain age could be bought cheaply and YO's vehicles included many that created interest. **Tony**, who was an exceptional organist, played in Churches and Cathedrals wherever he happened to be stationed. We met briefly in Alexandria during the war but it was not until 1948 that he and I found ourselves together again, at Cambridge, where I was a year ahead of him. He had now transferred to Rolls Royce. The numberplate U6 indicated that it was not one of the latest models. His College was Johns and he was soon well in with the musical fraternity. A convivial evening in his rooms was likely to transfer to the College organ loft where Toccatas or whatever thundered out, strangely with no objection from authority.

At Cambridge one 'proceeded to one's MA' by paying a small fee and attending a simple ceremony at the University. This happened five years after obtaining one's degree. **Tony** rang me and suggested that we should go up together for the occasion, by Rolls Royce of course. Reporting to his College **Tony** was told that they regretted that he had been incorrectly informed. He was not yet of standing as his degree had only been obtained four years earlier. Tony thereupon composed a letter saying that he was glad that the University was human enough to make mistakes and honest enough to declare them. Perhaps, he added, they would be good enough to return him his five pounds. Not many of us can aspire to leave behind such entertaining memories. It would be easy to comment 'They do not make them like this any more'.

Page–SSgt (Retd) W. G. Page. It is with great regret that I have to inform you of the death on 28 July 97 of **Gordon Page**. **Gordon** has for the last 16 years worked as an instructional officer, first at Catterick and of late at Blandford, teaching Royal Signals Technicians. He served in the Corps, which he originally joined as a National Serviceman in 1959 until 1981. Much of his service was spent in Germany, but he served in other theatres, including two years with 233 Sqn, N. Ireland. On completion of his regular service, he joined and served with 34 Sig Regt TA at Middlesborough until 1989.

Gordon who remained a 'Geordie" to the end, will be remembered by all those who came in contact with him for his optimistic view of life, his humour, and his vast repertoire of jokes with which he brightened many a day.

He leaves a wife, **Arma** and three children. **Arma** can be reached via her son at 7 Norman Close, Brunswick Green, Wide Open, Newcastle Upon-Tyne NE3.

Livock–Bob Livock lived in Sittingbourne, Kent, and was a member of 56 Div (City of London) Signals) RSA Branch. He joined 56 in 1937 and served in D Section No.1 Company–the Divisional Signal Office Section driving the Divisional ACV. He took part in the Battle of Enfidaville, the landings at Salerno and Anzio and the rest of the Italian Campaign until demob.

Maj R. C. Pringle–Colin Pringle, known to many of us as 'Tink', died on April 28 1997, aged 77 years. He and I served in Palestine with 6 AB Div Sig Regt soon after the war. Although he was a brave man and a natural adventurer, he was modest, light-hearted and full of fun. He was in a way a self-effacing man. I knew him for many years and, although I appreciated of course that he had been a Chindit and Signal Officer of 77 Bde commanded by **Brig Mike Calvert**, it was only of recent years that I learnt any details of his exploits. He was certainly never one to relate them publicly, except in some joking manner such as the story of his intelligence triumph, related on pages 49 and 50 of Philip Warner's 'The Vital Link'. However, I understand he has given some account of them privately in the Corps archives. It was fitting that his Chindit 'bush hat' was borne on his coffin. I believe that he was very proud of that hat. It had a large chunk cut out of the brim by a splinter from a Jap mortar bomb!

Colin was commissioned from the 'Shop' where he earned his representative colours for hockey and swimming. Both, of which, are sports in which he had distinguished himself at school. At the 'Shop' a pointer to the future was perhaps that he should have been awarded a 'Best Loser' medal as a novice boxer. Another pointer, maybe, was his early wartime posting to a Royal Marine formation, where the watermanship training he underwent, coupled with his swimming prowess, was to come in handy in the future. He later went to India, where in 1943 he was accepted as a Chindit.

In March 1944, he was Sig Officer of 77 Bde, which was flown in some 150 miles behind the Japanese lines in a deep penetration role and established an operational base astride the Japanese comms, both road and rail, which they held for a matter of months. It was during the fly-in for this operation that the remarkable story of glider, 'chalk number' 15P, took place.

Chalk 15P was **Colin Pringle**'s glider. The story, as I understand it, is the original US 'WACO' glider 15P was damaged during loading. A substitute was produced and took off with **Colin** and his companions, only to be found to be unserviceable when it was in the air. They were on a short tow and the glider landed 'somewhere in Burma', beyond the Chindwin River. The party was faced with a jungle march, back to the British lines and their rear base, which was to take them ten days. It was at the crossing of the Chindwin, which was some 600 yards wide at that point, that **Colin**'s watermanship bore fruit. A raft was constructed of bits and pieces in order that they could cross with essential equipment. **Colin** swam the river no less than five times, getting non-swimmers and those essential items such as weapons and boots across. The survivors eventually reached an outpost battalion of our own troops. It was the Seaforth Highlanders and they looked after them and sent them on their way, back to their original airfield. The next day they were flown back in to the Brigade Operational Base in a Dakota aircraft and carried on with what was to be a four-month operation behind enemy lines.

Perhaps one day a longer and more accurate account of Colin **Pringle**'s exploits will be published from his own account in the Corps Archives. What may not be in the personal account of this reticent and modest man is the story of 'The Medal that Never Was'. As I understand it, after the conclusion of the Chindit operations, an official letter was issued detailing certain awards and giving permission to wear the ribbon. After a period of congratulation and celebration that letter was cancelled without, I believe, either an explanation or an apology. **Colin** had been awarded the Military Cross and had worn the ribbon, which he had to take down: a bitter humiliation. That I, who came to know him so soon after the event, never heard him breathe a word of it is a measure of the man. He was no ordinary man and his passing does not go unnoticed by his friends or his Corps.

Rupert I. Kinross, CEng, FIEE–Rupert was born in Hull on the 5 December 1908. After passing the IEE examination in the early 30s he joined the Inns of Court Territorial Cavalry Regiment where he thoroughly enjoyed riding practice once a week with army manoeuvres monthly near Aldershot, where 'Tent Pegging' and shooting blanks at balloons was the order of the day.

He was promoted to Sergeant after six years as a Trooper and on mechanisation of the Regiment he successfully provided his Troop with a couple of Transmitters and Receivers of his own design for Field Comms. He retired from the Regiment just prior to WWII. At the outbreak of war he attempted to rejoin his unit but the Ministry of Labour intercepted his application and he was classified as being in a reserved occupation as a Chartered Engineer. He was employed as a development Engineer by EMI. Then later in 1939, he received a telephone call from **Gen A. Butler**, head of Branch (M18), to trace illicit transmissions to the enemy.

The following week he was appointed a Capt in The Royal Corps of Signals and seconded to M18 at the War Office. His job was to track down any unauthorised transmissions in the UK. He also served for a short period with the BEF HQ in Paris looking for French DF (Direction Finding) sites and equipment which, it seems, proved difficult. The work of M18 soon reduced to a trickle thanks to the efficient use of our DF equipment and **Rupert** was invited to join the Army Radar Research Establishment at Christchurch. He was promoted to Major.

He became deeply involved in the use of PPI, IFF, SLC, and because of his work with EMI and his experience in manufacturing of GL Mk 3. **Rupert** was demobbed in 1946 and joined Broadcast Relay Services as a development Engineer. **Rupert** retired in 1973 as Managing Director of Rediffusion Research Ltd. **Rupert** had two sons and two daughters.

Chilvers–Maj (QM) Peter Chilvers was born on 12 October 1923 and he died on 27 July 1997.

He enlisted at 18, in 1942 and saw service in Europe mainly in the Italian campaign. **Peter** met **Eileen** in war-time Signals and they married in 1944. After the war he joined the Metropolitan Police but missed Army life so much that he re-enlisted within in few months. He progressed through the ranks, seeing service in Palestine, Eygpt and many other theatres and after appointments of SSM and RQMS at the Junior Leaders Regiment Denbury, he became RSM of 21 Sig Regt and was commissioned in 1965 and served in 18 Sig Regt, then Catterick, and with the TA in Bromley before his final appointment in 28 (BR) Sig Regt from where he retired as Major QM in 1974.

He settled in Devon and became the Car Parks Manager for Teignbridge District Council until his retirement at 65. He was also the SSAFA representative, in Devon, for many years. **Eileen** died in 1990 and our sympathy goes out to his children; **Frances, Kathryn, Jane** and **Andrew** and to his six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Williams–Cpl Tony Williams died suddenly at home in Wakefield, on the 17 June, 1997. He joined the Signals in June 1961 and served six years with the Regulars followed by six years with the Reserves. He spent most of his career serving in the UK and Germany. At one time **Tony**'s two brothers, **Dennis** and **Trevor**, were also serving with the Signals. When he left the Army, **Tony** became a miner and worked in different pits in West Yorkshire until taking early retirement in 1993.

He was a very enthusiastic member of the Huddersfield Branch of the RSA and was our Standard Bearer for many years, representing us on many occasions.

He will be missed by his many friends and colleagues and leaves his wife, **Lynn**, daughter **Joanne** and son **Mark**.

Lynn lives at: 156 Agbrigg Road, Wakefield, WF1 5BL

Dart–Ron Dart who lived at Bexly Heath, Kent, was an ex-SSgt of Line Troop in 83 Squadron of 31 Signal Regiment (V) and formerly in 332(City of London) Signal Squadron at Aitkins Road, Balham.

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WEF January 1997

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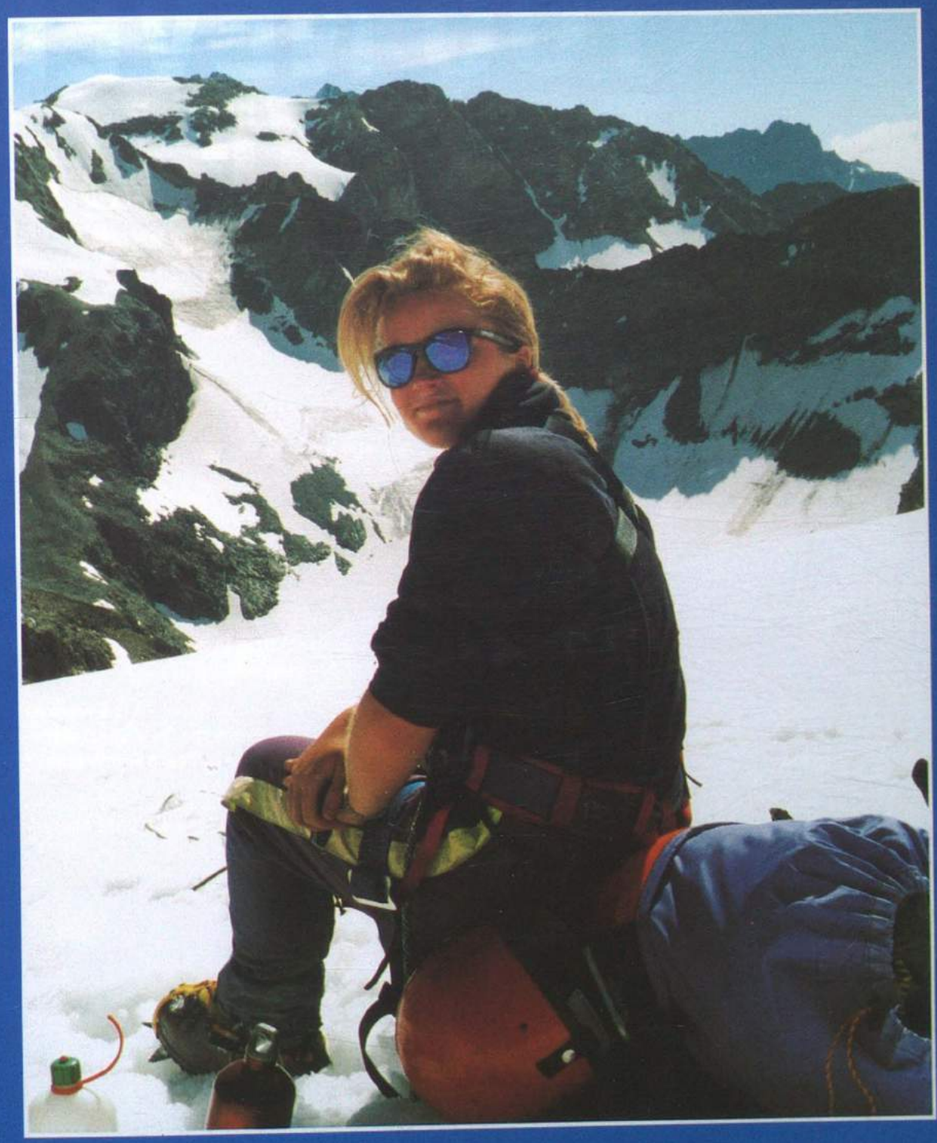
THE Wire

Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Institution

December 1997



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The Royal Signals Magazine

December 1997 Vol. 51 No: 6

All correspondence and matter for publication in **The Wire** should be addressed to **The Head of Publications, The Wire**, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, DT11 8RH Dorset. Tel No: Blandford mil 2079 STD 01258 48 2079

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Editor Lt Col (Retd) P. Valder
Assistant Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

***The Wire* is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers**

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS
Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE

This is my first Christmas Message as Master of Signals, and at the outset I must say how deeply honoured I am to have been appointed. I shall do my utmost to support the Corps in its activities and to live up to the exceptional standards of commitment, understanding and charm for which my predecessor 'General Archie' was celebrated. On your behalf I offer him and Sylvia our thanks and best wishes for the future.

In my six months in the job I have visited SHAPE, most of our Germany based units, and my old regiment 14 Signal Regiment (EW) in Pembrokeshire. Without exception I was thrilled by the professionalism, resilience and spirit of our troops, and the quality and vision of our leadership. I witnessed for the first time the increased flexibility demanded of units and individuals in this post cold war era. I can assure you that the way in which the Corps has responded to this demand is deeply and widely respected in the Army at large.

This message would not be complete without acknowledgement of the work and energy of the Royal Signals Association not just for the excellence of its benevolence work but for the part it, and the retired Corps, plays in sustaining the wider Royal Signals family. This sense of belonging becomes evermore important to the serving Corps under the greatly increased pressures exerted by the 'New Order' of things.

In the New Year ahead Annie and I look forward to getting to know you all. And for my part, I shall put at the forefront of my aims, the support of the SOinC in shaping the destiny of the Corps in the next millennium. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF
Brig N. F. Wood ADC

It seems amazing that, as 1997 draws to a close, we are still involved in what is now becoming a seemingly permanent operation in Bosnia. While the drain on the Corps has not been as great as it was last year, it still remains a considerable commitment to which many of you have deployed this year. Let us all hope that a permanent solution can be found in the near future so that the burden of this endless roulement can be eased.

On a different front the fortunes of Northern Ireland seem to ebb and flow and we are still praying for a permanent peace settlement in that troubled Province. As ever members of the Corps serving in these and other operations continue to do so with determination and distinction, and my thanks go not only to you but also to your families and friends who go on supporting you and the Corps through some very difficult times.

These operational pressures and the attractions of well paid civilian jobs, for which many of you have been well trained in the Army, have caused an unprecedented number to leave the Corps sooner than expected. Still our recruitment of new Signallers remains buoyant and the Royal School of Signals is now training very significant numbers in the magnificent facilities that have been built over the last couple of years. We have seen Blandford grow into something of which we can all be proud and is now the centre of a number of annual Corps activities including the RSA Reunion Weekend and the Morrison Cup Athletics Meeting. If you haven't visited Blandford recently, do come and see what has happened to the place–you will hardly recognise it. Also while you are there, make sure that you visit the new Museum, which was finally opened to the public, in its revitalised form, in May this year. It is a piece of our Corps heritage in which we can take the greatest pride and if you are not really impressed I'll eat my hat!

Again this year my travels have taken me far and wide, and, besides seeing many of you at work and play, I have been lucky enough to visit Italy, France, South Africa, Canada, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. Everywhere there has been a great spirit of warmth and friendship amongst the Signals community. These visits continue to develop the close relationships we have with other Signals Corps and there are plenty of opportunities for training and exchanges through these contacts.

This is my last Christmas message as the SOinC as I hand over in July next year and retire–hopefully not into obscurity! It has been a true privilege to serve the Corps in this capacity and a real pleasure to meet so many of you wherever you may have been serving. Wendy and I are most grateful for the friendship and hospitality you have given us, not only over the past year, but in all our time with the Corps. We both send you our warmest greetings for a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

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FRONT COVER:
Lt Kate Simmonds Adventure Training in the Alps – Cool!

BACK COVER: The Master of Signals and the Ober Burgermeister of Krefeld, take the salute at 7 Sig Regt Freedom of Krefeld Parade.

AFCEA(UK) SOUTHERN CHAPTER

Programme for January and February 1998

15th January 1998
- Title: To be confirmed
- Speaker: Merlin Communications/MAS Technology Ltd
- Venue: HMS *Collingwood*
- Time: 18.00 (Drinks & Supper followed by Lecture)

19th February 1998
- Title: 'Communications for Bosnia'
- Speaker: Brig J.H. Griffin, ACOS CIS, HQ LAND
- Venue: The Vine Hotel, Ower (Nr. Jct 2 M27)
- Time: 18.00 (Drinks & Supper followed by Lecture)

AFCEA Members and their guests are welcome. Reservations must be made through- **Maj Tony Gibb**, Secretary AFCEA (UK) Southern Chapter, BDMT, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH. Tel: 01258 482621 Fax: 01258 482620

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION BLANDFORD LECTURES 1997/98

The Blandford lectures are held in conjunction with the IEE Southern Centre (Wessex Area) and AFCEA (UK) Southern Chapter. The Lectures are held in Princess Mary Hall commencing 6pm, with tea being served in the foyer at 5.30pm. Members from outside Blandford Camp who wish to attend should contact:

Lt Col (Retd) R.P. Shiner,
Army CIS Engineering Group
Blandford Camp
DORSET
DT11 8RH
(Tel: 01258 485407 or ATN 737 5407)

The programme for December 1997 and February 1998 is:

Wednesday 3rd December 1997: 'Airships'
by **Mr P. Evans,** DERA Farnborough.
(Lecture sponsored by IEE Southern Centre (Wessex Area Young Members))

Wednesday 4th February 1998:
'Coded Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplex (COFDM)'
by **Mr J. Mitchell,** BBC Research Department, Surrey
(Lecture sponsored by IEE Southern Centre (Wessex Area))

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Would all subscribers who pay by this method please check with their banks that they are paying the correct annual subscription of £9.00.

SOLDIERS PEDDLE, PADDLE AND PUSH THEIR WAY TO GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL IN LONDON

The event was a combined fund raising effort by soldiers from 15 Sig Regt Northern Ireland and 35 Sig Regt (V) from Sutton Coldfield for Great Ormond Street Hospital London, Birmingham Children's Hospital and Lisburn Station Charities. The initial idea for the event was conjured up by Mansfield born **WO2 Chris Hymas**, currently based at Army HQNI. He was heard to comment that:

"Our mission was to raise as much money as possible before and after the event,through individual effort and team work. Every member of the team has been working very hard for the past few months to raise money by themselves doing a wide variety of activities on camp back in Northern Ireland. They've organised charity discos, a car wash, an iron man challenge and a fancy dress competition.

The three-day event in England was the culmination of six months work by the soldiers. It was a hectic schedule but a lot of fun. The first day saw the teams racing to complete a total distance of sixty-six miles, running and cycling between Sutton Coldfield and Bicester. The second day of the event began with everyone pushing a 1.75 tonne Army trailer approximately 21miles and finish off with a 19mile run.

The final day started with a 15mile canoe down the Thames between the Kew and Waterloo Bridges, which tired everyone out and finished with the team joining forces to push the toy laden trailer through the streets of London to Great Ormond Street Hospital to present the cheque and best of all . . . surprise the children with the toys!"

Mr Martin Barnes, Fund Raising Manager of Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity commented:

"Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital has a proud tradition of receiving help and support from the Army stretching back many years. We are very pleased that members of 15 Signal Regiment have worked on this fund raising endeavour. This is the second time that the Regiment has raised money for the Hospital and we continue to be most grateful for their efforts."

The energetic team received a warm welcome at the Hospital. Several soldiers were allowed to visit some of the young patients in the wards with the toys they had collected

HQNI & 15 Sig Regt Team ready for the road on their trailer push through London

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WIRE NOTES EDITOR'S REMINDER

AIM: To produce a magazine that is informative, readable and hopefully fun. In addition to Unit and Association Notes, we will welcome unclassified articles, on any topic of relevance to the Corps, from any source.

PICTURES: Most certainly. Preferably of 'ACTIVITY'. Pictures with movement and 'LIFE'.

COLOUR: Yes, when events/pictures justify the extra expenditure.

SUBMISSIONS: Guidelines -

Major Units - 3 pages of *The Wire* (approx 5 sheets of single linespaced A4) and up to 9 pictures.
Minor Units - 1½ pages of *The Wire* (approx 2½ sheets of single line spaced A4) and up to 5 pictures.

All notes to be sent to the Editor as both hard copy and on disk, in single line space with rank and name as follows–**SSgt Harold** 'Carpetbagger' **Robins**. The format for the disk should be one of the following *Rich Text*, *Word* or *Word Perfect*.

DEADLINES: These are shown at the top left of the first page of every Wire. Please adhere to them. We have heard ALL the excuses for late entry.

A BELATED THANK YOU

At last a Norfolk war veteran, **Aidan** 'Sandy' **Lovett**, received a medal for his part in the ill-fated defence of Greece, 56 years ago. **Aidan** says that it serves as overdue recognition for those Second World War veterans who fought in a 'forgotten war'.

"They just threw us away, if you will, 10,000 of us."

Aidan was a telephone technician serving with the Royal Corps of Signals at the time.

"Even when we arrived, it was practically all over for Greece."

He can remember there were 10,000 troops sent to help defend Greece against the Nazi occupation, but he knew as soon as he arrived that he would be lucky to come through it alive. Within three weeks of arriving he was ordered to surrender and on 29th April 1941 he, along with many others started the long march through Greece, Yugoslavia and Albania to Stalag 18A, a prisoner of war camp in Austria where he was to spend the rest of the war years. Many died on the march and those who survived spent the rest of the war living in poor conditions with meagre rations supplied by their German captors. However, the Germans weren't the only worry the prisoners had. **Aidan** remembers how one day an American bomber dropped its arsenal over Stalag 18A killing 48 soldiers. He was finally freed in May 1945and was handed over to the Allied Forces after yet more marching across the Austrian Alps into Germany.

There is little knowledge of the Greek Campaign, says **Aidan**, but he hopes that this will soon change with the introduction of service medals by the Greek Government.

"The medal gives us the recognition to which we are entitled. We went in there under impossible circumstances and did what we could, but we have been forgotten. It is as though the whole thing is being swept under the carpet".

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HAUTE ROUTE EXPEDITION
12TH-17TH AUGUST 1997

by Lt M.J. Crawford and 2Lt K.P. Simmonds

After a preliminary two weeks training at Haus Magnus, two subalterns from 16 Sig Regt proceeded to Chamonix, the centre of European mountaineering. After establishing a base camp and waiting for a break in the weather, they finally started out on Thursday 12th August 1997 on their expedition to complete the Classic Haute Route between Chamonix and Zermatt.

With rucksacks packed, full to the brim with ropes, crampons and ice axes we ascended the first climb up to the Col D' Tour to a height of 3281m. After an initial hard climb up and around the crevasses we were on the first glacier of the expedition. It was a long descent off the glacier crossing the border into Switzerland and arriving at a small valley village called Champex. A short bus ride took us to Bourg St Pierre where we found a bed for the night and enjoyed a traditional Swiss fondue. The village has a history dating back to Napoleon–he stopped to feed his men there, eating the village out of house and home–this still causes arguments today about who is to pay the bill.

A short, sharp day saw us climb 2240m over a distance of approx 2km. We covered a total of only around 9km and at the end we were breathing fairly hard but reached our destination by 1230hrs. On arrival we found that a group of climbers had had to turn back from our next days' route due to bad weather and poor snow conditions. The rest of the day was spent sheltering in a hut and playing numerous games of backgammon–never again! An early start was needed in order to get the right snow conditions and we had to cross an exposed traverse on a slope of over 50 degrees. The conditions proved to be fairly hazardous with ice covered slate and deep snow and on a couple of occasions our hearts were in our mouths as we narrowly avoided plunging head first down the slope. The next stage needed a Young Officer with a map!–precise, accurate map reading was required to avoid huge ice falls and heavily crevassed areas. A hard slog down into the valley floor and back up the other side saw us to our next bed for the night. This hut got the worst food award, miss out the Chadon hut if you can. After a map recce we decided that it would be possible to compress two days trekking into one the following day. In hindsight we had probably bitten off more than we could chew. At 0500hrs we set off and arrived at our next destination 11hrs later (with no more than a 30min break) and a few frayed tempers. The final glacier we climbed took us up to the Bertol Hut that was built high up on a rocky outcrop. The last push saw us scrambling up fixed ladders and climbing into our beds totally and utterly exhausted.

The last day and again a 0500 start saw a hard climb up to the summit of the Tete Blanche to a height of 3872m. After reaching the summit we dropped down a heavily crevassed Stockji glacier that required us to weave around huge crevasses and edge across precarious snow bridges. The last hard stage was the bouldering over a moonscape at the bottom of the glacier and down into the final valley. We arrived in our favourite mountain village, Zermatt. We had covered 80 miles and had very sore feet so we spent a night in the infamous Brown Cow bar and enjoyed a few well deserved beverages! All we had to do now was return to Chamonix and we achieved this by using the hospitality of the local travellers, who had no reservations about stopping for two weary English hitchhikers. On returning to Chamonix, two very tired yet satisfied officers reflected on a thoroughly enjoyable expedition. Both being relatively experienced mountaineers, it had seen them improve their personal skills and develop mountain leadership techniques in a challenging environment.

Lt Matt 'Cindy' Crawford

SHORT SERVICE LIMITED COMMISSION

When I discovered, to my delight, that I had been accepted for a SSLC with The Royal Signals my father joked that after seven years of Boarding at Cheltenham Ladies' College I was going from 'one green institution to another'! Although the tough selection process was now over, the training and mental preparation before attending The Roval Military Academy Sandhurst was onlv just beginning . . .

The first day of Sandhurst arrived and with it mixed feelings of excitement and pure fear: fear of my military ignorance and of the unknown I was about to face. However, although the next three and a half weeks promised to be arduous and somewhat of a vertical learning curve, it was thoroughly enjoyable and a great number of firm friends were made. On 7th November 1996 we were commissioned from Sandhurst, accompanied by feelings of relief that we had made it and a huge sense of achievement and pride that we were now to be part of such a great organisation.

After a long weekend break, I attended a two-day introduction to my new Corps at The Royal School of Signals on Blandford Camp. Although this proved to be a very mentally challenging stay it was fortunately much more relaxed! This was the last of my training before being posted to 7 Sig Regt in Krefeld, Germany. On arriving in Germany, despite being filled with excitement about the year to come, I was also very nervous about what was ahead of me. This was partly due to having lost all safety in numbers, but I was also now fully aware of the extent of my ignorance! Yet there was no need to have worried; I had fallen on my feet. In the Regiment I was immediately assigned a Troop which induced the reaction "Help!" However my first task, to organise a Squadron Potted Sports, illustrated the friendliness and helpfulness of all in the Regiment. I realised that in fact I had not lost any safety in numbers but discovered a greater safety within the Regiment.

As I arrived, the Regiment was returning from Bosnia and I was reassigned to a new Troop. This was the Regiment's Satellite Troop, Sierra Tp, which was soon to move Squadron. This gave me the opportunity both to meet more of the Regiment and learn about the role of a different Troop. It also allowed an insight into how different Troops and Squadrons are run.

In the run up to Christmas I was flung into a social and physical flurry of activity, every minute of which I thoroughly enjoyed. I even had the opportunity to play in some matches for the Regimental Hockey Team, which I was thrilled about. Since returning from Christmas the Regiment has been hectic both socially and at work! At the end of January I was able to go Basic Winter Training, a ten-day course of skiing in Wertach, Southern Germany. The course involved five days Nordic skiing, five days Alpine skiing and survival skills. It certainly lived up to its reputation for being hard work, but it was a superb time that you do not want to return from!

A Regimental Board of Officers occupied the month of March. This Board enabled each Squadron Comd to assess and sign for the equipment within his Squadron after the return from Bosnia, and in turn for the CO to sign for the Regiment. As a member of my Squadron team, together with another officer and six SNCOs, I was heavily involved in assessing another Squadron. The Board was time consuming and hard work, accentuated by the fact that my Troop Sergeants were also being employed away from the Troop and I needed to ensure that the needs of the Troop were met. However, the Board was particularly interesting and enabled me, as a team member, to gain an important insight into the equipment makeup of a Squadron, the paperwork involved with each item and how to account for it.

During the week following the Board of Officers, I did a very informative and enjoyable attachment with 280 Sig Sqn at St. Tonis. It was particularly interesting to experience life outside of a Ptarmigan Unit, and it's involvement with other nations' armies under LANDCENT. Furthermore, it provided the opportunity to observe the organisation of an independent Sig Sqn, as well as make a visit to the German 990 Sig Regt, also under LANDCENT. The latter introduced me to a means of communication that, despite involving the same principles as 280 Sig Sqn, used very different equipment. This emphasised the inter-dependence required of the armies under LANDCENT in order to provide a complete and effective means of communication for NATO. Immediately after this attachment followed three weeks of Troop level training, Squadron level training and finally Ex Woodland Flight; the first Regt Exercise since Bosnia as well as my first Royal Signals Exercise. Despite being nervous, mainly due to my ignorance of what was involved in a Signals Exercise, I not only genuinely enjoyed the Exercise but it also provided an invaluable opportunity to see Ptarmigan in action. During the Exercise I did shift work, together with my Sergeant, on the Sqn CP. When not on shift I took the opportunity to visit my Troop's detachments as well as tour and be briefed by other Squadrons and their detachments, resulting in an immensely better understanding of my limited knowledge of Ptarmigan. Although mentally exhausting the information and hands-on experience I gained from officers, seniors and signallers alike was excellent and unobtainable within Barracks.

The month of May began with a visit by another officer and myself, to 72D Sig Batt, 7 Sig Regt's sister American Unit. The aim was to discuss the use of their Troppos on the forthcoming ARRC Exercise. Ex Able Condor, and the future possible use of the 83 and 91 satellite systems as well as enhance and encourage relations between the two units. Since my Troop had worked with the Americans, on 501 detachments during Bosnia, a perk of the visit was that it enabled me to see the equipment on which they had trained and worked. Also it clarified the lecturettes they had given to new Troop members and myself on the workings of satellite systems. The remainder of the month was filled with the annual auditing. The team of which I was a member had the biggest account to audit the PRI and it's accessories. Auditing was new to me, as well as to several of the seniors in the team and gave an insight to the financial side of the Army, together with its implications. Like the Board of Officers I found it hard work, but at the same time very interesting and worthwhile, although I was one of the few!

At the end of the month began one of the highlights of my year, Ex Lion Sun. This, an Infantry Exercise in Cyprus, not only heightened my already immense enthusiasm and enjoyment of Infantry, but also enabled me to experience work in adverse and potentially dangerous weather conditions. It provided an opportunity, which I grasped with both hands, to practice previous and learn new Infantry, weapon, first-aid and adventure training skills. The Exercise consisted of one week of dry training including heli and boat drills and FIBUA; one week of ranges varying from a 9mm pistol and LSW moving target shoot to a Close Quarter Battle Range; a three-day and a five-day exercise; together with Adventure Training and Rest and Recuperation. The greater part of the time I spent as a "grunt", due to the experience required to be Platoon Commander. The exercise was a success, unsurprisingly far greater than my three and a half weeks at Sandhurst! However, as a rifleman I learnt a great deal, both from an Infantry point of view as well as gaining invaluable experiences from "the other side", enabling me to learn from other Platoon Commanders' mistakes and also follow their examples. During our stay in Cyprus I was asked to host the Regt 2IC for his one-week visit. As he did not arrive until near the end of the final exercise I had the opportunity to act as enemy for the start. This not only gave me the opportunity to learn a great many combat and tactic skills from the seniors with whom I was working, but it also enabled me to see events from a different angle and, once again, learn from other's mistakes and follow their examples.

During the final Company Fibua Attack against a Light Infantry Platoon I acted as OC Fire Support of a section of men. My part entailed recceing a route to Paramali village and leading my Fire Support Team and a Platoon into their position prior to the start of the attack, thus clearing the route for the remaining two platoons. My Fire-Support Team was then to provide appropriate Fire-Support during the two-hour attack, and remove any enemy directly attacking us by means of fire-team attacks. The whole task; from Recceing to OC Fire-Support were all new experiences which emphasised the importance of acknowledging advice from the very experienced soldiers under my command. The exhilaration felt by my Fire-Support Team and myself during the attack was immense and increased proportionally by the amount of Pyrotechnics used and the experience of a "real" enemy who knew nothing of our plans. Our sense of achievement, however, on completing our task having overcome several difficulties, was even greater!

Next came time for some relaxation–Adventure Training and R&R. One of my aspirations this year was to overcome my fear of heights by doing something I thought I could never achieve–parachuting! This is exactly what I did! A victory over myself, which has instilled confidence and acted as an example to myself that no fear can stand in my way. I now hope to further this experience to free-fall! During R&R I took a party of forty to Egypt and Israel on a cruise. This involved collecting and handling £4,500 cash, arranging cabins, dealing with the Cypriot Tour Manager and acting as Officer in Charge during the cruise. It was a superb way to finish an outstanding exercise.

Ex Able Condor began the following day after Ex Lion Sun! This was a two-week ARRC level exercise, thus enabling us the opportunity to deploy with the French, Germans and Americans, as well as Support Bn, 16 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt. The size of it amazed me! As in Ex Woodland Flight my role was as Watch-keeper in the Sqn CP, as a result of the formation of a new Troop in the Squadron, there were considerably fewer Watchkeepers. This enabled me to do solo shifts, which I was very nervous about. However, it has not only furthered my knowledge and improved my use of Ptarmigan, VHF and HF, but also of the running of a Sqn CP. It has also enabled and instilled confidence in me to make decisions contributing to the running of it, and thus shoulder more responsibility for it and become an equal team member. Then immediately following Ex Able Condor I am fortunate enough to be going to Batus, Canada to participate in Ex Medman. This, I feel, is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am extremely excited and grateful to be going, especially as it enables me to see other Corps at work. However, it does unfortunately mean I miss my Troop Adventure Training. I then return in time for Sqn Battle Camp a parachuting course, Ex Woodland Flight 2 and then sadly two weeks prior to the start of University in September, I leave.

Throughout the year I have taken on challenges and responsibility which I never felt I could have done a year ago. For example, I have organised my Troop Adventure Training which includes three days Klettersteig with stays in Mountain Huts, White-Water rafting, rock climbing with abseiling and mountain-biking in Bavaria, Southern Germany. I have also had to give a Squadron brief on the CFT Treaty, write a military essay, attend an RNEP station after a soldier had a minor RTA, deal with several compassionate cases whilst being Orderly Officer and even cows on the loose in camp! I have also had the opportunity to do quite a large amount of training. Gaining the fastest female BFT time in the Regiment as well as daily running and lunchtime circuits. I have also been a keen member of the Regt Hockey Team and Regt Swimming Team that has included five days a week training. I also organised BFBS Radio, BFBS–Television and newspaper advertising. As well as this I've participated in a 24-hour sponsored swim, in an outdoor pool in April, to break the World 24-hour Distance Record. For this we needed plenty of Vaseline and wetsuits! Without a doubt the Army has improved my self-confidence and increased my leadership skills, enabling me to achieve that which I often felt was impossible before.

During my year, although seemingly unapparent here, I have spent a large amount of time with my Troop. I can honestly say that, despite the fantastic opportunities I have been lucky enough to have and have thoroughly enjoyed, it is the Regiment that I have been with and the Troop that I have commanded which have really made my year and confirmed my desire to join the Army following University. I thoroughly enjoy the day-to-day work, the fitness, the Exercises, the challenges, the discipline, the variety, but above all the people with whom I work and their competence.

I have discovered that the SSLC commission is an opportunity not to be missed and that the Army is an organisation that guarantees that you will certainly get out what you put in and possibly more. In fact it is because I have been so convinced by the people I have met, impressed by the standards of physical fitness and opportunity for adventurous training, matched with the enjoyment of my work and its benefits that I am currently applying for an Army Cadetship. So after going to Birmingham University to read Sports Sciences (BSc) I only hope to return for more.

1998 sees the 25th Anniversary of Heli-Tele
Former Royal Signals Sergeant **Richard Doyle-Davidson**
has produced the above embroidered badge
to celebrate the event.

All those who have used Heli-Tele operationally are invited to confirm their interest and quantities of the above badge. In particular those who were involved with the original ORs, Operations Staff and all Aircrew who have 'flown the eye'.

Final price and has yet to be settled though the more badges ordered the cheaper they will become. All those interested please give your name and order to **Mr Peter Cuckow**, the RSA's AO in RHQ, Blandford Camp. Tel: 01258 48 2091

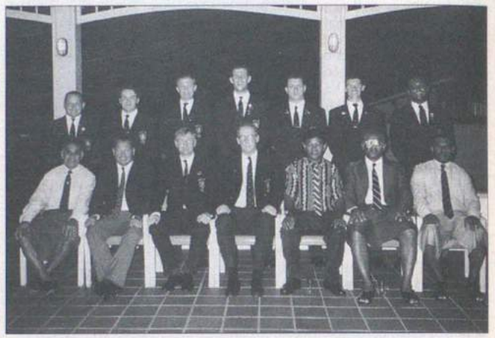
RUGBY

The British Army (G) Rugby Team have recently returned from a tour of New Zealand and Fiji. In spite of a tough schedule, lasting three weeks, the tourists turned in some superb rugby against some heavy opposition. There have always been strong links between the United Kingdom and New Zealand ever since Captain Cook first sighted them some 228 years ago. This includes strong links between our armed forces, which were recently reinforced by serving side by side in Bosnia. It was during this period that among the many friendships formed and sporting fixtures organised, an invitation was issued that we might like to take the Kiwis on at their national sport. On their way home the Tourists were scheduled to take on the Fijian Military Forces on the island paradise of Suva, in the South Pacific. And so the tour of a lifetime began for the 35 players and officials who set off from JHQ for the antipodean winter and a very tough tour.

After an overnight stop at RAF Uxbridge and a send off from **Gen Sir Roger Wheeler** the squad boarded their flight for Auckland arriving some 27 hours later. After a very short break, to acclimatise, they were straight into their first training session, with the first game just 48 hours away. The following morning they flew south to Christchurch for the match against the New Zealand Army South Island side, '3 LFG Commanders XV'. This was a tough match with the Kiwis turning in a very physical performance. However, the BA(G) responded well in spite of the long trip and lack of acclimatisation. The team withstood some heavy pressure during the first half but they eventually found their game in the second half with **Green** scoring two excellent tries. With the end in sight they were trailing 30 points to 32 with a conversion about to be taken. It missed and the New Zealand side scored a try in the last few seconds to win 39-30. Following a sightseeing tour of Christchurch the squad flew back to North Island and the next two matches. In the first against The Army Training Group XV, they soon found themselves 17-5 down. BA(G) gradually improved on this with tries scored by **Powell, Williams, Fazackerly** and **Matheson** taking them into the lead with a score of 29-22. The home side rose to the occasion and in the final moments they scored under posts, with the conversion to bring the score level at 29-29.

BA(G) took an early lead in their next game, against Cordite, only to find that they were 13-6 down half way through the first period. However, they gradually picked up and tries scored by **Innis** and **Berryman**, both converted, brought BA(G) back into the lead with a score of 20-13. The final score was 25-20 to BA(G)–the first victory of the tour. Then there was the game against the New Zealand Infantry Regiment. Within the first 15mins the Infantry took a 14-0 lead. BA(G) fought back bravely but the final score was a crushing 60-12 to the Infantry. With their defeat at the forefront of their minds they now faced the full New Zealand Army side. Following the customary 'Haka' the home team started very strongly, BA(G) responded well with the strength of their pack proving to be quite a handful for the NZ side. The tourists played some fine attacking rugby and after 30mins **Matheson** finished off a lovely move taking the score to 8-5. BA(G) maintained the pressure right to the end and the final score was 23-10. A finely balanced match with the result being in doubt right up until the end. With the hard work done they then boarded a flight to Fiji, to the palm fringed beaches and the coral seas of the South Pacific.

In the humid conditions of the National Stadium in Suva the tourists took on the might of the Fiji Combined Services. The Fijians served up a breathtaking display of rugby. Their handling and improvisation being a joy to behold and despite some excellent defensive play, particularly by **Podmore**, BA(G) really had no answer to the onslaught. When the final whistle blew BA(G) had been comprehensively outplayed, however, they should take credit for restricting the score to 69 points. The hospitality in both New Zealand and Fiji had been almost overwhelming and it is to be hoped that this can be returned should either country ever send a team to the Northern Hemisphere for a return match.



Nine members of the serving Corps were involved they are shown here with Ex-members of the Corps who have now returned to and settled in Fiji
Back Row (*L-R*): Sgt Gordon Mundie, Cpl Dillon Davies, WO1 (RSM) Trevor Keates, Cpl Steve Humphries, SSgt Mark Neighbour, Cpl Jason Wood, Cpl Benny Bembridge
Front Row (*L-R*): Lauri Vula, Harry Powell, Maj Andy Hickling, Brig James Shaw, Mr Mateyawa, Frank Dewa, Mr Vatu

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
OCTOBER 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Col R.J. Holmes MBE	SANGCOM
Col R.A. Wright	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Lt Col J.L. Fletcher	SANGCOM
Lt Col M.J.P. Collins	Royal School of Signals
Maj A. Duncan	Salmond House Trg Centre
Maj A.S. Eames	600 Sig Troop
Maj W.J.L. Fiskel MBE	Garats Hay Sp Unit
Maj M.A. Kerr	Falkland Islands Work Unit
Maj F.C. Running	2 Sig Bde
Capt G.H. Hume	DITMTC
Capt D.R. McSporran	JACIG (AE)
Capt E.J. Say	RCB
Capt R.A. Scott BA(Hons)	39 Signal Regiment (V)
Lt A.J. Gray	HQ Sig Sqn, 7 Armd Bde
Lt A.P.H. Hillary	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Lt S.J. Harrild	399 SU (Army Element)
Lt L. O'Rourke	ATR Bassingbourn

NOVEMBER 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
Col A.W. Merrick	BLO France
Lt Col R.J. Steed MBE	33 Signal Regiment
Maj A.R. Blackwell	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj I.G. Favager	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A.G. Hill	SANGCOM
Maj M.J. Fensom	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj D.G. Robson	RMCS Shrivenham
Capt S.J. Baldwin	Combined Armed Forces Training Centre
Cap C.D. Cook	DRA Military Manpower
Capt I.G. Ellis BSc(Hons)	259 Signal Squadron
Capt L.C. Launders BA(Hons)	Royal School of Signals
Capt J.M.P. Leggate	HQ ARRC
Capt K. Mannings	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Capt J.E. Sutton	2 Signal Regiment
Capt P.I. Turner	39 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn (213)
Capt J.K. Walster	15 Signal Regiment
Lt H.L. Bosley BSc(Hons)	RHQ Royal Signals
Lt G.B. Lamb BSc(Hons)	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Lt L.A. Wookey	HS HQ AFCENT

WOs and SNCOs
OCTOBER 1997

Rank and Name	*Unit to which Posted*
WO1 G. Woodcock	HQ R. Signals
WO2 C.W. Naylor	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
WO2 C.N. MacKay	CIS Eng Gp
WO2 M.C.W. McCorry	CATC (South)
WO2 J.G. Evan	PATA
A/WO2 Pickford	ATR Bassingbourn
A/WO2 J.G. McNaught	251 Signal Squadron
A/WO2 M.A. Fleming	1(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
A/WO2 R.K. Hughes	7 Signal Regiment
A/WO2 G.D. Robinson	220 Signal Squadron
SSgt P.G. Griffiths	7 Signal Regiment
SSgt J.H. Laffey	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218)
SSgt E. Hall	11 EOD Regiment RLC
SSgt M.C.W. Payne	20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (210)
SSgt M.E. Walton	21 Signal Regiment
SSgt M. Hawkins	5(AB)Bde & Sig Sqn (216)
SSgt K.M. Curlett	Royal School of Signals
SSgt M.A. Henley	33 Signal Regiment (V)
SSgt P.G. Haynes	2 Signal Regiment
SSgt A.H. Manktelow	36 Signal Regiment (V)
SSgt A.M. Keen	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt N.D. Dobbins	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt G. Watton	251 Signal Squadron
SSgt T.A. Lake	Royal School of Signals
SSgt T.A. Ainsworth	DASD CGS
SSgt P.I. Carley	280 Signal Squadron
SSgt M.H. Horan	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt M.D. Newns	15 Signal Regiment
A/SSgt J.B. Smith	30 Signal Regiment
A/SSgt S.A. Oldridge	R&LS (East)
A/SSgt I.S. Skimmins	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218)
Sgt R. Coates	39 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn (213)
Sgt S.A. Hadley	238 Signal Squadron
Sgt P.A. Yates	7 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (207)
Sgt P.A. Chambers	26 Field Regiment RA
Sgt T.A. Henry	Garats Hay Sp Unit
Sgt P.S. Latimer	24 Air Mob Bde & Sig Sqn
Sgt D.B. Longmuir	JSSU Oakley
Sgt R.C. Douglas	7 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (207)
Sgt V.K. Tipple	7 Signal Regiment
Sgt D.L. Bennett	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt P.D. Eldridge	31 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt I. Barsley	1(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
Sgt M.H. Darlington	4 Regiment AAC
Sgt N.R. Back	36 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt G. Shipman	225 Signal Squadron
Sgt L.G. Turbitt	259 Signal Squadron
Sgt A. Thomson	Int Sup Unit
Sgt R.D. Allen	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt S.A. Alexander	35 Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt N.G. McKenzie	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt S.M. Foreman	9 Signal Regiment
Sgt L.S. Crossing	21 Signal Regiment
Sgt M.M. Wareing	8 Cdt Trg Team
Sgt S. Sidhu	HQ RSA
Sgt C.M. Hanson	16 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt T.I. Bickerstaff	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt M. McNeill	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
A/Sgt S.I. Fardy	HAC
A/Sgt H. Wilcox	5(AB) Bde Sig Sqn (216 Para)
A/Sgt M.A. Woods	RLS Wales & West

NOVEMBER 1997

Name and Rank	*Unit to which Posted*
WO1 M.P. Purves	Commission
A/WO1 L.V. Keily	7 Signal Regiment
WO2 D.W. Craig	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203)
WO2 I.P. Wells	238 Signal Squadron
A/WO2 D.A. Cumming	249 Signal Squadron
SSgt B.T. Gillie	15 Signal Regiment
SSgt L.V. Bath	220 Signal Squadron
SSgt G.T. Tinsley	7 Signal Regiment
SSgt S.P. Norris	7 Signal Regiment
SSgt E.M. O'Halloran	259 Signal Squadron
SSgt E.J. Head	37 Signal Regiment (V)
SSgt P. M. Lamont	Garats Hay Sp Unit
SSgt D.J. Old	15 Signal Regiment
SSgt A.P. Staniford	Royal School of Signals
SSgt D.J. Livesey	Royal School of Signals
SSgt S.P. Wright	ATR Bassingbourn
SSgt G.R. Grey	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt P.S. Gee	243 Signal Squadron
A/SSgt C.I. Pomfret	11 Signal Regiment
A/SSgt R.E. Nolan	280 Signal Squadron
Sgt M. Openshaw	11 Signal Regiment
Sgt I. McEwan	SHAPE Reg Sig Gp
Sgt G.S. Roberts	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt R.P.N. Allen	15 Signal Regiment
Sgt G.I. Murray	Battlefield Eng Wing
Sgt P.R. Woods	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt N.J. Turner	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt J.R. Raybould	249 Signal Squadron
Sgt A.D. Jones	7 Signal Regiment
Sgt R.P.N. Wallace	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt C. White	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt P.P. O'Brien	1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt K. L. Lang	Y List
Sgt H. McNair	242 Signal Squadron
Sgt G.S. Skeels	251 Signal Squadron
Sgt P. Rogers	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt C. Collins	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt I.R. Burton	20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (200)
Sgt B.B. Patel	11 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt P.D. Lagden	ATR Bassingbourn
A/Sgt S.P. Fleming	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt A.R. Gutteridge	1(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
A/Sgt M.N. Campbell	1(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
A/Sgt M.I. Cowlard	11 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt G. Sinclair	1(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
A/Sgt T.B. Rogers	14 Signal Regiment (EW)

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DISC Chicksands,
SHEFFORD,
Bedfordshire. SG17 5PR
Tel. (01462) 752838
Fax. (01462) 752821

Closing date for applications is 1 February 1998

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS & TRAINING

MINISTRY MATTERS–A REPORT FROM DGICS

by Col Jim Blake

Recently I played my answer-phone messages to find that I had received a call from **Col Mike Galloway** who now heads what is apparently known as the Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps Manpower and Career Management Division at the Army Personnel Centre. Having worked out who was calling and from where, i.e: Col PB11, The Glasgow Royal Signals Manning and Records Office, I realised that I had been in my appointment in the MoD for more than 2 years and ought to be thinking about my next post. Whilst contemplating this fact, I was also struck by the thought that I had not seen any report on DGICS in *The Wire* during my time here. I recall only too clearly the helpful reports we received, very regularly, from **Steve Turnbull** whilst he was in PS. On the other hand, one of the last bastions of Corps influence and a key member of the Central Staff **Maj Gen Bill Robins** and his team have not featured at all.

This report is an attempt to redress that imbalance. It could not come at a more appropriate time either since, in January 1998, **Maj Gen Bill Robins** will be retiring. Perhaps the most astonishing fact regarding this event is that this will end what has effectively been a run of 18 years in Whitehall, truly a major achievement and a reason to designate him a 'Whitehall Warrior'. That is not to say that he is just another man in a grey suit from the Ministry. He still runs from his pied-a-tèrre in Battersea into the office and keeps himself very fit for the exceptionally long hours that are his lot. He also keeps in close touch with the Corps, serving on various Corps Committees and as President of Corps Basketball. Another of his major interests is in Arts and Crafts and he will, I am sure, be finding more time for this activity when he vacates the Ministry. Some of his recent major challenges have included getting CHOTS into service, setting up the DFTS organisation and contract not to mention pressing on with SKYNET 5, Joint Battlespace Digitization and many others.

He has held his present appointment in two guises. First he was ACDS(CIS) and then, in April 1994 he became the first Director General Information and Communication Services (DGICS) not to be confused with DGCIS who is almost an equivalent Director General in the PE at Abbey Wood but who has responsibility for Command Information Systems rather than Services. This effectively entailed the merging of DGITS based in Swindon, and principally involved in 'non-operational' IS, with ACDS(CIS) in Main Building who sponsored 'operational' systems. This merger has helped to remove the division between operational and non-operational systems and was achieved with the mandatory saving of posts. As might be expected, the workload was markedly increased for the DGI. He has combined all these tasks with a number of important international roles and has been responsible for close liaison being established with Microsoft in general and **Bill Gates** in particular. This is enabling the MoD to feed in proposals to our major software provider that can only be beneficial. He finds time to give numerous presentations and to write papers supporting AFCEA and the BCS amongst others. We all wish him and **Kathy** well for the future and are sure that he will not be short of job offers!

Briefly to call the roll for the other Corps members of DGICS in Main Building and Northumberland House: **Brig Tony Raper** has been in post as D OR(ICS) for almost a year after arriving from his post Germany R&R in India. On his team **Col Martin Wilkinson** heads OR2 with Messaging as a main focus, whilst **Col David Lynam** is the Project Director for the Joint Command Systems Initiative. Others in the Directorate include: **Lt Col Jim McKee** (OR)2(Land) and **Majs Adrian Pearce** (OR)1a, **Tim Wadey** (OR)ld and **David Powell** in (OR)2j. In the Policy Directorate **Lt Col Bill Lidster** lurks as an RO2 ICS(Pol)Sec looking after DERA Research, whilst **Lt Cols Colin Whittaker** and **Neil Fisher** fill Infosec Sys and Pol slots respectively the former supported by **Maj David Barnett** in Sys2. The author finds himself in an AD Studies slot whilst PB11–sorry, MCM Div attempts to sort him out a sunshine posting to recover from traumatic stress.

The Director Ops is **Col David Lowe** whilst **Lt Col Nick Nicol** heads up DCPB with its responsibility for Comms Procedure Policy and with **Maj Derek Copeland** filling an RO2 slot as his assistant. The Defence Radio Frequency Branch features four retired Majors from the Corps, **Peter Chase**, **Colin Rayner**, **Ron Fletcher** and **Desmond Lavender**. And we should not forget that we have a number of other Corps worthies at our outposts in Swindon, Corsham and Shrivenham at the DITMTC. I shall get one of them to write the next Sitrep, assuming there is one after the Strategic Defence Review Reports! Even I could not be that pessimistic–or could I?!

HQ LAND COMMAND WILTON

G6 CIS is a General Staff Division within HQ Land Command responsible for aspects of information support provided by Communications and Information Systems (CIS) and Electronic Warfare (EW). The principal responsibility of G6 CIS is the delivery of communications and information systems to allow LAND commanders to win the information battle. To achieve this we liaise closely with Division and District HQ staffs, UKSC (G) and the Signal Brigades in UK and Germany. We also liaise with MoD Staffs on CIS and EW matters, QMG over support of equipment specific to the Royal Corps of Signals and AG Staffs in order to co-ordinate CIS strategy and implementation. G6 CIS is a multi-capbadge organisation, but is predominantly Royal Signals. There are 34 Officers, 8 Other Ranks and 57 civilians divided into three branches–Ops, Policy and Plans and Systems Development–all under the command of ACOS CIS/Comd Comms LAND, **Brig J. H. Griffin**.

G6 CIS has been involved in the tasking of units to six operations so far this year. We have also been involved in the procurement of equipment to support those operations. Most notably, the EUROMUX Management And Data System (EMADS) was procured and delivered to Op LODESTAR in July 1997. It has proved to be a significant enhancement to the EUROMUX System, providing the EUROMUX OSCs with a near real time network management tool and the operators, a near real time status of their local communication links. An E-mail system is also provided to all users for increased network management efficiency. However, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy (and Jill a dull girl). Due to this several members of the division have been proving their sporting prowess in the inter-departmental General's Cup and the entire division was invited to an afternoon social function at the Commander's house which was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who were able to tear themselves away from work.

Capt Colin Turner making his debut appearance in *The Wire*, after 25 years service, with two representatives from BAe SEMA on the introduction of EMADS into HQ LAND

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HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde

Comd	**Brig G. Hughes**
Con AFTs	**Lt Col M. Sinton**
COS	**Maj R. Thomas**

Following the fond farewell and departure of **Brig Mervyn Lee** after the handover to the new Comd, **Brig Hughes**, in June, the Bde are now settling down to its role. The trials and development of the NCRS HF Radio system is now almost complete after two years of hard work. The regiments are now gearing up to re-establishing their roles and expertise in the Regional Comms tasks. This will culminate in next year's Brigade nationwide exercise: Purple Duster 3.

THREE PEAKS VICTORY

Members of 600 Sig Tp combined with other personnel from Corsham station to arduously train over the past six months, intent on claiming victory in the Emergency Services Three Peaks challenge. This year it was organised by the Wiltshire Fire Brigade and involved over 140 teams of hardy stalwarts from both the Emergency Services and the Armed Forces as well as many civilian teams. The team consisted of :

Mr Bob Starr (Manager)
WO1 (YofS) Williams (Team Captain)
WO2 Rose
Sgt (FofS) Docherty
Cpl Matt Petts
Cpl Andy Baerd
JT Dave Hymers (RAF) (Driver)
Sig Julian Starr (Navigator)

The event took place over the summer solstice on the weekend of 21st –23rd June and involved running up the three highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales; namely Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon. In order to avoid accidents en route a minimum total road travelling time of 10 hours is imposed. The team were intent on a serious challenge to the title from the outset and **Dave Hymers'** rally driving qualification was not simply a case of serendipity ('a happy coincidence' in plain English!!). Needless to say, their road stages took precisely ten hours to the second in spite of a traffic jam on the M6. This only left 6hrs and one minute in which to scale the three peaks in order to break the previous record...a tall order in the best of conditions. The five runners proved well up to that challenge and went on to smash the previous best time by a staggering 46 minutes, coming in within an impressive total time of 15hours and 14 minutes. Their efforts have raised over £1500 for CLIC Cancer and Leukaemia in Children charities.

L-R (Standing): SSgt (FofS) Joe Doherty
(Sitting): JT Dave Hymers, WO1 (YofS) Bleddyn Williams, Cpl Matt Peters, Mr Bob Starr, Sig Julian Starr, Cpl Andy Beard, WO2 Steve Rose

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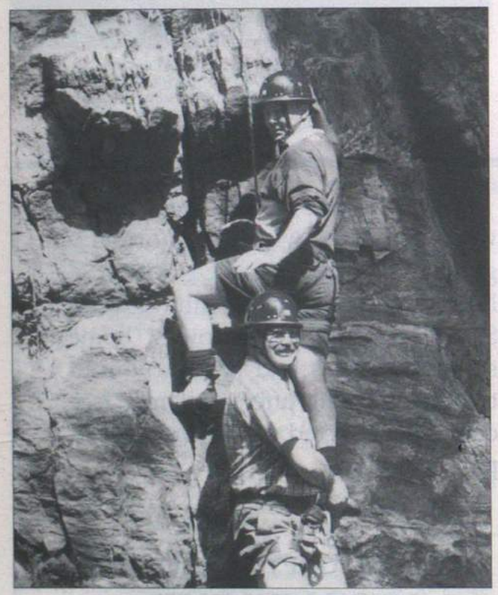
HQ 11 Sig Bde
Donnington

EXERCISE JIMMY'S DRAGON–(YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD)

In mid September 1997 a small team from Headquarters 11 Sig Bde set off on Ex Jimmy's Dragon to the French Pyrenees. The Exercise had been planned by **Capt Sarah Allan,** the S03 (W) Ops/CIS during the few tea breaks that she had been allowed; now her extensive planning would be put to the test. The first hurdle, as ever, was to get qualified instructors. It naturally followed that **Brig Wills** found himself on an Unit Expedition Leader course, stomping around the hills near Ballachulish with a group 20 years, and at least six ranks, his junior (needless to say he ran them ragged). The other instructor was **Capt Andy Parsons** the Adjt of 33 Sig Regt (V) and the remainder of the team consisted of 2 x TA Majors, 2 x Late Entry Captains, 1 x WO2 AGC(SPS), 1 x Cpl AGC(SPS) and 1 x LCpl Driver/Lineman. The next hurdle was getting this rather unusual collection of individuals 1000 miles over land and sea to Bagnères de Luchon. Why else take a SO2 Log Sp on an expedition if it is not to organise the move? P&O were extremely helpful and I am sure their bar has been restocked from the Casino profits. 34 hours and a few scenic detours later (honestly the Commander was not navigating) and the group arrived to be confronted by the pleasures of tent pitching in the middle of the night. Thank goodness those lovely orange Force Ten tents have not changed in the last 30 years.

The Pyrenees is an excellent venue for adventure training and in order to get full benefit from the area **John Howie**, a local guide was engaged as both leader and mentor. On arrival he displayed a suitable sense of humour by addressing one group member as the Bde Tottie (he was not referring to **Capt Lee Brown,** the TOT). From then on the team was thrown headlong into a programme of climbing, walking and scrambling. Surprisingly, many had never previously been Rock-Climbing, however, individual styles and techniques soon developed. The Commander and TOT displayed excellent team work in the 'it may be three points of contact but what's wrong with a leg up?' move. The Chief Clerk demonstrated an interesting variation of the Hand Jam–the Head Jam; this provoked Emmy into proving that it is impossible to climb whilst helpless with laughter.



The Commander and Capt Lee Brown
'It may be three points of contact, but what is wrong with a leg up?'

Style was again displayed for all to see on the hills. The Commander fashioned a stylish 'pound stretcher' Cagoul and the Chief produced an interesting camping water carrier instead of a water bottle (OK I did tell him to take plenty of water, but I mean, a gallon!).

All this training culminated in a three-day expedition with the aim of reaching three of the 3000m plus peaks. The team split into two groups, one with an average age of 42 and one with 32. Both followed challenging routes that ensured that everyone on the expedition felt pushed and achieved personal firsts or records. Even **John Howie** opted to carry extra rocks in his Bergen in order to feel the challenge. Each night the group met up at the refuge to huddle together in one bed; the less said the better although **Cpl Jasmine Cleathero** is still adamant she does not snore. The scenery was magnificent, blue skies, mountains, circling vultures and bright blue glacial lakes; in fact the lakes looked so good certain members of group one decided to take a closer look! Needless to say by the end everyone was ready for the R&R day. For some this involved Rest and Recuperation, for others a spot of personal climbing challenge and a chance of an educational tour of Paris for the remainder.

Prepared for anything–the Commander displaying the heights of fashion

All the objectives of the exercise were achieved, the peaks were climbed, glaciers traversed, ridges dangled from and everyone generally experienced a wonderful, if hair raising, sensation and returned with a definite sense of achievement. The stories and anecdotes are too numerous to include here, suffice to say that the trip was well worth it and every member of the group thoroughly enjoyed it. But more importantly a strong team had been formed from the unlikely collection of individuals and everyone had been reminded of the true benefits of Adventurous Training. The average age of this team of adventurers was 38 - as stated in the title, you are never too old.

The Team

Further information can be obtained from:

Brig D.J. Wills	'How to send half your HQ on adventurous training and still get the job done.'
Capt S. Allan	'How to arrange an adventurous training expedition to the French Pyrenees in 2 minutes, with a postage stamp.'
Capt A. Parsons	'How to take a team of geriatrics across the Pyrenees'
Capt L.F. Brown	'How to climb a mountain, at age 49 and 3/4 with a dodgy knee.'
WO2 D.A. Smith	'How to extract your head from a crack.'
Capt J.T. Sykes	'Information on a club in Belize?'

PTARMIGAN TRAINING CENTRE–UPDATE

The Ptarmigan Training Centre (PTC) has been completed and handed over to HQ 11 Sig Bde by the West Midlands TAVRA. The Works Superintendent, **Maj (Retd) Ted Noon** has overseen the creation of a magnificent facility that has been built primarily for the training of 33 and 35 Sig Regts (V). The centre provides a 162-seater theatre that is equipped with the latest sound and video projection equipment available. This has been custom built into the theatre and provides computer graphic projection, video presentations and 3d-visualiser projection as well as all round stereo sound from compact disc or tape. There are 6 classrooms, each seating 12 students, equipped with a video presenter, power point computer projection and overhead slide projection. In addition there is a garage bay with an interior viewing platform which allows students to view the externally mounted equipment on the communications vehicles under instruction. Additional facilities include exterior hard-standing with possible connection from the parked vehicles to a number of Ptarmigan ports in the classrooms and theatre.

There is also the ability to power up to six vehicles from the external power supplies built into the centre which provide single and 3 phase AC as well as 28v DC. The provision to import HF/VHF communications into the building has been added as an additional feature. All of these facilities make the building highly versatile, either for trade training, for presentations/conferences or as the focus for CPX play. Although the Centre is provided as a Ptarmigan Training Facility for the Territorial Army units in the Bde, it can be made available for use by any other unit, Reg or TA, by contacting the facility manager, **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Buxton** on Donnington military (748) 2722.

On the hand over of the Ptarmigan training facility, **Brian Walker,** the M&E consultant trying to explain the 'glitch' which created this door as the main entrance to the building to a very disgruntled looking brace of Brigadiers. **Maj Rod Gladwin** and **Capt Lee Brown**, the project manager and the technical manager try to shift the blame to the facility manager **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Buxton**. The real culprit, **Steve Robinson,** the site construction manager, slinks away after declaring he only followed the plans.

GOSSIP COLUMN–EDITOR CPL JASMINE CLEATHERO

On 26th September 1997 HQ 11 Sig Bde Staff wagged off early to the local hostelry where we bade farewell to **SSgt Mick** 'Fluff' **Alcock** on the completion of 22 exemplary years service with the Corps. **Capt Jim Sykes** had organised a sumptuous meal for all at a local restaurant that was washed down with the House Red and the odd glass of lager. Fun was had by all, mostly at the expense of Fluff as the Commander, **Brig David Wills** encapsulated his career in verse.

SSgt 'Bazz' **Roberts** his replacement was welcomed into the 'Bde family' and he is now really looking forward to the challenge of filling Fluff's shoes. Congratulations are in order to **Mr Alcock** as all the resettlement training paid off and he has a job employed as a Training Officer with a large International Firm. Well done! **Brig Wills** also announced the promotion of **Cpl J.S.M. Cleathero** AGC (SPS) to Sgt. She appeared suitably surprised, although she had opened the mail a few days previously. How she kept the information to herself is a mystery to all of us! She is awaiting a posting and has volunteered for any unit in any theatre as long as Royal Signals are not in the Orbat.

The Bde HQ has recently completed the Operation Readiness Test (ORT) on 2 Sig Regt in York. During the deployment the staff had to make themselves scarce in the evening and this was accomplished by an expedition to the bright lights of the York nightlife. **LCpl Simon Emmet** was dispatched by the Commander to recce a pub with a fountain near by as he was determined to accomplish a mission that he had set himself on the recent Staff trip to the Pyrenees which involved **Capt Sarah Allan** and taking an early bath. Fortunately for **Simon** he took the right turning this time and found the necessary facility close by. Although the Commander achieved his aim it was at some personal cost, as **Sarah** returned the favour by dragging him in with her with assistance from **Cpl Jasmine Cleathero** and **Maj Steve Bellerby**. The ORT was completed the next day to the satisfaction of the NATO observers and 2 Sig Regt, though the journey home was uncomfortably damp for **Capt Allan**.

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Army Training Regiment Bassingbourn

SHQ
Sqn Comd — **Maj Steve Vickery**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Anderson**

Maj Steve Vickery continues to congratulate the Sqn Lanyard Trophy team on being the first team to finish with all 10 members. Training for next years' event will probably start soon. SHQ welcomes back **Capt Mick Bohanan** from his QM's course and warn all subalterns that the man in charge of money is back! Well done **SSgt** 'Taff' **Furnival** on standing in for the SSM, you have done SHQ (Ghost town) proud.

The Sqn Comd, Maj Steve Vickery leads his team to an impressive final result

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Richard Byfield**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Carl Tucker**

The Troop welcomes **Cpl Andy Tinkler** Royal Anglian and hopes his infantry input will be of use. Our other new arrival is **Cpl Mike 'Smudge' Smith** from 721 Sqn Tidworth Tp; original nickname 'Smudge'. The Troop recently raised almost £900 for the Army Benevolent Fund whilst adventurous training in Wales and thanks all of the parents of recruits who donated money. The Regiment owes a big thank you to **Sgt Carl Tucker** for organising so many golf competitions that almost anybody who can swing a club wins a prize.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Lisa Taylor**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Brian Turner**

The Troop has just picked up their new recruits and also welcome three new corporals. **Cpl Simon Link** from 604 Sig Tp, **Cpl Michael McDonald** and wife **Terri** from 11 EOD Regt and **Cpl Dave Churchward** all the way from Echo Tp. **Cpl Dave Churchward** finally gets away on a course; good luck on your UEL.

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Mark Harrop**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Dave Bennett**

Charlie Tp say goodbye to **Sgt Dave Bennett** who is off to 30 Sig Regt and welcome to **Lt Mark Harrop**. On attachment from ATR 'Winge-chester' comes **Cpl Mo Hudson** AGC and from 216 Para Sig Sqn, **Cpl Andy Fisher** joins the Troop. The Troop would like to thank all concerned for helping to raise £500 for the Fireman's Benevolent Fund at an activity day with Luton Fire Station.

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd — **Capt Lee O'Rourke**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Jason Smithurst**

A sad goodbye goes to **Lt** 'Home Alone' **Harrop** and **Cpl Nicky Coombs** who make moves of less than 100m to Charlie Tp and AFS respectively. **Sgt Jase Smithurst** is back in the big chair after the successful completion of his Drill Course. Welcome to **Capt Lee O'Rourke** from a year in Italy and **Cpl Paula Kelson** from 241 Sig Sqn. Keep grinding away **Cpls** 'Brommers' **Bromley** and 'Daz' **Kidd**.

ECHO TROOP
Tp Comd
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Roy Carter**

Sgt Roy Carter battles on without a Tp Comd and nothing can hold him back from his Tp lines decoration master plan. The Troop welcomes **Cpl Carl Seddon** from stress free 7 Sig Regt and says farewell to **Cpl Dave Churchward** who moves over to an easy life in Bravo Tp.

FOXTROT TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Richard Gregory**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt Mick Aver**

On the break up of Delta Sqn (a composite Squadron of all Bassingbourn cap badges) 1 Trg Sqn took on a new Troop. Previously called 'Yankee Troop' it fell into line and kindly agreed to the title of Foxtrot. The Squadron now welcomes **Lt Richard Gregory** 22nd (Cheshire) Regt, **Cpl Paul Walledge** and **Ian Fawcett**. The Troop continues to work hard in the Regiment and intend to carry out 'Community Work' at Addenbrookes Hospital for their regular charity event. Congratulations to **Sgt Mick Aver** on his promotion and entry into the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess. Farewell to **Cpl Steve Evans** who is off to enjoy German beer with 7 Sig Regt, **Capt Gareth Marsh** and **Sgt Bob** 'Ginger' **Wallace** to AFS.

263 (Harrogate) Signal Squadron Army Apprentices College Arborfield

As the Squadron returns back to another busy period following a well earned summer leave there have been a number of changes within the ORBAT. In the HQ **Capt Gordon Newell** takes over from the 2IC, **Capt Eamonn Driscoll**. **Eamonn** goes of to Headly Court to undergo some serious rehabilitation from slave-driven-office work induced by the OC, **Maj Chris Paterson**. Congratulations go out to a very happy **Capt Gordon Newell,** as it has recently become evident that he firmly occupies the moral high ground following last year's turmoil.

The 8th September 1997 saw a full intake of 100 ATs being received in the junior term. **Lt Stu Barltrop** AGC (ETS) has taken over at Bradley Tp, enjoying the opportunity to get away from the classroom environment and reliving his mad military I've-been-to-Bosnia-with-the-Woofers experiences. His team includes many new faces from around the Corps and Army. The Penney Tp team also saw a few changes. Arriving into the unit are **Cpl James Ayton** (LI), **Cpl Col Brotherston**, **Cpl Paul Millington, LSgt Glen Still** (WG), and newly promoted **Sgt Dave Taylor**. A warm welcome goes to their families.

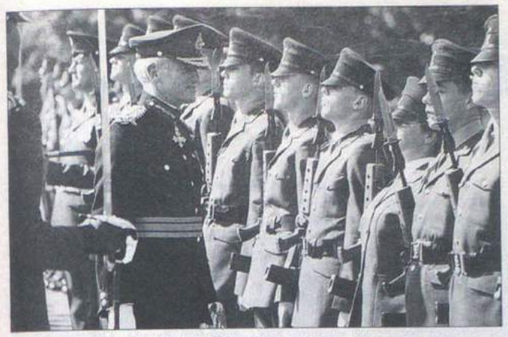
Sadly the Squadron loses **Cpl Ian** 'Jeb' **Stewart, Cpl Den Wakefield** and **LSgt** 'Spike' **Brookes** who go to civilian employment and a much more relaxing and less intensive lifestyle–so they hope! Returning to the Corps following their tours at the College cheerio to **SSgt (SQMS) Tom Smith, Sgt Nigel Back** and **Cpl Martin Cowlard** on promotion. The very best wishes to themselves and families in their new postings.

Finally a big congratulations is reserved for the Sqn Comd. **Maj Chris Paterson** who happily announced his engagement to **Lydia** recently. The marriage will take place next year.

CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

Scott Tp, 263 (Harrogate) Sig Sqn passed off the square at the official Pass Out Parade on 15th August 1997. Having assumed command of Scott Tp halfway through their second phase of training I was impressed by their level of personal development and maturity. Under the watchful eye of **Sgt Nigel Back**, 48 ATs from Scott Tp and 37 ATs from Rawson Tp, intake 97B completed their Phase One training in a flurry of activity. This culminated in a five day final exercise, Ex Signal Defender, held on Salisbury Plain and at Hawley Training Areas under the often flamboyant direction of **Capt Gordon** 'Amani Versace' **Newell** who was able to introduce a larger element of leadership tasks to test the AT. As a confirmatory exercise the ATs were also able to gain an insight into the workings of regular units, in particular those of 3 (UK) Div based in Bulford and 1 Inf Bde at Tidworth which whetted their appetites for the future. But uppermost in the ATs minds was the Holy Grail of the final Pass off Parade that assumed mammoth proportions as the end of term approached and the officers under the command of **Maj Chris Paterson** were required to fall in for rehearsals, in temperatures in the high 80's.

The fact that no Royal Signal's ATs 'took a bow' during practices and on the day itself was a demonstration of remarkable self-discipline, imbued within them by the Sqn Permanent Staff. The day itself proved to be the highlight of the term for the ATs with near perfect weather conditions and record spectator attendance of many hundreds. The inspecting officer, **Maj Gen Stokoe** DCOS HQ Land Command, himself an ex-Apprentice and Royal Signals Officer provided the College with a mercifully short inspection in appreciation of the rocketing temperatures.



Maj Gen Stokoe DCOS HQ Land Comd inspects the Apprentices

Maj Gen Stokoe DCOS HQ Land Comd presents AT Sgt Sutton with his prize

Watched keenly by the CO of 11 Sig Regt, **Lt Col T. Canham** the Signals ATs collected several prizes, including best educational performance by **AT Harper-Ronald** and best all round Signals AT by **AT Sgt Sutton**. But life moves on apace in the Apprentice College and we have welcomed over 100 new ATs of intake 97C into both Penney Tp and a newly reconstituted Bradley Tp under the busy endeavours of **Sgt's Townley** and **Burdus**. They work hard to keep their newly arrived ATs (and OC's) on the straight and narrow. The main effort is now one of instilling the attitudes and standards which are required within the regular field Army today (no easy task with today's breed of teenager), and this is usually achieved by judicious employment of various stick and carrot techniques. As a Tp Comd and non-Signaller, the potential of the ATs of the September intake is very good. They are the keenest of the school leavers to join the Army, and this is reflected in their commitment in the classroom and on exercise. Although this does not always seem to be reflected in their own personal administration! With time and persistence, intake 97C should prove to be a bumper crop of soldiers for the Royal Corps of Signals.

NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

EMC Division Army CIS Engineering Group

ROYAL NAVY, BRITISH ARMY EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION FARNBOROUGH 1-5 SEPTEMBER 1997

The EMC Division of the Army CIS Engineering Group recently exhibited at the RNBAEE, Farnborough. The exhibition was organised by the Defence Export Support Organisation in conjunction with the DTI. The aim of the exhibition was to promote British expertise in defence related manufacturing and services. The exhibition consisted of 106 indoor stands and outside static displays on a wide variety of military equipment. Our aim was to advertise the services that we provide to the field Army in terms of support to projects or operations. **The SOinC(A), Brig N.F. Wood**, on visiting the EMC stand indicated that he fully supported and encouraged the Group in such enterprises. Army EMC Division is located at Blandford Garrison, it recently moved to brand new premises away from the main School of Signals complex. The Division is split into 3 sections, each dealing with widely diverse subjects. Firstly EMC/MI trials, they trial new equipment coming into service. Recently they tested the new Bowman radios that will replace the Clansman range of radios. The next is Radiation Hazards section, they deal with personnel Radhaz problems such as the affects on the human body from manpack radio antennas. The final section is Spectrum Management Section, this has the only two military posts with Army EMC Division (S03 (W) and a Yeoman of Signals). The section deals with Frequency Deconfliction of the spectrum for theatre operations such as NI and the Falkland Islands. They also produce and disseminate Comms Planning software and terrain data to the field Army.

11 Signal Regiment
Blandford

3 (PENNEY) SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj David Lumb**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell**

Sadly this is the last article that will be submitted to *The Wire* by 3 (Penney) Sqn. Saturday 18th October 1997 signified the demise of the 2-year apprenticeship with the graduation of Scott Troop, Intake 95C. The last two weeks has seen much activity from the apprentices and permanent staff alike. Scott Tp hosted the Commander, **Col C.L. Le Gallais OBE**, the CO, **Lt Col T.W. Canham**, the CI TTD, **Lt Col P. Richards** and a number of school and regimental staff to dinner on Wednesday 15th October 1997. The evening was chaired by **AT SSM Rodney Dunlop** ably assisted by the PMC, **WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell** and **Mr Vice, AT Ruth Kennedy**. The Comd replied on behalf of the PS to an excellent speech given by the AT SSM, the night ended with the mandatory disco.

The PS is in the process of moving office accommodation to allow the current area to be refurbished–we hope to move back in the not too distant future! Our next *Wire* article will be submitted under the banner of 3 (Harrogate) Sqn. Monday 27th October 1997 is (was by the time you read this) the day that we take over the management of all technicians from 1 Sqn.

FINAL GRADUATION PARADE–SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER 1997

The apprentices of Scott Tp, 3 (Penney) Sqn graduated on Saturday 18th October 1997 on completion of their apprenticeship, which began in Harrogate, North Yorkshire in October 1995. The Reviewing Officer was the **Master of Signals, Maj Gen I.O.J Sprackling OBE**, and was accompanied through the day by the CO, 11th Sig Regt, **Lt Col T.W. Canham** and his ADC, **Capt P.G.M. Atkinson**. The parade was only the second of its kind in Blandford and sadly the last. Once again the supporting troops were single entry soldiers, provided this time by 1 Sqn. They did an outstanding job–for some members of the supporting troops it was a case of second time around, having graduated themselves in August. **Sig Amanda Verrall** is unique in that she commanded an apprentice squad in August and came back (courtesy of **WO2 (SSM) Anderson**) to command a supporting troop squad this time.

The parade was commanded by **AT SSM Rodney Dunlop**, who was ably supported by **AT SSgt Neil McElhinney** and **AT Sgt Kelly Lee**. The Corps Band were once again in support and what an excellent job they did. The parade was watched by over 440 parents, relatives and friends and over 30 guests. The parade was outstanding, with a number of guests saying that it was the best they had been to in a long time. The credit must go to **WO1 Bob Banner, WO2 (SSM) Eric Udell, WO2 Mark Anderson** and **Sgt** 'Johnno' **Johnston** who managed, against all odds, to achieve the result they did. The Graduation Church Service preceded the parade the night before when the apprentices re-affirm their 'oath of allegiance'. **Padre Graham Hadfield** conducted the service and the 'oath of allegiance' led by the CO. The service was attended by a number of parents and the squadron permanent staff. Saturday dawned warm and sunny, much to the relief of **Maj David Lumb**–all the praying had after all been worth it.

The parade was followed by the prizegiving, with the prizes being presented by **Maj Gen Sprackling** and **Brig D.J. Wills**, Commander, 11 Sig Bde who had kindly agreed to present the SOinC's Prize. Once again the prize winners were well deserving of their awards. The prize winners and their parents were then introduced to **Maj Gen Sprackling** and the other guests. This concluded the graduation of 86 young men and women–the last of the Royal Signals 2-year apprenticeship.

The Reviewing Officer presents AT Sgt Kelly Lee with the Commanding Officer's Conduct Prize

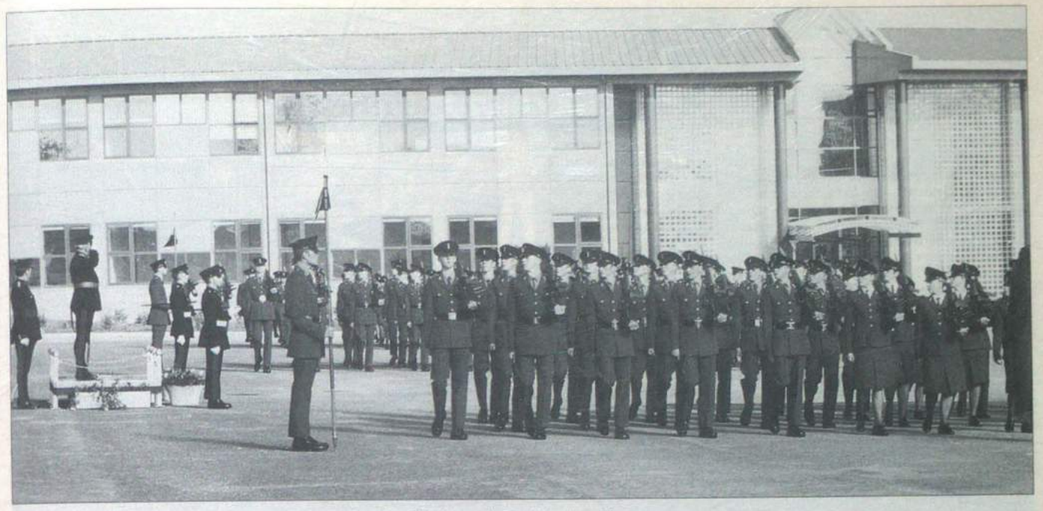
The Reviewing Officer presents AT Nick Hillyard with the Commanding Officer's Sports Prize

The Reviewing Officer presents AT Ruth Kennedy with the Corps Committee Prize for the Best Telecommunications Operator Telegraph

MY THOUGHTS
by The Parade Commander AT SSM Rodney Dunlop

After working so hard for 2 years we had arrived at the most significant day in our training, our Graduation Parade. The two weeks beforehand had been very busy, our final exercise in Sennybridge followed by a week spent mostly on the drill-square, handing in kit and preparing our accommodation for hand-over. The Friday night before the parade was our Graduation Church service when we re-affirmed our Oath of Allegiance. The excitement was immense, as some people had not seen their parents for some time. After a couple of beers we went to bed at our 2200 hrs curfew to rest for the long day ahead.

After being rudely awakened at 0530 hrs we were out doing a final run through of the parade and of course 'areas'. Then it was breakfast, a shower and then changed for the parade and the collection of rifles. When waiting at the Squadron you could tell people's nerves were starting to go as the toilet was a popular place that morning. Some final adjustments were made to clothing and a couple of swigs of port for the Parade Commander and Squad Commanders then off we went. The feeling of pride we had while marching on to the sound of the Corps Band was overwhelming. The worst part was the inspection because the **Master of Signals** spoke to almost everyone and it was quite a hot day. Then we were off again, marching around and then off the square. There was an immense sigh of relief from everyone that it was over, especially myself. We then went down to the gym for the prizegiving and to be congratulated by our parents and Squadron staff. Then at last the 'kit-kat wrappers' (apprentice tapes) and green tabs (shoulder flashes) went flying and we were fully trained signallers, well nearly, in some cases.



The 'march past' in slow time

Marching down the Corps Memorial steps to 'Auld Lang Syne'

PRIZE WINNERS

Education Prize 'For the best academic achievement'
Technician Prize awarded to **AT SSM Dunlop**
Operator Prize awarded to **AT McKenzie**

The Business And Technician Education Council Prize
'For the Technician who has made most progress in his BTEC Studies'
awarded to **AT Boyle**

The City & Guilds Of London Institute Prize
'For the Telecommunications Operator who has made the most progress in their City and Guilds Studies'.
awarded to **AT LCpl Holloway**

Director Education Training Services (Army) Prize
'For outstanding academic progress whilst an Apprentice'
awarded to **AT LCpl Clarke 739**

The following prizes are for Trade and Military Training.

Royal Signals Corps Committee Prizes
'For the best Apprentice in each Trade'
Telecommunications Technician Prize awarded to **AT LCpl Moore**
Telecommunications Operator (Telegraph Prize) awarded to **AT Kennedy**

The Director of Army Training's Prize
'For the best all-round Military performance'
awarded to **AT LCpl Holloway**

Commanding Officer's Prizes
Conduct Prize
'For conduct, discipline and example' awarded to **AT Sgt Lee**
Sports Prize
'For the best all-round performance in sport and physical activities'
awarded to **AT Hillyard**

The Wavell Prize
'For the Apprentice considered to have achieved the most on an Adventure Training Expedition' awarded to **AT SSgt McElhinney**
Racal Prize
'For the Technician with the best performance in Advanced Technology'
awarded to **AT LCpl Moore**

Master of Signals Award
'For the best all-round Apprentice' awarded to **AT SSM Dunlop**
Signal Officer in Chief's Prize
'For the most outstanding Tradesman' awarded to **AT Kennedy**

The White Helmets

A somewhat eventful show season has come to an end. Having travelled the length and breadth of the country performing to hundreds of thousands of people, spreading the Royal Signals word and recruiting the potential amongst them, the team are now settled in Blandford for the next 6 months. Preparations for the November selection course are well under way with wet and windy weather booked.

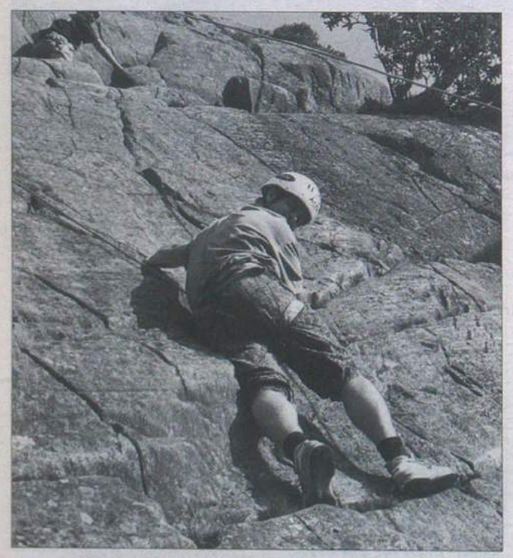
The team says goodbye to a number of their members. Firstly **Sig** or rather now **Mr** 'Nobby' **Summons** leaves to join the rank and file of the big civilian outside world. **Sig** 'Togs' **Teague** treks an enormous distance to the MT next door whilst **Cpl** 'Bones' **Balkham** goes to the other extreme and disappears across the water to Northern Ireland and 3 (Inf) Bde. All are wished the best of luck and reminded that there is always a Triumph Tiger for them should they wish to return! A couple of the team have (foolishly) decided to tie the knot. **Cpl** 'Lance' **Malin**, ever fearful that the team may somehow spoil the proceedings, has whisked his beloved **Fi** off to the Dominican Republic whilst **Sig** 'Togs' **Teague**, is marrying **Jean** in Blandford. Happy wishes are passed on and a special 'welcome to the fold' for **Fi** and **Jean**. Slightly further along the line, **Sig** 'Gaff/Doctor Death/Monkey Man' **Gaffney** and **Emma** are to be congratulated on the birth of their little girl, **Paige Ellie**, who was born on August 14th. (The team would have preferred her to be christened 'Bubbles'!)

Other excitements include **LCpl** 'Charlie' **Chester** successfully completing his ACI's course–we look forward to the twice a week beasting sessions from him. The temporary disappearance of **LCpl** 'Daz' **Hankin** to the black hole of the pay office–we look forward to more favourable claims and advances (?). Then there's the anticipated medical qualifications of **Sig** 'Scotty' **Eccott** and **Sig** 'Tony' **Annetts**–we look forward to being patched up by them. We also trust that the OC had a superb well-deserved holiday in Madeira with his wife, **Joan**. Where was that tan?

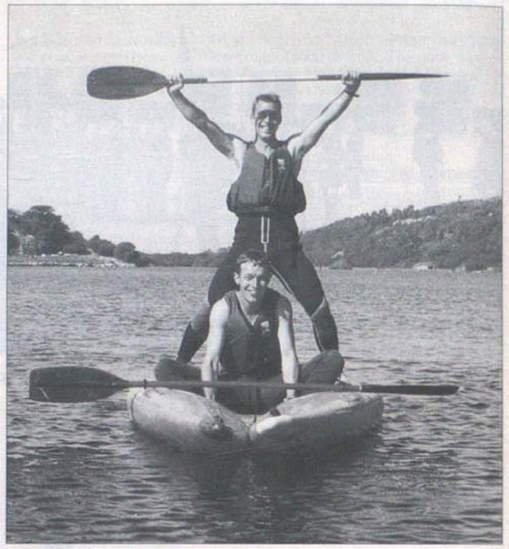
Finally, a word must be said about the week in Capel Curig, North Wales. Much to the disgust of all the team, the Team Captain insisted that **all** members (every excuse ignored) take part in Ex Steam Iron, an 'arduous' adventurous training exercise. Activities involved mountain biking, TR&A, canoeing, mine exploration, go-karting, stone-skimming and going to bed early (because of fresh air induced tiredness). **LCpl** 'Al' **Hayes** is now an honorary member of the team–many thanks to him for helping out, and **LCpl** 'Danny' **Cooper** deserves a medal for surviving 3 days of instructing the team how to canoe. Unfortunately, the weather decided to be unpredictably warm and sunny and the team was forced to enjoy themselves–as quoted by **Sig Tony Annetts**:

"So there we were, after the show season, ready to do some adventurous training. 'What?', a voice cried, 'White Helmets and adv trg - the two don't mix!' As it turned out, it seemed amongst the lads that it was a thoroughly enjoyable week and the activities were pursued with glee".

Sardinia has been promised for next year (?).



Sig Tony Annetts propping up a 100ft rock-face



Cpl 'Lance' Malin and Sig 'Togs' Teague perform daredevil stunts on an unmotorised canoe

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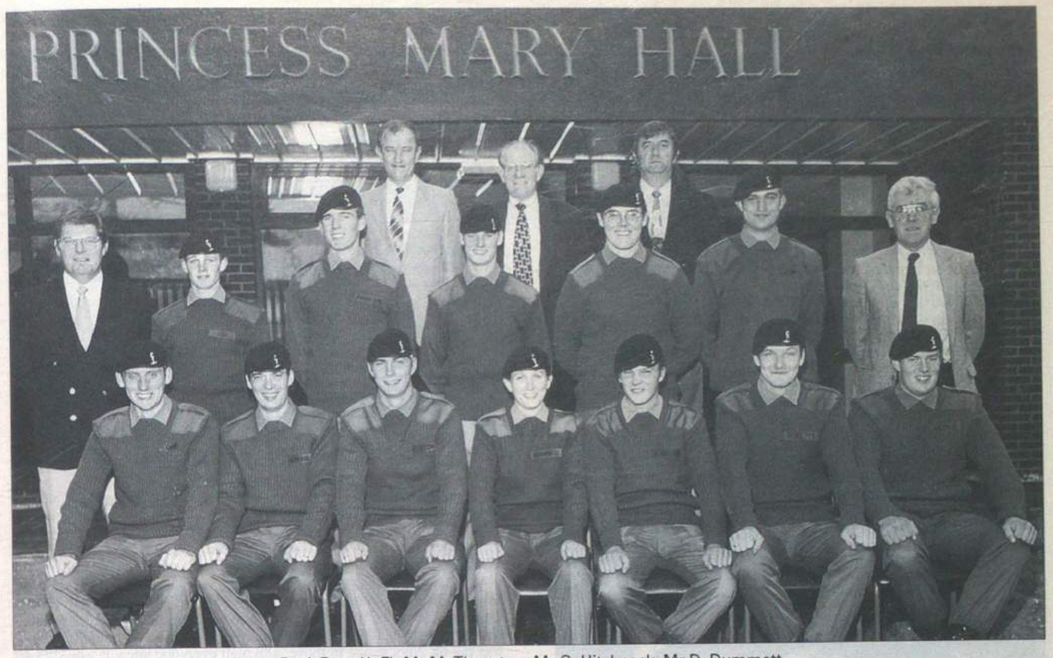

Back Row (*L-R*): Mr M. Thornton, Mr G. Hitchcock, Mr D. Dummett
Middle Row (*L-R*): Mr G. Cobb, Sigs Dodd, Davies (576), Wilkie, Harris (572) and Day, Mr Al Cook
Front Row (*L-R*): Sigs Dine, Armitage, Ellisdon, Hermitage, Krikorian, Scull and Excell

OPERATING SECTION–RADIO GROUP
WHAT WILL OUR FOREFATHERS THINK OF US?

The 6th October 1997 saw the end of an era. No more will we hear the cries of 'I can take 5 letter groups, but when it comes to plain language etc'. OTBR 820 became the last Basic Telegraphist course to pass out with morse code as part of their syllabus. The photograph shows the course together with the instructors responsible for teaching/practising their morse skills.

THE STORY OF A SOLDIER
'THE FOURTH PROVINCE'
by David Griffin

The author served six tours in Northern Ireland with the Royal Marines, three on covert operations. This is his story, using a mixture of fact and fiction to bring out his points, from which he draws serious conclusions on the future of Ireland, on operations in Northern Ireland, tactics, training, weapons performance, rules of engagement and much more.

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NEWS FROM BOSNIA

MND (SW) HQ and Sig Sqn (207)

OP LODESTAR
SQUADRON HQ
Sqn Comd — **Maj I. Cameron-Mowat**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) P. Atkinson**

The Squadron has seen some action in it's long and illustrious career, but Op Shiva at the end of August certainly stretched the 'massive' Ops team. No more, 'It's a quiet day in MND (SW)' as SFOR was tasked to support an operation by the International Police Task Force (IPTF) to democratise the civilian police. The night of the 19th ran the Squadron ragged; not only providing secure communications for the vast hordes of Fusiliers, Artillery, Czechs, IPTF et al who invaded the camp before invading Banja Luka itself, but meanwhile organising the reception, feeding and general logistics associated with their arrival.

Just a few of the weapons recovered during Op Shiva

The morning of the 20th found calm restored once more and the now non-functioning Ops team, containing the incoherent OC and the bemused Ops Offr (of two weeks) **Capt Rich** 'Bulging Biceps' **Moir**, were packed off to bed. The net result of all this activity was to disgruntle a number of local policemen and to recover four truckloads of weapons. All this occurred whilst Yeoman **WO2 (YofS) Graham** 'The Marathon Man' **Pardew** and **RSM** 'Pifwic' **Atkinson** were improving their tans on R&R. Perhaps they should be banished more often? During all the excitement, the 'massive' half of the Ops team was concentrating on getting even more massive. **SSgt Fof S** 'Hello Colonel my name's Andy' **Garrett** and **Sgt** 'Prince Naseem' **Adam Yafai** were often to be seen flexing in the gym. In fact it was rumoured that the latter popped his front tooth out during a particularly strenuous pose. Between dangerous Ops, 207 Sig Sqn has found time to enjoy itself. An afternoon at Manjaca ranges was spent firing the Barrett 50 Sniper rifle. 2 RRF kindly let us employ a few rounds to the detriment of a few tank hulks. This awesome weapon had a recoil fit to knock a Lieutenant over as **2Lt Helen Murphy** found to the amusement of the guys.

Pte Johnson, 1 Green Howards
with the Barrett 50 Sniper rifle at Manjaca Ranges

COMMS TROOP
Tp Comd — **Lt Carter**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ferris**

Well, after a couple of exciting months it has all ground to a sudden halt. Whilst the elections were going on, which every other unit in Bosnia were worried about, all Comms Tp were worried about was if they had a complete tool kit for the never ending CES checks. Armoured Tac HQ was put on 2 hrs notice to move, although everyone knew it wouldn't go anywhere. However, as always, there was plenty to do; football tournaments against the locals, a couple of interesting range-days, cheeky sports afternoons and the not so cheeky battle PT. As the last R&R package comes back we are happily looking forward to going back to Hohne and to that end we'd like to wish 19 Mech Bde a Happy Christmas and a very Happy New Year: it's ace here in the winter–enjoy!

Armoured Tac HQ deploying to Lisina West Rebro Site–
August 1997

NEWS FROM THE FACTORY

Like a busy airport, there's always people coming and going in Banja Luka, so we'd like to say a few welcomes to: **Cpl Kev Heaton** from 21 Sigs, **Sig** 'Biff' **Bithell** from 3 Div and **Sig** 'Eyeliner' **Savage** straight from training. Early in September **Cpl Dave Rimmer** deployed a rebro to Mostar having to put up with gale force winds, snapped masts and **Sig** 'H' **Griffiths**! **Sig** 'Psycho' **Smith** is over the moon with his new job as Padre's driver although we're not too sure the Padre is. Leading the way in stunt panzer driving is **SSgt** 'Can you take this panzer off my hand' **Ferris** who had a lucky escape when his student **LCpl** 'Fallguy' **Thomas** (14 Sigs) rolled the 432. After a comedy of errors **SSgt Ferris** was recovered, suffering only a crushed hand, and gagging for a fag. Meanwhile members of the Troop were forced stamping and screaming to the U2 concert in Sarajevo as **Sig** 'Eye eye' **Whetlor** 'entertained' them with his own merry melodies. Back from the Dutch contingent is the ever gorgeous **Sig** 'Harold' **Broderick** keeping troop morale up with his stylish humour! **LCpl** 'Twitch' **Meakin** and **Sig** 'Nancy' **Corrigan** can be found down the LAD tearing wagons apart and then putting them back together with parts left over. While all this is going on **Sig** 'Civvy' **Pink** can be found in Syscon munching pizza and drinking brews. After R&R **LCpl** 'Greyman' **Swayne** has jumped straight back into Banja Luka life with his beloved crewman **Sig** 'Jock' **Devenay**.

NEWS FROM THE REBROS

As the tour comes to an end its going to be quite hard to wrench the rebro crews from their homely mountain tops. **Sig** 'Barny' **Beevers** can be found at Radalija singing 60's favourites to the local's distaste. **LCpl** 'Them' **Thomas** is a new fixture at Sjenokosic rebro and is rumoured to have put **Sig Dave Moore** on a diet. **Cpl** 'Brummie' **Hamblin** at Gola Pljesevica is still enjoying his mole like lifestyle. **Sig Mark Young** is still at Ivovik as is **Sig Jase Court** at Lisina.

NEWS FROM THE REARLINKS

As we sent our own Charlie's Angels **Cpl Kerry Webb** and **LCpl Tracy Brant** to the Dutch contingent, their craving for Dutch Marines has got stronger and they are happy to stay there regardless of what 19 Mech Bde say. **Sig John Doughty** is still going strong at the Canadian battalion enjoying the strange world of **Sig Rob Gittins**. **Sig Gaz Jennings** has just been joined by **Sig** 'Graduate' **Danter** so hopefully someone will now answer the phone! **LCpl Dale Petty** has returned to the Czechs to see the rest of his tour out.

SFOR UNITED

HQ MND (SW) were invited to take part in a six-a-side football competition in down town Banja Luka. **RSM** 'that'll be 3 days community service' **Atkinson** nominated **Sgt** 'Andy Gray' **McGiffin** to take on the managerial job to get SFOR United ready for war. The lads were a bit wary of the 300 plus crowd that met us in the stadium. First time nerves were quickly lost as we realised the competition was going to be a lot stronger then we imagined–SFOR United were going to be in for a thrashing. The strange thing was, kick off wasn't until 22:30 hrs. The first match was a hard game and the locals were more organised as they beat the SFOR team 4-1. This seemed to be the trend for the next 2 matches as we were beaten 7-2 and 5-1. As SFOR United came to their last game team morale was obviously low and was to be smashed even further by an opposition goal halfway through the first half. The score was to stay 1-0 until early in the second half when a defence splitting pass by **Sig Dez White** was collected by **LCpl Ross Gleave** who fired a memorable goal into the right hand corner. SFOR United now realised they had a game and minutes later **Sig Chris Moore** scored, but to his disappointment, it was disallowed. As our confidence couldn't be higher **LCpl** 'Big Eye' **Morris** crossed a defence beating ball into the box to connect with **Sig** 'Bob' **Zimmerman**'s head to make the score 1-2. As to be expected SFOR United were hanging on by a thread, and all the pressure in the last 5 minutes came from the opposition, but the amazing cat like saves from **LCpl** 'The Smile' **Woolley** in the dying minutes guaranteed us the deserved 1-2 win.

SFOR United Banja Luka Football Stadium
Back Row: SSgt Smith, Sig Zimmerman, Sig White,
Sgt McGiffen, Lt Carter, Sig Knight
Front row: LCpl Thirwell, Sig Alston, SSgt Wing,
Sgt Corcoran, Sig Moor

ODA OFFICE

Like most detachments who arrived in theatre in April of this year, there were understandably a few teething problems and this was most definitely the case for the workers in the ODA (Crypto Office). **SSgt Neil Perham** joined 207 Sig Sqn from 1 Div to take over the running of the ODA in Banja Luka. Along with him came **Cpl Neil Pollitt** from 207 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Ralph Farmer** from 30 Sig Regt and **Cpl Paula Kelson** from 241 Sig Sqn. Lack of experience in the world of Crypto showed at the start of all our tours. However, with hard work and persistence this finally changed after five months on the job! We each attempted to learn one anothers' jobs with some resounding success. Notably **Cpl** 'Pid' **Kelson** on learning how to use 30 Sig Regt's equipment, the Inmarsat, a satellite phone:

Cpl Farmer: OK, point the dish towards the satellite, Paula.
Cpl Kelson: Is that the one on the hill over there?
Cpl Farmer: No Paula, that's a Pylon!!

At this early stage of her tour, we forgave her, but when she had been with us for two and a half months we could not overlook her next error:

BFBS Radio: The weather in the Balkans will be 32C.
Cpl Kelson: Wow that's hot. I wouldn't mind being there. Where is the Balkans, Ralph?
Cpl Farmer: You're in them Paula!!

The ODA office wishes **Paula** the best of luck in her posting at Bassingbourn as a Weapons Training Instructor! **Sgt Neil** 'Oasis' **Perham** is now guaranteed a civilian job as Quiz Master General for his success in organising the famous Sgt's Mess Quiz Nights. We wish **SSgt Neil Perham** the best of luck in his new posting to 16 Sig Regt. **Cpl Neil** 'Tacsat' **Pollitt** was glad to end his detachment as the General's personal telephone operator. His immense fear of flying was not taken into consideration when he was called upon to fly around Bosnia with the General, and he would like to extend his thanks to **Yeoman Graham** 'I need a fag' **Pardew** for that one! The ODA office wishes him the best of luck in his new posting to 1 Mech Bde as Crypto Sergeant.

Cpl Ralph 'Never missed a Derby game' **Farmer** leaves the ODA after a successful job of sorting out 30 Sig Regt's crypto account so we can forgive him for his one history mistake:

Cpl Farmer: When Sir Francis Drake was playing bowls waiting for the French to attack . . .
Cpl Pollitt: But Ralph, I thought that was the Spanish Armada!!?

The ODA wishes **Cpl Ralph Farmer** the best of luck in his new posting to civvy street, and also wishes 19 Mech Bde the best of luck in their posting to 'Smog City' Banja Luka for this coming Christmas.

QMS DEPARTMENT
QM — **Maj (QM) W.J. Drain**
RQMS — **WO2 (RQMS) G. Hodgson**

It would be nice to start these notes saying that the department is starting to wind down ready to go home but nothing could be further from the truth. Although the 'priority one' taskings from the QM have lessened, the workload hasn't. New boy **Sig** 'Robbo' **Robinson** was caught whinging about everybody getting away but him, however the RQ did remind him that not only did he have an 18 hr drive to Split in a MK, he also has the privilege of running the IT account. Talk about a learning curve, Everest springs to mind. **Sig** 'Bart' **Simpson** is the only guy on camp that's put on weight (although he blames the RSM for allowing a pizza place to open on camp). **Sig** 'Blodwin' **Davies** came back from a firepower demo with a face redder than his Liverpool top and he blames the RQMS for giving him time off to get some sun. It has also been noticed that there has been a lack of blueys for 'Blodwin', however we think the reason for this is because his girlfriend has been addressing them to herself. The **RQMS WO2** 'only 14 blueys a day' **Geoff Hodgson** has settled in now although he has been known to answer the phone saying 'Sgt Major 233 Sqn'. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Bosnia to **Cpl Jim Green** who has come out for the last 31 days, much to his delight. The **RQMS (A) WO2** (call sign 10B) **Steve Tinkler** after 2 days of carrying a PRC 321 around on his back (including runs) had great difficulties establishing comms with the QM, mainly due to the fact that the PRC 321 is not compatible with Motorola. He just about twigged that it was a wind up when he was tasked to attach a 12m mast to the rear mudguard of his mountain bike.

We would like to thank **Major** 'pivo' **Drain** for his input to the Logistic Support Inspection by ensuring that there was fresh cream in the cakes for the team. On a more serious note, a huge pat on the back for all the members of the department who worked extremely hard in achieving the first satisfactory pass on the LSI in 6 years–WELL DONE. A special thank you must go to **Cpl** 'Druggie music' **Percival** for all the hard work he did on the MSA account prior to his return to England for an operation. We wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him back in Hohne ASAP.

QM Dept MND (SW) HQ & Sig Sqn
Banja Luka Metal Factory–September 1997

TECH/LINE DETACHMENT

The Tango/Lima Detachment has had a mini changeover of personnel over the past couple of months in theatre. First to go was **Cpl** 'Alan Shearer Walks on Water' **Hession** who departed these fine shores for Blighty on compassionate grounds. Next on the list was our Tp Comd **Capt Julius Caesar** or GWAR to his mates, he's off to 14 Sig Regt as the Adjt, we wish him all the best for the future. His replacement is **Capt Richard** 'I'm not a Scouse Git' **Moir**, we hope his stay is a long and happy one. We must also say a fond farewell to **Sgt Titch** 'I miss my dog' **McGiffen**. He has left for Hohne a few weeks earlier than the rest of the Squadron, (is the Squadron trying to say something?). Last but not least we say an even fonder goodbye to **Sgt Wick Davey** who is off to 11 Sig Regt Tech Wksps via 1 (UK) Armd Div. We wish him all the best. **SSgt Si** 'Recon' **Murray** has kept the workshop on their toes with an 11Km run that turned into a half marathon due to getting temporarily geographically embarrassed. However due to the ribbing he has been given the workshops have been re-introduced to Baselines PT. **Sig** 'Almost A Sex God' **Elston** has just returned from R & R with a note from Welsh Assembly saying KEEP HIM.

280 (UK) Sig Sqn (Fwd)

by LCpl Whitehead

DIANA PRINCESS OF WALES–24 HOUR SPONSORED RUN

On Saturday 6th September 1997 personnel of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn (Fwd) were watching the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales from the sunny hotspot of Sarajevo. Sunday evening whilst watching the news on the memorial fund it was mentioned that the Squadron should do something! These were to be the infamous words of **Sgt Al Peel.** Within an hour he and **WO2 (SSM) Kev Smith** had come up with the idea of a team of 10 runners pounding their way around the camp for 24 hours! So came, 'Who will volunteer?' We got 12 names, great that gave us 2 reserves.

The team was split into two, one being **Capt** 'Fred' **Hargreaves, WO2 (SSM) Kev Smith, LCpl Jason Whitehead, Sig Bri Hillson** and **Sig Grant McDougal.** Team two was **Lt** 'Rich' **Todd, Sgt Al Peel, Cpl Rob Butlin, Sig Charlie Lister, Sig** 'Nipper' **Wood.** The reserves were: **Sig Reed** and **Sig Richardson.** The plan was to run in shifts of 6 hours per team with each team member completing 5 laps of the HQ SFOR camp before changing over. This meant that each person would run a total of 20 laps in the 6-hour period (easy).

Monday 15th September 1997–The Admin Order had gone out and each department had been detailed. At 0800 hours the RQMS, **WO2** 'Brummie' **Cox** pitched up the first tent and some flags, at the same time **WO2 (Master Chef)** 'Geordie' **Chrisp** brought out the carbohydrates with lots of much needed fluids. At 0830 hrs **Brig Monro HLDRS** gave us the off and we all ran the first lap after which it would be individual until the last. Highlights of the day were to be **Sig** 'Nipper' **Wood** and **Sig Mark Reed** running 5 laps dressed as Victorian gentlemen and receiving a wink from **Kate Adie** as she passed through on her way to a press conference. After this it was **Lt** 'Basil Brush' **Todds, WO2 (SSM) Kev Smith, Sgt Al Peel, Cpl Rob Butlin** completing a few laps in towels and flip flops carrying wash bags. **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Brummie' **Cox** (Jimmy Saville) made loads of money running around with a bucket collecting loose change, however, the highest donation of the day was made by **Sig Bri Hillson** who while competing found time to run the RSM's runway and receive a hefty landing fee. Whilst the day went on the RQMS and **Sgt Pete Hepple** set up the Barbecue area for all nations to come and cheer on the runners. The Barbecue provided fun for all as it was free of charge. All we asked for was a donation for each burger or beer consumed. The QM also deserves thanks for retaining the attention of the guests by auctioning off various gifts. The Barbecue finished and we approached the early hours of the morning but the morale never dropped due to a variety of visitors who popped out to do a few laps with us, these included **Brig Monro**, OC Sqn, Ops Officer, MTO, QM and RSM. At 0515hrs we were visited by Commander SFOR, **Gen Shinseki** (US Army), who spoke to all the runners and gave us a quick photo call. As 0930hrs arrived we all completed the last lap together and came into a hail of clapping and cheering. Many thanks to the following: QM, RQMS, **WO2 Chrisp**, UKNIC, 30 Sigs Det, **Sgt Hepple** and **Sgt Scott** who provided a great deal to the logistics of the event. Final thanks must be given to all the nations in HQ SFOR that supported us and dipped into their pockets on more than one occasion through the day and night. The final amount raised was in excess of DM 13,000.

249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))

249 SIG SQN (AMF(L)) DET ATTACHED TO 280 (UK) SIG SQN FORWARD

The Squadron support for Op Lodestar continues with **Cpl Mick Robjant** and **Sigs Mark Reed, Paul Richardson** and **Graham Lark** deployed in Sarajevo on the elite O+M (Operator + Maintenance) Team. Whilst out here attached to 280 Sig Sqn we have mainly been working on CRONOS and phone systems. The jobs have been varied from fault finding and the laying of phone cable underground, to the setting up of frame rooms where the phone lines come in. Also we have spent a lot of time working on fibre optic cables that are used with the CRONOS System. This was a particularly tricky job as it involved not only the laying of cables, but also terminating and fitting the heads. To add even more variety, whilst out here, we have all worked on reconstructing Butmir Military Airbase, which is now fully up and running.

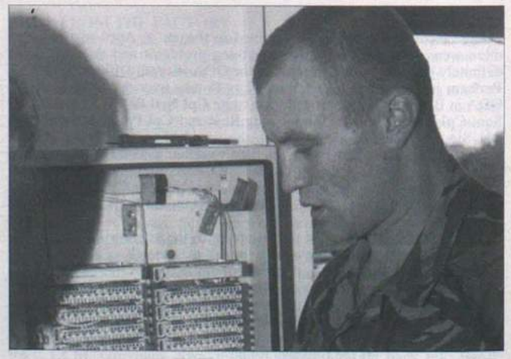
Sig 'Jez' **Tierney** was based at Mostar away from the other Squadron members working with the video teleconferencing and fielding enquires on the CRONOS System for helpless Staff Officers. Also in theatre are the two Squadron VSC 501 SATCOM Dets ably manned by **Cpls** 'Nav' **Elliot, Steve Armstrong, Jase Stone** and **LCpls Kevin Duggan** and **Danny Mulheran.** Also out there for the long hot summer were **Sigs** 'Ollie' **North, Kevin Milne, Dave Dytham** and **Duncan Shaw.**

EXERCISE DYNAMIC MIX 1997
20TH SEPTEMBER-4TH OCTOBER

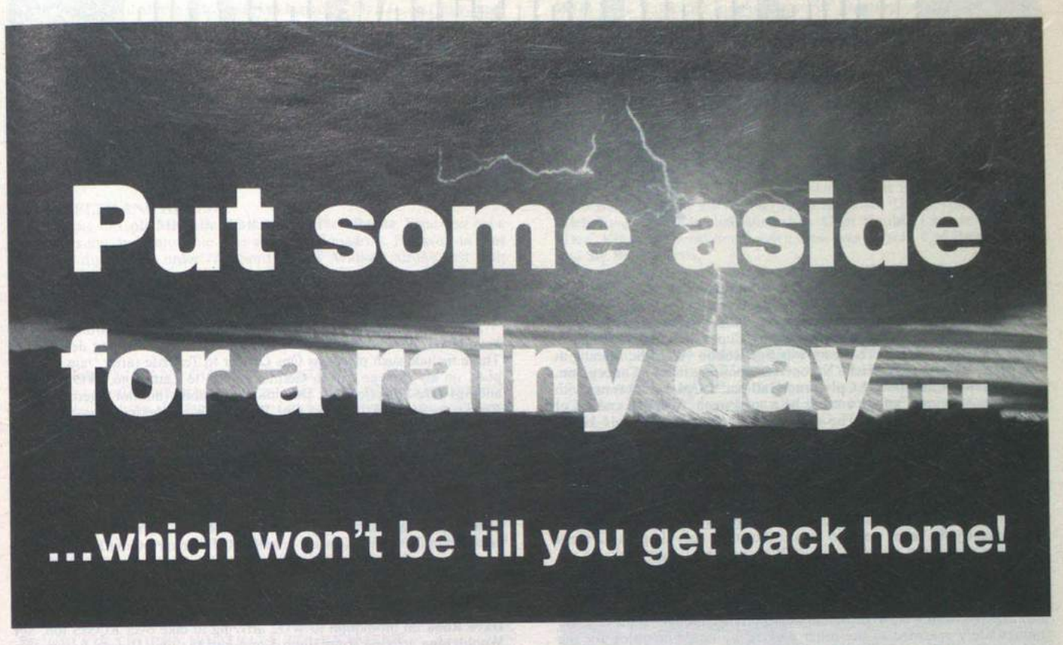
Ex Dynamic Mix 1997 was an AMF(L) deployment to Southern Sardinia designed to test the many contributing nations' ability to deploy a force capable of operations in a semi-arid environment. As a CPX many units were looking forward to getting some beach time and tanning in – not so 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) who started digging shell-scrapes and erecting cam with appropriate enthusiasm. Needless to say 249 Sig Sqn had no problems with the change of pace, except for the 2IC, **Capt Richard Rumsey**, who was so enthralled with the idea of his first AMF deployment he flew home on compassionate grounds soon after Start Ex, to be closer to his In-Tray.

The serious tanning was left to the professionals in the form of **SSgt Chris Martin** and **WO2 (YofS) Rick Dickson** (who never quite caught up) and all those on the Rebros (no matter how much they deny it). The size of the training area created several new problems for the Squadron–it was far too small. Firstly the Comd Dets and the Rebros were so close together that they could be visited fairly easily. Indeed **Cpl** 'Fozzy' **Foster** was almost driven to a nervous breakdown by the regular and unexplained presence of the Sergeant Major at his det! Secondly, to keep the Support element at the Squadron echelon busy the QM, **Capt John Marriott**, decided to diversify. **Sig Paul Kemp** was put in charge of car valeting, where random unattended rovers were collected, cleaned and returned in a same day service much to the delight of some rather bemused customers. **Sig Dave Dytham** tried to get in on the action by setting up a food stall all over his 9x9, but on his return from hospital he found that the demand was simply no longer there.

Finally a word about the AMF's very own recce screen, **Sgt Nick** 'Don't call me Tucker' **Turner** who was on his final AMF exercise, was promoted from his usual job with the Rebro Recce to baby-sitting a potential officer, **Paul Saunders**, the Scottish Junior Champion of Admin. **Sgt Turner's** calm, steady and quiet manner proved ideal in this potentially challenging appointment. Ex Dynamic Mix 1997, was certainly the highlight of my attachment to 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) as it was my first opportunity to see a Royal Signals Unit deployed on exercise. The exercise was also the ideal way of finding out about the Squadron and the equipment they use. Unfortunately some of the other little projects planned for me such as the Cambrian Patrol had to be cancelled because of exercise commitments but my time at Bulford was hopefully excellent preparation for the Troop Commanders Course.



Cpl Mick Robjant in a typical *Wire* pose



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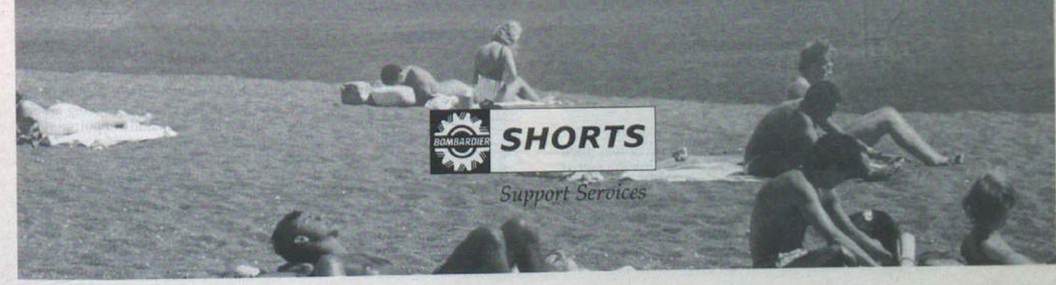


NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HQNI and 15 Sig Regt
BFPO 801

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd — **Maj D.I. Whimpenny**
SSM — **WO2 C.F.B. Hymas**

After a few days spent on the ranges at Ballykinler and the Maze, the seven members of the Squadron's Mercury Cup March and Shoot Team for 1997 were selected. The team was **Sgt Robbo** 'We'll be running at my pace' **Robson**, **Sgt Mich** 'No one can spell my name' **Concepcion, Cpl Graeme Campbell, LCpl Dunc Hall** and **LCpl Jay Owens**, with the reserves being **Capt** 'I used to be a marksman' **Worden** and **LCpl Boris** 'Crap shot' **Wade**. The competition took place at Ballykinler Training Centre on Wednesday 10th September with the teams assembling for briefings and a final 'Lubrication of weapons' the evening before.

The first event of the day for the Squadron Team was the NI Advanced Pistol Shoot. We were very confident of doing well on this stand, though I hasten to add not because 225 Sqn personnel conducted it! Subsequently the team went on to win the stand only dropping 2 shots from the maximum possible total ('Who put the Lance Jacks in the team?!')

Next came the Judgemental Snap Shoot. We completed the stand without too many holes through the baby, and finished joint second to 233 Sig Sqn, who were to prove our nearest rivals throughout the day. We immediately returned to the other end of the range complex for the Moving Target Range. Once again we finished joint second. After a nice long break for lunch, we then went onto the Fire Team Assessment which consisted of a 2 mile march (plus quite a bit for luck!) with full equipment, an additional 20lbs and varying shooting from 300, 200 and 100 metres. We were last off for the march and therefore knew we had to beat a time of just over 21 minutes. Off we set at **Sgt** 'No I'm not related to Seb Coe' **Robson's** 'steady' pace and never slowed. We eventually crossed the line nearly 2 minutes quicker than the next best time. However, we took a casualty, after crossing the line with **Cpl** 'Give me water' **Campbell** suffering badly from dehydration after being assisted in running a little faster than he would have liked. He was unable to compete in the shoot which, meant the team was given a hefty penalty deduction and consequently only managed 4th place on the shoot phase. This wasn't to matter though as the March and Shoot was over and 225 Sig Sqn finished up winning the Mercury Cup 3 points from 233 Sig Sqn.

225 Sig Sqn March and Shoot Team
WO2 (SSM) Hymas, Capt Worden, Sgt Robson,
Sgt Concepcion, Maj Whimpenny (OC), LCpl Owens,
Cpl Campbell, LCpl, Hall

At the end of the Mercury Cup there was a separate 'Honours Only' Falling Plate Competition, which was particularly tough as it was fired from the 300 metre point. The Squadron team proceeded to rub the rest of the teams' noses in the dirt and win convincingly in all heats and the final, being the only team to hit 9 of the 10 plates in each round! This resulted in a clean sweep for the Squadron and maximum points in the Mercury Cup towards the overall competition. Congratulations go to all those who took part, especially **Sgt** 'I can't quite catch Michael Johnson' **Robson** for his training and motivation behind the team.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO2 (RQMS) A. Sartorius**
Tp Janitor — **Sgt M. Concepcion**

After the completion of the Squadron rebuild, members of Alpha Tp have taken some well deserved holidays to many a far flung destination. These include such places as Ops Officer to Tenerife (after 'rain stopped play' on his caravan trip to Germany), RQ to Lanzarote, **WO2 Nelson** and **Sgt Fitz-Patrick** to the Dominican Republic (but not together!), **Cpl Brown** to South Africa and **Cpl Wardrope** to Mexico. Not forgetting **LCpl Jimmy** 'Chunter Chunter' **McLean** to Costa Del Doncaster, the Riviera of the North.

On the sporty side of life, the **RQ Tony Sartorius** (after completing a grand job on the organisation of the rebuild) is now able to represent the Corps at rugby (when he isn't sick or at physio). In fact, since the rebuild of the Sqn was complete, we haven't seen him at all! **Sgt Mich Concepcion** has also managed to find the time to travel to Blandford to take part in the Inter Unit six-a-side Football. Come on you Janitors!

ARRIVALS

Alpha Tp would like to welcome **WO2 Mick Brooks** from UKSCG into our very busy Small Systems Group. Also a welcome goes to **SSgt Dave Rook** on promotion to WO2 arriving to take over RQMS job, **Sgt Wooldridge** arriving from Hong Kong into the Ops Bureau department where he will join **Cpl** 'Cape Fear' **Bob Blair** for some Scottish lessons. Also arriving this month to the SRS are **Cpl Nicky Dunlop** returning to work after giving birth to a baby girl, **Lauren**, and welcome to **LCpl Carol Lambert** who joins us from the sunnier climes of 9 Sig Regt (Radio), Cyprus.

FAREWELLS

We bid a fond Au Revoir to **WO2 Fiona Nelson** who is travelling miles and miles across the compound to 233 Sig Sqn on promotion to WO1. You will be greatly missed as our Unit SAAFA Rep, but we are assured that her door is always open (just call her Diedre). Farewell is also bid to our illustrious SSM **Chris** 'Shurrup' **Hymas** who is off to 3 UK Div at sunny Bulford, we wish both him, **Sue** and **Humbug** all the best for the future. **Sgt Carl Magin** (AGC(SPS)) is also leaving our shores for a riveting tour of the MoD, we wish you and **Jane** the best (you'll need it). From the SRS, goodbyes go to **Cpl Liz Drew** who is finally out of the Army after 12 years and not forgetting **LCpl Helen** 'never here' **Nolan** who couldn't get out of her posting to 30 Sig Regt, no matter what she tried. All the best to one and all.

ECHO TROOP/C WATCH
Tp Comd — **Capt L.D. Burrell**
Shift Supervisor — **SSgt P. Davey**

Firstly hello and welcome to **Sgt Jim Porter** and his wife **Marie** and son **Ryan, Cpl** 'Pepsi' **Mattacola** and **LCpl Carla Gilligan**, and goodbye to **Cpl** 'Lance' **Beaton** who has gone to 14 Sig Regt for his last tour in the Army.

Lately some of the Watch members **Sgt Jim Porter, Cpl** 'Dave tight lines' **Marrs, Cpl** 'Pepsi' **Mattacola, LCpl Roy Venables** and **LCpl** 'Ned' **Kelly** had a day's parachuting course at Ballykelly. Unfortunately in the three times that they have been they have failed to jump at all, due to bad weather conditions, although on the last attempt were actually up in the plane ready to go. Congratulations go out to **Cpl** 'Pepsi' **Mattacola** on his engagement to **Vicky**, so no more nights out with the lads Pepsi. Apart from the parachuting attempts and the 'Pepsi Mattacola shock', this has been a very quiet time for the watch.

GOLF TROOP
Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS) Steele**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt J. Greenwood**

The last few months have been a busy time for Golf Tp, with the building now nearing completion the sight of technicians crawling around under desks and in floor ducts is commonplace. When the opportunity for a spot of recreation has arisen though, we have been quick to make the most of it, as proven by an excellent day on the golf course (organised by **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Brown**). The day started off a little slowly with **Sgt** 'Gez' **Walker** notching up a memorable 21 strokes on the first hole. However, he improved throughout the day and shoes and socks stayed on when adding his later scores. **SSgt John Greenwood** is reportedly now on for an 0 Confidential, having greeted even the dodgiest strokes of the CO with a resounding 'Good shot Sir!! How do you hit your irons so cleanly?'

Tommy has made a lot of effort to ensure the Troop plays as hard as it works, and invited all the lads around to his house for a spot of curry and liquid refreshment. The food–courtesy of **Sgt** 'Bahadur' **Graham** and **Tracy Steel**–was superb, however people did regret the curry powder the next day. **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Brown** proved to be a bit of a black belt at trousers down horse racing (for full explanation please contact this unit on secure means) and **SSgt** 'Tachy' **Greenwood** came close to losing his gringo moustache in a combination arm wrestling and beer drinking event. A final word must go to **Cpl** 'Evil Kneival' **Brown** for his valiant event to clear the Officer's Mess Annexe in one of the firm's cars. Allegedly those ramps in the road are to slow people down not for getting all four wheels off the floor. But what's an oil sump between friends.

FAREWELLS AND HELLOS

Welcome to **Cpls Michelle Watkins** and **Pick Payne**, hope you have an interesting and enjoyable tour with the Squadron. Farewell to **Cpl** 'Where's my posting order!??? Sniff bohoo' **Walker**, all the best with the part timers (no change there).

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON
SHQ/COMMCEN TROOP
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Manktelow**

NEW ARRIVALS AND CONGRATULATIONS

The Troop offers a hearty welcome to **Sig** 'Jo' **Leyland** who, although being straight from the factory seems to be adapting to life over here pretty quickly.

Congratulations and all the best goes out to **Cpl Dave Greenstreet** and his wife, **Joanne**, on the birth of their second child–a baby girl called **Eleanor**. There have been a few name changes and yet more pregnancies within the Troop. The first being **SSgt Lindsay Manktelow** who announced her pregnancy last month, so our warmest congratulations to both her and **Tony.** Next is **Sig Carrie Whitworth** (nee Carr) with best wishes from all on her recent marriage. Finally, all the best to **Sig Nikki Harman** who has just announced that she also is expecting.

The shaping of the Troop underwent an overhaul with COMMCEN Tp becoming attached to SHQ proving that all the best sports stars come from small places as was proved in the recent McKelvie Trophy football.

MCKELVIE TROPHY FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Many people believed that the outcome of the first game would decide the winners of the tournament and CONMCEN Tp proved them right. With convincing wins over TM, Romeo and India Tps thanks to dazzling runs from **WO2 (SSM) Day, WO2 (FofS) Forbes, Phil** 'Ravanelli' **Robson** and **Sig Alvin Black**, the team was untouchable. Although the defence came under lots of pressure, they stood fast. Well done to **Sgt Andy** 'Forest Gump' **Corlett, LCpl** 'Tankie' **Hamilton, Sig John Magee** and **LCpl Greg Cox** for keeping them out.

WORKSHOPS
Tp FofS — **WO2 (FofS) Andy Forbes**

PC REPAIR

PC Workshops has, of late, had a busy time of it, with every man and his dog seeming to need their PC repaired yesterday! **Sgt Mick Press**, fresh from T1 **Sgt Bill Fagan** and **Cpl Frank Henderson** completed their move to TM Tp buildings fitting twice the kit in half the space they had used before. We have just welcomed **Cpl** 'Chelsea' **Hughes**, also straight from his T1 in Blandford. Good luck with the baby **Frank** and **Sonia**–let's hope it has her looks.

CARFITS

The new spirit of Carfits Gang continues with our usual philosophy that any vehicle left outside the bay gets a fit. The newly promoted **WO2 (FofS) Andy Forbes** discovered this when he left his mountain bike outside and a complete Cougar system was 'expertly' fitted by **LCpl** 'Tankie' **Hamilton.** Farewell to **Cpl** 'Stan' **Stanbury**, now at 216 Para Sig Sqn and **Cpl Si Welsh** who has moved to 3 Bde FRT. Welcomes to **Cpls** 'Brain' **McLean** fresh from the factory and **Cpl Bob Bowden** posted from 204 Sig Sqn.

CRYPTO REPAIR WORKSHOPS

The Crypto workshop has been through a few changes with comings, goings and promotions. We have to say Goodbye to **Cpl Manny Cowie** who has left for Civvy Street–Good luck for the future. **Sgt Mick Ollenshaw** and newly promoted **Sgt Jase White** are still holding the fort, but have been joined by **Sgt Stu Murray** from Blandford after completing an arduous year on his T1.

DC WORKSHOPS

Another area of the workshops to receive a facelift is DC Repair. **Sgts** 'Indy' **Ind** and **Dave Kilgallon** have both moved onto 8 Bde FRT and TM Tp Installations respectively. The new blood is **Sgt** 'Mas' 'Scarlet Pimpernel' **Maxwell** and **Cpl Dave Rycroft** who have arrived from TM Tp and India Tp respectively.

THE REST OF SQUADRON
INDIA TROOP
Tp Comd — **Capt Rich Newhouse**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Frank Corrigan**

Life continues in India Tp with plenty of comings and goings. Farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Andy Forbes** and **LCpl Dave Rycroft** who go to Workshops and **Mr John Kilner** who goes to Civ Div. A Big Hello to **WO2 Russ** 'Little job for the nightshift' **Darlington** and wife **Elaine, Cpl** 'Willy' **Wilson, Sig Andy** 'Is there any beer left?' **Adam** and **Sig Jase Whitehead**. Good luck and congratulations to **Cpl Steve Munro** and **Cpl Stu McCluskie** on their marriages (Not to each other that is) and **Phil Callaway** on his Class 1 course (Have one in the G Spot for us). The new NCC is up and running and we are all settling down to the new shift system. Welcome back to nights for the Cpls–you all hated days anyway.

POSEIDEN FINN 1997
by Sgt 'Geordie' **English**

This was a two-day sailing expedition to introduce novices to a bit of offshore sailing. So, on a cold and blustery day the intrepid sailors set off from Bangor bound for Portpatrick in Scotland. The skipper was **Capt Rich Newhouse** aided and abetted by **Capt Ronnie Launders** and **Sig** 'Daz' **King**. The remaining novice crew was myself, **Cpl Dave Hallam** and **Sig Bobby Betts**.

Our journey started in the nice calm waters of Bangor Marina, however, as we left we were greeted by a 10 foot swell and winds of 25 Knots. Suddenly my stomach was telling me this was not going to be a pleasant crossing–a feeling shared by the rest of the crew. The journey took us 4 hours during which time the swell got bigger and most people decided to lighten the loads by disposing of their breakfasts. The 'I almost stuck it out' must go to **Sig Bobby Betts**, who managed to keep a brave face despite suffering quite badly from seasickness only to give in when we were in sight of harbour (actually about to enter the harbour). Never mind, I am sure the fish enjoyed the food.

Portpatrick offered some fine pubs and restaurants and the locals were very friendly. The following day was beautiful and sunny with very light winds–this was what sailing is all about! At one stage we did think that we would not make it back but the wind picked up and gave us all the opportunity to sail and navigate the boat. We eventually reached Bangor 9 hours later but the journey had been a lot more pleasant than the day before.

Sig Paul 'Reluctant Sailor' Betts at the helm, with
Sgt 'Geordie' English

ROMEO TROOP
Tp Comd — **Capt Nick Massey**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt (FofS) Sue King**

The Troop has been extremely busy over the past 3 months with the Ops section again bearing the brunt of the workload. Since the ceasefire the Troop has got busier rather than quieter, with Ops section being tasked with all manner of training. The Troop has welcomed **Capt** 'The Boss' **Nick Massey**, thrown straight in at the deep end, and **LCpl Karen Ballard** to the Tech section.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Monty Farrow** and his wife on the arrival of their baby girl, **Katherine**–enjoy those sleepness nights. Also congratulations to **Sgt Mark** 'Tug' **Wilson** on passing his Yeomans' selection and to **Cpl Pete Lawn** who finally achieved that long overdue promotion.

On the farewell side of life we would like to wish **Sgt Si Crowther** and family all the best on his FofS course. Also, farewell to **Cpl Scott Robinson** on his posting to the Island of Love and Keo (Cyprus) and finally to **Cpl Andy Clarke** who is off to Civ Div.

Foreman 'Sid' **Sideras** has finally found his vocation in life not in communications, but as the seller of some extremely dodgy T Shirts at grossly inflated prices. Finally we must congratulate **Cpl Steve Simpson** in being able to dash more than 300 metres from a helicopter without passing out or was it a grid reference check? If anyone in the Corps knows any cures for backache or any good stretching exercises could they please contact **WO2 Billy Bingham** ASAP.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd/FofS — **WO2 (FofS) Ian Rutherford**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Shaun Cook**

Life in the largest Troop in the Regiment continues at a pace. There have been many changes to the overall structure, notably the TOT, **Capt Gig Plumb** moving upstairs to Comms Branch to steady the ship. Unusually, the taskings for the Saddle Club have dried up of late! On the sports front, the McKelvie Trophy Tug of War was handsomely won although second place in the football was hurtful. We also bid farewell to the following: **SSgt Ged Keane** and **Wendy** who are posted to 7 Sig Regt, **SSgt Tony Quinn**, off to 9 Sig Regt after joining the ADP roster. Also there's **Sgt Alexander High** and **Marie** posted to 35 Sig Regt and hopefully still going FofS and also **Cpl Kev East** off on his T1 course. Good luck to you all wherever you go. On the arrivals front a warm welcome to **SSgt Bod McDonald** and **Chris** who arrives from Hong Kong with a box full of Gucci watches, **Sgt Jim Barr** and **Alison** from Blandford and **LCpl** 'Gilly' **Gilchrist** from sunny Germany.

THE INTER SQUADRON MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION

Teams entered for this competition came from Signals units all over the Province. The main competition consisted of four events. The NI Pistol Shoot, the Moving Target Shoot, the Judgemental Snap Shoot and the March and Shoot. There was also the Falling Plate Event which was to be judged separately from the main competition. Teams were to consist of five members for the main events and four for the falling plate.

The competition was fierce with all teams scoring highly in each event, however after a couple of shoots it became clear that first place would be fought over between 233 and 225 Sig Sqns. In spite of very good shooting from all the 233 Sig Sqn team, 225 pulled ahead–despite losing a man in the march stage of the March and Shoot, their strength showed through in the shooting.

Overall places were:

6th 39 Bde Sig Sqn
5th HQ Sqn 15 Sig Regt
4th Bde Sig Sqn
3rd 3 Bde Sig Sqn
2nd 233 Sig Sqn
1st 225 Sig Sqn.

233 Sig Sqn team members were **Sgt D Alderson** (Capt), **Sgt D Brock-Edlin**, **Sgt C Benson**, **Sgt R Campbell**, **Sgt D Watts**, **Cpl D Knapman**, **LCpl B Myerscough**, **Sig S Massey**.

COMMS BRANCH
LANYARD TROPHY

The task of training the Regiment's Lanyard Trophy Team fell to **WO1 (Yofs) Bob Nixon**. After weeks of training and an arduous journey just to reach the start point, at 0550 hrs, Thursday 11th June 1997 the team lined up to set off on the 40-mile march. At the halfway stage we had only lost one member of the team. The team slowed over the latter stages understandably, however ten members of the Regiment completed the 40-mile march in a time of 14hrs 57mins to finish in a creditable 8th position. The team would like to thank **Cpl** 'Mac' **McGuckien** and **LCpl Greg Cox** for their outstanding admin support.

The team after completing the 40 mile march
Back Row (*L-R*): LCpl Bob Hoskins, WO2 YofS Andy Drummand, WOI YofS Bob Nixon, Capt Richard Newhouse, WO1 RSM Steve Pellant, Sgt Tony Martin, LCpl Phil Callaway
Front Row (*L-R*): LCpl 'Griff' Griffiths, Sgt Mark Robson, LCpl Jason Owens

HELLO AND GOODBYES

Welcome to **WO1 (YofS) Steve Holt** who joined us on promotion to take up the reins of Comms Branch YofS, Good luck . . . and also to **Cpl Andy Forster**, hope you enjoy your time in Comms Ops. We say farewell to **WO1 (YofS) Bob Nixon** who is off to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, **Cpl Frank Baker** to 30 Sig Regt and **Cpl** 'Mac' **McGuckien** off to Blandford on his Class One course. Good Luck to all.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Capt Graham Addley** on his marriage to **Claire**, and also to **LCpl Steve Nelson** on his marriage to **Vicky** we offer them our best wishes for the future. Congratulations also to **Maj Yeoell** on being selected for promotion to Lt Col, and also to **FofS Steve Johnston** on his recent selection for a commission.

FAREWELL TO CAPT WHICHELO
(ADJT HQNI & 15 SIG REGT)

No it's not another wacky invention by 'Professor Whichelo' for canoeists who live away from the water, but RHQ HQNI and 15 Sig Regts' attempt to see him off in style. There is nothing like a Friday afternoon paddle around Thiepval Barracks as long as it ends up at the bar! As you can see from the faces of the assembled members of RHQ, we were sorry to see him go! Off to pastures new, **Capt** (now Maj) **Whichelo** is to take up the post of OC 202 Sig Sqn in Bulford. We wish him all the best.

3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (203)
BFPO 809

Sqn Comd — **Maj C.R. Owen**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) K. R. Winkles**

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt L. Launders**
Tp Sgt — **Sgt S. Parke**

Comms Tp continue to provide the vital comms support for 3 Inf Bde in the form of Syscon (no problem too big or small, no enquiry too ridiculous), COMMCEN, Crypto and Comms Trials Team. This cosmopolitan mix of roles and trade groups makes for an interesting but effective team. Having been somewhat stretched with limited manning a number of new arrivals over the last two months have been extremely welcome. The majority of the arrivals come from 30 Sigs (what have we done to deserve this?!). Comms Tp would like to welcome the following: **Sig** 'Nelly' **Nelson** and **Sig Chrissie Strain** from 7 Sigs, **LCpl** 'Sonic' **Harding, Sig** 'Moonmonkey' **Adams**, and **Sig George Marshall** from 30 Sigs, and **Sig** 'Frosty' **Frost** and **Sig Lee Mellor** straight from the factory. **Sgt Donna Nevens** has come on promotion from 16 Sig Regt to take over as Crypto and Commcen Sgt. She relieves **Sgt Karl Woodray** who is attached to CDA NI.

Comms Tp have been involved with a number of things over the past couple of months, these included three of the Troop showing off their Tiger Woods skills at the Brigade annual golf meeting. **Cpl** 'Fat Fingers' **Heath**, **Cpl** 'Tiny' **Johns** and **LCpl** 'I'm sure I booked out' **Harding**. Unfortunately they did better at sinking pints in the clubhouse than they did at sinking those little balls into the holes! On the more arduous side **Capt Richard Webb, Sgt Donna Nevens, Cpl** 'Tiny' **Johns** and **LCpl Lestor Richardson** 'volunteered' to represent the Squadron in the Kiwi half Marathon in Bulford. They thought that it would be an easy ticket to the mainland, but were made to work for their weekend out of Province. Despite a good showing in the Great North Run a few weeks earlier **Sgt Donna Nevens** sustained an injury and covered most of the course in an ambulance. The rest of the team achieved respectable times and do not seem to have been put off running stupidly long distances for no apparent reason, as they will be taking part in the Blandford half marathon in October. **Sgt Sam Parke** led the Squadron March and Shoot team to a reassuring third place in the Mercury Cup competition–obviously trying not to seem too keen.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd — **WO2 (FofS) Steven**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Pennell**

Life in the Troop is as hectic as ever despite the cease-fire. However life in the Province is not all that bad, a recent weekend away is witness to that.

BALLYKINLER BASH

A luxurious weekend away, was enjoyed by the Troop, at a first class holiday camp–Costa Ballykinler. 'A fine break away from work' said the Foreman, 'with a little stroll on the beach and a day viewing the countryside.' Foreman speak that translates to a CFT, partially on the beach and an APWT. The weekend started well with **LCpl** 'Kipper' **Fisher** showing the locals how not to squeeze a large vehicle through a small gap. Having arrived almost unscathed a successful day was had on the ranges with the two Woodys vying for top shot. Unfortunately **LCpl** 'UMIN' **Wood** did not realise that **LCpl Fisher** was assisting **Sgt Wood**, maybe next time 'UMIN'. The CFT proved easy enough except for the eight-mile sprint part. **LCpl Lester Richardson**, on loan from Comms Tp, took much pleasure in dragging the lads around. Even the clerks passed so he must have been good.

The Troop Barbecue went down well with entertainment being provided by **Cpl** 'Rab' **Nisbett, LCpl** 'Stud' **Eades, LCpl** 'Kipper' **Fisher** and **Sig Ken Boon**, all at the expense of everyone else. **LCpl Wood** provided all the ingredients of a fine feast, ably assisted by his loving Tp SSgt, **SSgt Ian Pennell**. I wonder if **LCpl Fisher** will tell the Foreman what he really did to his beer! Overall a great weekend and we even managed to complete most of the year's ATDS.

TM Tp enjoy their day on the beach

Over the past few months we have said farewell to **Cpl** 'Mac' **McDonald** and **SSgt Andy Dick** (Rab is really missing you). We wish you all the very best in your future employment. We welcome **Cpl Mason, Cpl Pope, Cpl Balkham, Cpl Baker, LCpl King, Sig Stainer** and last but not least **SSgt Andy Lothian**. We hope that you and your families enjoy the tour at the sharp end.

SQUADRON FOOTBALL

The NI six-a-side and the Royal Signals seven-a-side competitions both served as useful pre-season practice for the ambitious Squadron football side. A disappointing result in the NI tournament did nothing for our confidence but we were determined to produce a better account of ourselves at Blandford. Unfortunately, despite a rare goal from **WO2 (FofS)** 'Scotty' **Stevens**, we were thwarted by 15 Sig Regt in the quarterfinals. In a game reminiscent of the legendary clash between Anderlecht and Notts Forrest in 1984, the 1-1 draw went to 15 Sig Regt who had won more corners. The team are sad to lose top goal scorer **SSgt Andy Dick** who has been posted to the eventual winners of the competition, 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. We have high hopes for a more successful eleven-a-side season.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING–EXERCISE SNOWDON FINN

Ex Snowdon Finn was one of the many adventurous training exercises run by the Squadron over the year. By nature of the unit's split location, five troops and various shift systems, Snowdon Finn probably brought members of the MT, COMMCEN and Training Wing together for the first time in a non work environment. It would prove to be the make or break of us We departed at 0500 on a cold, wet and windy morning, which to those of you who have served in the Province is known locally as 'summer'. Although at first it seemed like any other cold early start we were shocked and subdued when we heard of the sudden death of Diana, Princess of Wales. The eleven-hour journey to Capel Curig Camp was very quiet.

On our first morning in Wales, having been thrilled to discover we were on fire picquet that night, we set off into the mountains. We parked at Pen-Y-Pass and walked up the miners' track towards the top of Snowdon. **Sgt Paul Beattie** was just commenting to **Sgt Sam** 'The Tat' **Parke** how generous **Cpl Jack Horner** (RLC) was being to us Scalybacks when **Cpl Horner** announced that we had all been sold into slave labour to the camp commandant. For no pieces of silver we were forced to work for the National Trust moving fence posts 500m up a near vertical climb. We were later informed that it had taken eighty Gurkha days to get them this far. Nonetheless we toiled and toiled all morning until we had made a substantial dent in what seemed like a monumental task. The weather, that had never been good, then closed in completely and the decision was made to abandon ship for the day. A worthwhile task had been started and a sense of achievement gained even if National Trust does sound like an item of underwear that I will probably now have to wear for the rest of my life.

Sgt Paul Beattie evidently not making light work of moving the tiny fence posts whilst LCpl Steele smirks in the background

Having ensured the safety of all whom stayed at Capel Curig Camp over night we waited for our orders from Ober Gruppen Fuhrer **Horner** (only kidding my lord). Today, he said, we would take the low tracks around the area (**LCpl Alan Steele** thought Jack meant Holland and Belgium, **Sig Chris Hoggard** managed to calm him down before he recounted the whole of the blitzkrieg first hand). Few of us had spent much time in North Wales and we were struck by the outstanding scenery and how unspoilt it seemed. We had a breathtaking walk until our bodies gave us the gypsies that we had done enough for the day. That evening even **Sig Chris Moore** who has only just emerged blinking out of

training, came out of his shell. His rendition of the Tub Thumpings 'I get Knocked Down' with kebab in hand has been recorded and will be used in resistance to interrogation training as white noise. On day four the weather was as bad as the locals had seen at this time of year and so we were advised against going into the mountains. Instead we spent a very pleasant day swimming in Bangor and picking up a few souvenirs. The weather on the fifth day was much improved and so we decided to finish moving the rest of the fence posts up the hill. Progress was slow but determined. We were stopped by many a group of civilians who wondered what we were doing. This remains a very good question, by the end of the day, however we did have a great sense of achievement and the sense of a conservation job well done. It has been a long time since I have had such a hard time getting out of my bed. On the sixth morning I was pleased to find that I was not the only one suffering. We spent the day walking around the bottom of the Glyders then crossing over to Crib Goch. The last mile to the minibus was run–the last one back bought the first round that evening.

Damp but not downhearted
(*L to R*): Sig Hoggard, LCpl Steele, Sgt Parke, Sgt Beattie and Sig Moore

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
BFPO 801

COMMS SECTION
OPS TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt John Fraser**
Comms Section SSgt	**SSgt Kev O'Neill**

Another hectic period for Comms Section, slowly adjusting to the One Tp, 2 Sections era. Its good to see that the Tp Comd **2Lt John Fraser** has taken up from his predecessor and is never here. There was a brief sighting of him prior to his departure on the Swiss Raid Commando to Switzerland, but apparently that was only to note when his extra duties were, and pick up his mail. In fairness to him, his time in the Squadron since arriving from Blandford has been well used, being pinged for any and everything that the SNCO's in the Squadron can fit into their in trays. Keep going boss, not far from your nervous breakdown.

The Section has as normal had its fair share of sporting activities to contend with. **Cpl Marie McChesney, Cpl Mandy Duffy, Sig Norma Moffat** and **Sig Charlie Docherty** all doing stalwart service in winning the NI Rounders Championships and coming an excellent runner up in the Army Rounders Championships. Well done to all those involved. As well as our rounders heroines, other members of the Section have been providing valuable service to the Bde HQ and Sig Sqn teams in Volleyball, Swimming, Tug of War, as well as taking full parts in the Mercury Cup Competitions that are run within the Province. Special mention must go to **LCpl Bri Rawlings** for doing his best to intimidate the Referees and opposition at the Volleyball competitions. I'm not sure who he scares more, us or them. Work wise, if you can fit any in between all the sporting events we have undertaken, has once again been hectic, trying to cram 8 days work into 7 as usual, however all the section from Syscon to Trials, Rover Group to the COMMCEN and Crypto have as always proved themselves more than able to met the challenges set for them.

As always there have to be a few tearful farewells and the Section bids a fond farewell to **Sig Geordie Haggath** off to Civ div and to **Cpl Marie McChensey** who was posted to fill a vacancy in 225? Sig Sqn at short notice and also to **Sig Fiona Smith**, who is also leaving to join the great unwashed in Civvy Street. Thanks very much for all the hard work and we wish you all the best for your futures. We welcome to the Section hot from her Tp Comd Course, **2Lt Stewart**, who we have seen decidedly lots more of than the Tp Comd (that wouldn't be hard), Fancy staying?? Also to **Cpl Kev Holland** who takes up a post as one of the Crypto NCO's and to **Sig Dave Kirton** who arrived from the Factory to work in the hardest worked COMMCEN in the Province. Welcome all and have a good time with the glorious and fighting 39th.

We unanimously decided to travel through the night in order to attend Diana, Princess of Wales' funeral on the last day of our exercise. It was a very moving experience that none of us will ever forget. Thousands of people silently lined the route of the funeral cortege. We followed the funeral cortege past Buckingham Palace and watched the service on the large screens. After the service we drove back to Capel Curig, every motorway bridge was covered with banners with personal messages and the road was strewn with flowers. We returned to Northern Ireland the next day agreeing that the exercise had been challenging and rewarding if a little subdued. The bad weather meant that we did not achieve all of our aims but each of us had a very welcome break from Northern Ireland.

EXERCISE POSEIDON FINN

What was planned by **LCpl Dave Hannam** as a week long epic offshore sailing adventure turned into a two day introduction to offshore sailing because of the last minute non-availability of a skipper. Despite these changes the intrepid crew of six from 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and 233 Sig Sqn decided to make the most of the time available under the supervision of **Capt Richard Newhouse** (233 Sig Sqn). After a baffling tour of the boat, an introduction to the mysterious language of sailing and a safety brief we set off from Bangor harbour to cross the North Channel, destination Portpatrick. For those new to sailing it was certainly in at the deep end–fortunately not literally. As the wind got up and the sea became uncomfortably choppy we learned very fast about reefing sails and steering to the compass. By the time we reached Portpatrick several hours later everyone was exhausted and several (including the skipper) were looking forward to getting on dry land having been more than a little seasick on the way across. By the time we had relived the experience several times in the pub that night anyone would have thought we had sailed across the Atlantic!

The next day dawned much more brightly and we found that we were almost becalmed. After some man overboard drills off the Scottish coast we pointed for home. This time it was not seasickness but sun-burn which was the danger as **Capt Ronnie Launders** ably demonstrated! The sea was almost flat and the sky cloudless; woolly hats and waterproofs were discarded in favour of shorts and shades. The light winds meant that the crossing took almost twice as long as the trip out but we arrived back in time to clean the boat and hand it over that evening. Despite the curtailment of the expedition it was certainly a comprehensive introduction to the contrasts of offshore sailing. We had an excellent break from the normal routine and a lot of fun.

RQMS DEPARTMENT
WO2 (RQMS) Lawes

It's been a busy month for all in the dept, commencing with the Commanders' Cocktail Party early in September. As the workload started to ease off a little, the 'Famous Five' decided to swan off to Stranraer for the day armed with mountain bikes, daysacks and lashings of ginger beer. The crew consisting of **Cpl Al Keir, Cpl Paul Selby, LCpl Lyn Sheridan, Sig** 'Naf' **Ufton** and **Sig** 'Sticky' **Bunn** started off with a glass of Sherry on the Seacat to prepare us all for the daunting task of scaling the highest of hills that lay ahead of us. Ever rode a bike up a 6-mile hill? **Paul** 'King of the mountains' **Selby** managed it (hardly out of breath) Not! The rest of us took the easier option of walking. Having all safely got to the top, **Al** realising he had forgotten the map started to flap. Not being one to be outdone on the day 'Sticky' **Bunn** saved the day by producing his cucumber sandwiches lovingly prepared by his mum (wrapped in a map). Enough said! Thankfully the last 10 miles were downhill and conveniently we ended up at the local tavern for a pub lunch. Top recce **Al**!!! A good day was had by all.

General notes to include: **WO2 (RQMS) Lawes** is in Blackdown on his RQ's course. Arrivals **Cpl Selby** arrived from 3 Div. Posted and Promoted **Sgt Keir** to 16 Sigs.

EXERCISE SADDLE SORE III
by LCpl Wardale

Armed only with the Exercise theme songs, a naive enthusiasm, and hopelessly unprepared backsides, we began the long trek to Wales. The sober state of the whole party that morning was a fine example of how the Exercise would continue. After a night introducing ourselves to the delightful locals, perhaps helped by having **Cpl Gethin Bevan** (real name!) as an inside link to the very Welsh populace, we began our first day of mountain biking. Immediately it became clear that there were two groups–the bikers led by **Sgt Andy** 'Strike a Pose' **Maylett**, and the biffs at the back, inspired and encouraged by **LCpl J.C.** 'Off, Bev!' **Moses**. Faced with a further 30km, we had our first 'casualty' of the trip. **LCpl Neil** 'It was me gears!' **Wardale** decided to take a dive under **Cpl** 'I couldn't help it' **Bevan's** bike. **LCpl Geordie** 'Sleeping Bag' **Tonks** ('nuf said) was quick to volunteer to sacrifice a day's biking to take him to the hospital, with the help of a friendly neighbourhood milkman. As the days went on, everybody became more confident with both their bikes and their abilities. Notably the transformation of a mild mannered MT Sergeant into **Sgt Stu** 'Banzai' **Vernon**, whose next biking expedition is to K2, was a sight to remember.

The nights were a quiet affair of cleaning bikes, cooking dinner, discussing the pros and cons of aluminium frames and studying the maps for the following day's activities. **Cpl** 'Muz' **Murray** was particularly quiet during these nighttime rest periods. We biked far and wide across Snowdonia, Betys-y-coed, met the interesting locals of Pwhwelli, and found some excellent trails in the Coed-y-Brennan area–a must for next year. The famous Red Bull route provided entertainment for the 'biker' group, while the rest put their stabilisers on, got beat by kids, and laughed at biking-spotters. We promised not to mention the punctures our bikers received that day, or the lack of a working pump, so we won't. Sadly all good things come to an end. So it was with a group sigh, that the intrepid, and extremely Saddle Sore bunch, put the MIB on the radio, packed their boxer shorts away, and made their slow, sad way back to glorious NI.

1997 GREAT NORTH RUN
by Cpl Muz Murray

The annually held Great North Run is a very high profile, atmosphere charged event bringing people not only from every corner of the UK, but also further afield, to run the 13 mile road route stretching from Newcastle to South Shields. Ever conscious of maintaining its commitment to charity sporting events, the Squadron dispatched a team to compete in the event. Under **SSgt Andy** 'pie eater' **Paterson**'s watchful eye, **Sgt Al** 'gold card' **Keir, Cpl** 'Muz' **Murray** and **Pte** 'grab-a-gran' **Harman** boarded the Belfast to Stranraer ferry and made their way to Whitburn TA Centre, where we met up with **WO2** Brummie 'Steeplejack' **Lawes** and **Cpl Neil** 'I'll drive!' **Wardale**, who had both taken time off their leave especially to participate in the event.

There was lots of pre-race preparation–a somewhat unorthodox combination of sleep deprivation, carbo-loading (mainly pizzas and kebabs) and hydration techniques using copious amounts of yeast beverages! Nevertheless, come Sunday, we were eager for the race to start, and the record-breaking crowd of 36,000 runners was sent on its way by **Alan Shearer.** The atmosphere was electric, everybody was on a high, with lots of fun runners in various states of dress and friendly banter from even the slightly more serious runners. We were encouraged all the way by the crowd of never ending spectators adorning the route, bearing well appreciated gifts of oranges and sugary sweets. As well as the water stops, there were various types of bands at most major roundabouts and all this meant the race seemed to be over in a relatively painless amount of time. A really good time was had by all, and we managed to raise £250 for the childrens home at 80 Malone Road, the Squadrons nominated charity. After the race, the pre-course preparation had proved so successful we decided to carry on the motion, before making our way back to NI, stiff, tired but with a good sense of achievement, and thoroughly looking forward to improving on our time next year. A big thanks to the bar staff at Idols for making it all worthwhile.

8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
BFPO 807

The Squadron continues to be busy despite the PIRA cease-fire and the start of the all party talks at Stourmont. Whilst all personnel wish for a lasting settlement to come from the talks, the Squadron's operational role of maintaining and operating the Brigade's communication infrastructure continues unabated.

FAREWELL TO WO2 (YOFS) McHUGH

The Squadron would like to sent its best wishes to **WO2 (YofS)** 'Wee Terry' **McHugh** who leaves the Army in October 1997 after 22 years of service to the Colours. In a varied and demanding career **Terry** served in many different theatres, and is, as a result, entitled to wear The South Atlantic Medal with rosette, The General Service Medal with Clasp Northern Ireland, Accumulated Campaign Service Medal and the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Despite being in the twilight of his career, **Terry** was completely devoted to the Squadron during his last tour from March 1995 to March 1997. The Squadron would like to wish **Terry** and his family the best luck for the future and extend to him a warm invitation to visit us next time he is in Londonderry.

SENIORS VERSUS JUNIORS RUGBY

The opening rugby game of the season is the traditional Seniors Vs Juniors game. Despite pre match banter by the juniors the seniors were quietly confident that they would once again hold the trophy. **Capt. Colin Vaudin** won the toss for the seniors and the battle lines were drawn. The first Scrummage set the tone for the match with **Sgt Carl** 'Just one last season' **Budding** winning vital ball and **2Lt Alex** 'Gazelle' **Clixby** bursting off the back of the scrum and punching a hole through the juniors defence. The seniors back division, led by the outstanding partnership of **Maj Nadine RAMC** and **Sgt** 'Cleggy' **Clegghorn**, soon had the juniors in total retreat and scored try after try. Other notable performances came from **WO2 (YofS)** 'I will not play in that stupid game Sir' **Donoghue** and **Sgt Steve** 'Armani' **Brown**. The juniors fought hard throughout but despite the best efforts of both **Cpl Gareth Dearden** and **Sig** 'under the thumb' **Barrs** the seniors started to run away with the game. The game ended with a 44-0 victory for the seniors but a superb afternoon of good sporting fun was had by all.

The Victorious Seniors Rugby Team
Back Row (*L-R*): Capt Pete Hurry, Sgt Mark Fitzpatrick, 2Lt Alex Clixby, Capt Colin Vaudin, WO2 (YofS) Donaghue, SSgt Pete Griffiths, Maj Nick Sealy-Thompson, Maj Andy Whelan.
Front Row (*L-R*): Capt Gareth Powell, Sgt Neil Hunt, Sgt Martin Coles, Sgt Steve Brown, Sgt Carl Budding, Sgt 'Cleggy' Clegghorn, Maj Martin Nadin.

INTER TROOP TRIATHALON

The Inter Tp Triathlon took place on the 3rd September 1997 at Shackleton Bks, Ballykelly. The sprint triathlon event is competed for over the following:

500m swim, 20km cycle, 5km run.

Team SHQ, consisting of **Capt** 'Taff' **Watts, WO2 (YofS) Donoghue** and **Sgt** 'Dez' **Eldridge** started off as the favourites but they were not destined to have it all their own way. The first part of the event was in the pool with the best time coming from **Cpl Jeremy Martins** of 5 Royal Irish at 9.20 minutes. Notable performances in the pool came from **Sig** 'I'm not going to be sick' **Brown** and **Capt** 'Fish' **Watts**. The cycle ride proved difficult when several of the cycles, provided by the PRI, self-destructed on their way around the airfield. **SSgt Pete Griffiths** put in the best time, at 48.39 minutes. The fastest time on the run came from the Adjt of 15 Sig Regt, **Capt Fred Wichelo**, with a time of 16.10 minutes, much to the delight of his CO, Comd Comms (NI). The entire event was a great success and the results were as follows:

Team Results:	Individual Results:
1st–Comms Tp A.	1st–**LCpl Burke** 1hr 19min 54sec.
2nd–SHQ.	2nd–**SSgt Griffiths** 1hr 20min 00sec.
3rd–Comms Tp B.	3rd–**LCpl Green** 1hr 24min 04sec.

Comd Comms (NI), Lt Col Rowlinson R Signals, presents the Winning Team Trophy to LCpl Foster and LCpl McIlroy

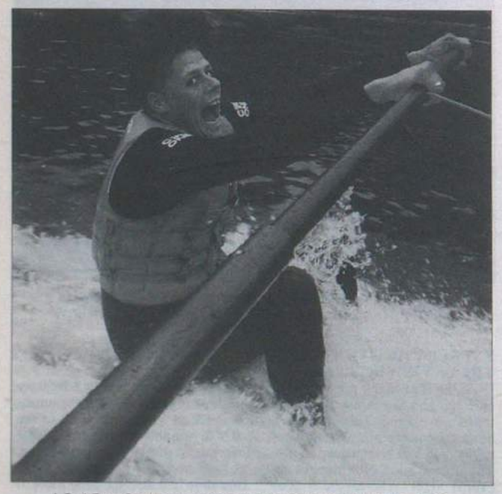
EXERCISE ACTIVE SWORDFISH
THE DS VIEW by 2Lt Alex Clixby

At the start of my pre Tp Commanders course attachment to 8 Infantry Bde HQ and Sig Sqn I was given the task of organising an adventurous training weekend. This came as quite a shock as I had missed all of the adventurous training expeditions at RMA Sandhurst, due to playing rugby, and had been asleep in most of the briefs, due to being knackered. The organisation didn't prove to be as hard as I first thought as **WO2 (YofS) Nigel** 'Where's the window?' **Donohue** had already done most of the work. After a few recce's and the writing of a few Admin orders, we were ready to go.

Ex Active Swordfish was a three day exercise that took place from Friday 26th September to Sunday 28th September 1997. We were based at the Activity Centre at the 5 Royal Irish Base, Coleraine. From here we had two days of canoeing, mountain biking, climbing and abseiling. This all took place in locations close to Coleraine and included parts of the Giants Causeway coastline and Ramore Head in Portrush. The area that was used was perfect. A very beautiful area that provided all the exercise personnel with a well needed escape from the Londonderry environment. We were spoilt for choice with experienced adventurous training instructors and took the cream of the crop, including **Sgt Col** 'Grab a Granny' **Bentley**, **Sgt Carl** 'Not another Guinness' **Budding**, **Sgt Neil** 'Tall Story' **Hunt**, **Sgt Mark** 'Sea-Dog' **Fitzpatrick** and **Cpl Mark** 'Buzz Lightyear' **Butler**. With such an experienced group of instructors it seemed that nothing could go wrong.

The canoeing was a great success with **Sig Daz** 'Stable as Jelly' **Morley** managing to capsize his canoe twice on a motionless mill pond. However, most of the other canoeists seemed to get to grips with the art pretty quickly and managed to canoe the course following the gallant **Cpl Mark** 'All the Gear, no Idea' **Butler**, who managed to finish the weekend without drowning anyone or getting lost. The climbing and abseiling was also a great accomplishment, with many beginners learning the ropes at Ramore Head in Portrush under the guidance of **Sgt Col** 'Hide your Grandmother' **Bentley** and **Sgt Neil** 'I organised this' **Hunt**. There were a number of climbs each of varying difficulty, which proved very successful after a night recce by **Sgt Neil** 'Does a lot for Charity' **Hunt**. The climbs were thoroughly enjoyed by all, although **Cpl** 'Naked fish' **Wright** seemed much happier to go skinny dipping in the freezing cold sea. Myself, **WO2 (YofS) Nigel** 'Interior decorator' **Donohue**, **Sgt Carl** 'Just one more pint' **Budding** and **Sgt Mark** 'Banzai' **Fitz-Patrick** were in charge of the mountain biking. This was not too arduous but did cause most of the group to sweat a little, although that was probably waiting for a Big-Mac in Coleraine McDonald's. **LCpl Nikki** 'Give us a push' **Keneford** called for help once or twice and **2Lt Jo** 'Super Gran' **Stewart** was undoubtedly the slowest thing on two wheels. Once again a prize should go to **Sig Daz** 'My brakes don't work' **Morley** for his slight accident while racing down a very steep hill, without brakes, while trying to catch **Sgt** 'Eddie Kid' **Coles** and **Sig** 'Noo-Noo' **Mier**–luckily he wasn't hurt. On Saturday 27th September we held a watersports day at a watersports centre just a few miles outside Coleraine. This was a great facility that was thoroughly enjoyed by almost 40 Squadron members. Sqn Comd, **Maj Mark** 'The Boss' **Perry** and **WO1 (RSM) Keith** 'The Badge' **Fisher** visited us to take part in the various watersports along with a number of other day-trippers.

The activities at the centre were great. There was a chance for Banana Boat Riding that required great expertise not to fall off. Once off, the banana boat was even more difficult to get back on as **2Lt Jo** 'I can't get on!' **Stewart** found out. **WO1 (RSM) Keith** 'Big kid' **Fisher** and **Sgt Mark** 'even bigger kid' **Fitzpatrick** were taken back to their childhood on the banana boats–it was great to see grown men acting like little children! **Sgt Carl** 'Ski Supreme' **Budding** and **LCpl Phil** 'Sport Billy' **Minns** were true professionals on water-skis, unlike myself–being under 5 foot tall must have been a definite advantage! **WO1 (RSM) Keith Fisher** was quite impressive on skis too, especially with his flying Superman impressions! The Kayak boating turned into a free-for-all with the members of each boat waging war like pirates of old. This started off with the throwing of water but soon turned into a mission to capsize each other's kayak and get **SSgt Pete** 'Can I borrow a shirt?' **Griffiths** into the water. The weekend was a great success, with the members of the Squadron having tremendous fun.



LCpl Daz Smithurst shows the rest of us how to do it, Water Skiing that is!

THE SOLDIERS VIEW
by Pte Hayley Smith

It all started very badly when on orders it told us we had to parade at 0600 hrs (as a clerk I didn't know that time existed). We all made it and moved up to the activity centre in Coleraine where our accommodation reminded us all of 'Porridge', but more crowded. The female rooms were strategically placed next to the seniors, for our own protection?

The first day's activities were mountain biking, rock climbing and canoeing. The mountain biking was over a route of about 16 miles covering terrain along the coastal cliffs and the beach. The rock climbing was held at Port Rush and was run by **Sgt** 'She wasn't that old' **Bentley**. The rock face he had picked out seemed impossible at first but we all got up it and had a lot of fun abseiling down again. The canoeing was the most difficult activity to master as my canoe seemed to have a life of its own. As a result I spent more time spinning round in circles whilst the rest of my group paddled down river. The activities carried on to early evening and then it was time to have a quiet trip into town for a refreshment or two, well this type of exercise is thirsty work. We returned to the activity centre later that night for a last drink when someone suggested going ice-skating. Christopher Dean had no competition, judging by the way **LCpl Trev Stamford** managed to take out everyone on the rink during his first circuit.

Saturday was the Watersports day on the River Bann, (September, NI and water is not a good mix). After being fitted up with wetsuits (**Sgt Budding** had to use a shoehorn to get into his and **Sig Morley** is the first man ever to have a baggy wetsuit), we all headed for the water. The activities included banana boat rides, water-skiing and kayaking. No-one managed to stay on the banana boat for more than ten seconds and we soon sussed that the driver was just convinced we were not wet enough and was deliberately turning it over. The water-skiing was easier and nobody fell off, especially **Cpl** 'I was pushed, honest' **Marriott**. By mid afternoon everyone started to get hypothermia so we headed back for a well earned barbecue. That evening we tried out the local nightlife in Port Rush and were entertained by the two Elvis's, namely **Sgt Neil Hunt** and **WO2 (YofS) Donoghue**. By the way Yeoman why were you drinking peppermint schnapps, with a pickled egg in it, all night. The entire weekend was good fun and a welcome break from Londonderry so we will be back next year, if Port Rush county council hasn't banned us.

AUTUMN FETE 1997

Once again it was time for the summer fete, only a little bit late on 13th September and so the change in name. **WO2 (MTWO) Kemp** was tasked with the organisation and having only arrived in Province during July was running around like a headless chicken. OK closely followed by myself, **Sgt Crowhurst** MT Sgt. A week to go and all the plans had been made and so it was just a case of sitting back and letting it all fall into place. As you all know no plan survives contact with the enemy, in this case the AAC who didn't want a fete on their helipad, and so last minute alterations were required. Having eventually fitted 13 '12 by 12s' and 3 '24 by 18s' into a kiddies play park the fete began. The big day arrived and the weather, obviously booked by the training wing, was typically Northern Irish, raining as usual. Not to be put off **Cpl Roberts** carried on with the Noddy Train and the kiddies smiles at least brightened up the day. **Pte Smith** from SHQ was the day's only casualty having banged her head on the Sumo Wrestling game, and this, not the time spent in the beer tent, was responsible for her sore head in the morning. All in all a good day was had by all in Londonderry Station with the face painting stall and the bouncy castle being especially busy. A lot of money was raised for all the Station charities and a big thanks to all those who supported the event.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

The Troop has seen its entire hierarchy change since the last edition of *The Wire* and so we have to say a fond farewell to the old OC **SSgt Pete Griffiths**, off to 7 Sigs, and **Sgt Mark Wareing** off to train cadets. We welcome **2Lt Clixby** who joins us from Sandhurst for a 3 month pre-troopies attachment and hope you have an enjoyable time before you get down to some real work. The new Tp Comd, **SSgt Laffey**, arrives from 238 Sig Sqn and we all look forward to some bulling parades. **Sgts Corcoran** and **Skimmins** also join the Troop from 3 Div and 16 Sigs respectively. We hope you all have a peaceful and enjoyable tour.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

After another strenuous couple of months in 'sunny' Londonderry things have finally returned to normal, with **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Roy Keane' **Higgins** and **Sgt Mark** 'Triathalon is good for you' **Chivers** actually completing a full week in camp. The Dept has been busy with the Bi-annual stocktaking board but has still had time to take part in the Inter Troop Triathalon, less said the better, and the Squadron's Golf competition won by our own **Cpl Eddie Porter**. We only have one farewell this issue and that is to the old stalwart of the Dept, **LCpl** 'Geordie' **Knott**, off to Rheindalen and Bosnia (OAP on ops). Seriously our best wishes go to 'Geordie' and his family for the future.

40 Sig Regt (V)
Belfast

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

The Regiment warmly welcomes back **Sgt Mick Simcock** and **Tracy** from 2 Sig Regt who has come back to do the same job as last time in 66 Sig Sqn. Also welcome to **LCpl Paul Dearden** from 21 Sig Regt who has taken over as the CO's driver. Farewell, good luck and congratulations to **Cpl Paul Conroy**, who has left us on promotion to join 30 Sig Regt.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **Lt Ian Craig** on his promotion, **Lt Hugh Lynch** on his commissioning in 69 Sig Sqn and **2Lt Patrick Watson** on his commissioning from Sandhurst. Congratulations also to **WO2 (SSM) Lyle** on his promotion to take up the post vacated by **Hugh Lynch** at 69 Sig Sqn, and to **Sgt Martin** of the same Squadron on his promotion. **Maj J. S. Fallows** (OC 66) and **Capt (TOT) J. Long** are both congratulated on being awarded the Territorial Decoration.

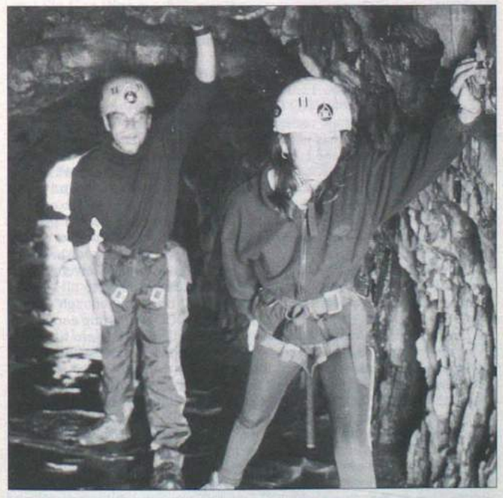
30TH ANNIVERSARY JOINT MESS DINNER NIGHT

The SOinC (Army), **Brig N.F. Wood ADC** and the Comd 107 (Ulster) Bde, **Brig A.A. Wilson OBE**, were guests of honour at a joint Officers' and Sergeants' Mess dinner night. This was held by 40th (Ulster) Sig Regt (V) at Clonaver Park, Belfast, on the evening of October 3rd to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Regiment.

69 (NIH) SIGNAL SQUADRON
EXERCISE LUNE FINN 28 AUGUST-1 SEPTEMBER 1997

Ex Lune Finn was the Squadron's annual summer adventure training weekend. It was based at Halton Training Camp on the outskirts of Lancaster. The activities planned were kayaking, windsurfing, biking and climbing. The advanced party set out from Limavady on Thursday 28th August to take over the camp and collect equipment on the mainland. The main party of intrepid adventurers then left Limavady Thursday evening to arrive in the early hours of Friday. Activities began at 0730 hrs, Friday morning with the customary fire drill.

The windsurfers set off for the lakes at Southport and the start of a two day course for them to gain a Level 1 RYA windsurfing award, taken by **SSgt** 'Mo' **Howarth**. **LCpl Ian** 'the fish' **Palmer** seemed to be content spending a lot of his time swimming rather than standing on the board. The cyclists were bussed out to the start point of their 'road to hell' and the canoeists and climbers stayed in camp to begin their activities. The cyclists decided that the 'Road to Hell' was a bit on the long side especially after a wrong turn and a potential heart attack or two. The intrepid adventurers at this point decided a rest stop was the thing and halted at a local hostelry along the way.



Cpl Johnson and LCpl Robinson adventure training in Wales

The groups back at camp started off their morning on the indoor climbing wall, a strange starter for those doing the kayaking but it provided a fill in until the weather improved for them to get on the water. **SSgt Lloyd Cammock** decided that he and **Sig Sheryl Williams** would try their own version of 'Gladiators'. **SSgt Cammock** seemed somewhat disappointed when **Sig Sheryl** 'Amazon' **Williams** outshone him on the wall. After the wall the climbers headed out to Twistleton Scar for an afternoon on real rock, climbing with much style, elbows and knees, up a series of single pitch climbs. The kayakers meanwhile were down at the River Lune to start their 1 Star training with **Sgt Curley**. Initially the going was tough due to strong winds but after a short river trip a sheltered area was discovered and skills training began. **Sig Ricky Lindsay** took the best ducking of the day after showing no fear and following one of the instructors down a weir. Unfortunately he attempted some tricky stuff and tried to negotiate it sideways. By the end of the day most were up to the 1 Star BCU standard and will complete any further training and the test itself back in the province. Activities ended for the day and the Squadron cleaned themselves up and put on their glad rags for the evening entertainment in Southport. The Ops Offr as usual only had a pair of jeans, and when told that if he wanted to get into any decent nightclubs he needed trousers he duly went into Lancaster and bought a brown pair of jeans instead. Needless to say he was refused entry to nearly every club in Southport. A good night then followed, although never have so few tried so hard with so many chat-up lines and failed so miserably.

Day two began again with everyone except the windsurfers swapping activities. The format for the day stayed the same. The 'Road to Hell' was conquered, by as **LCpl Joanne Palmer** put it 'even us girls', and a few embarrassed looks were seen on the faces of the all male group of the day before. The windsurfers finished their course and passed their tests. They are all now holders of the RYA Windsurfing Level 1 award. That evening, prior to heading home, it was pretty much a unanimous decision to return to Southport for the evenings' festivities . . . so it was!

85 (ULSTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON

After a much needed summer stand down, the Squadron returned in August and went straight into rehearsals for a parade celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the reformation of the TA in Northern Ireland. The parade was held at Balmoral showgrounds on 27th August. The inspecting Officer was **HRH The Duke of York. Maj Cathy Sutherland** led the contingent from the Regiment with **WO2 Mark Brotherston** as contingent **SSM.**

Maj Cathy Sutherland
leads the Regimental Contingent past HRH, The Duke of York

During September the Squadron got in some practice for the forthcoming BFT by pulling a Radio Relay vehicle around Newtownards. Organised by **SSgt Jim Clasper** and H Tp, the vehicle pull raised funds for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, The Race Against MS and the Not Forgotten Association. That evening, G Tp and **SSgt Eddie Hedley** (congratulations on his recent promotion) took over and organised a further charity bash to continue the fund raising. Over £1300 was raised in total. Also that night the **OC** presented wedding gifts to **SSgt Marty Harrow** and **Pauline.**

SSgt Jim Clasper has the easy job

September also saw the second, tri-annual (tradition made on the spot) 'Friends of 85' Reunion dinner. This brought together serving and ex-Officers and SNCO's of 85 Sqn, and was particularly special as it was also celebrating the Squadron's 30th anniversary. 33 former members attended, including 8 ex-OC's and 4 ex-SSMs. A great night was had by all with many 'one-eye' stories.

EXERCISE MANX FINN 29TH AUGUST-1ST SEPTEMBER 1997

85 Sqn set off on Ex Manx Finn Stretch 1, which was conducted on the mystic Isle of Man at League Bunk House, Ramsey. The weather at the start was fine, and the main party were met by an extremely sober and cheerful reception party (who had spent most of Friday carrying out close target recce's on the local amenities and opposite sex, hello Eric!). We were then split into groups for the following days activities. These included Hill walking, Sea Canoeing, Water sports, Abseiling, Climbing and Mountain Biking. As with all adventure training exercises, both events and characters spring to mind, such as **SSgt** 'Eric' **Coleman**. The two sea kayaking instructors (**Mr Herridge** and **Campbell**) displayed newfound skills of underwater kayaking which duly impressed the local instructors. The sacrificial 'Water Melon' found its place with the junior ranks team after the mess rugby challenge. The culinary delights of **WO2 Mark Brotherston** were both adventurous and tempting especially the custard. The weekend proved to be a great success and I think the Squadron members, both young and not so young, will agree that when in the Isle of Man you are 'Quids in'.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
BFPO 15

CO **Lt Col P.A. Pratley MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M.A. Schofield**

Ex Rhino Replen has been looming on the horizon for over a year. Even in Bosnia it reared its head as people started to discuss what was going to be the biggest continental exercise since the end of the Cold War. About 12,000 Regular and TA soldiers descended on to the Div to practice their war fighting logistic capability and it became the Regiment's problem to ensure that they communicated. Although the Regiment itself wasn't being exercised, the communications plan became as intricate a piece of planning as Bosnia. A lattice of Ptarmigan was overlaid on to almost a third of the Federal Republic of Germany, combining radio relay paths, the Army Telephone Network and the Bundeswehr telephone network. Euromux was laid alongside and the Danes appeared with DEOS. The Regiment with heavy support from 16 Sig Regt and elements of 7 Sig Regt, spread itself over a vast area making our own integral support by the Regt Echelon a feat in itself. 21 and 36 Sig Regts deployed complete with 204 and 94 (BY) Sig Sqns and 604 Sig Tp. Excon and HQ Div Sp Gp were the focal points for the Division on the Exercise and as units from all over arrived, deployed and eventually recovered successfully.

LCpl Jinks and Sigs Keers, Bartlett, Curran and Morris enduring the deprivations of deployment to Köterburg

We were delighted to host **The Master of Signals** and the Corps Band. They met and played for Officers and WOs from all of the Corps' exercising units, on the Teutoburger Wald, and the Band went to play for exercising soldiers elsewhere, most memorably on top of the Koterburg to an appreciative audience of several hundred. The school children the next day seriously enjoyed their concerts as well. The exercise has been judged a success and large numbers of very tired loggies have gone home satisfied and we hope a little wiser of what it took to allow them to have a good exercise. Meanwhile a sizeable element of the Regiment has gone to join 2 Sig Regt and 200 Sig Sqn in Poland.

The corps Band on top of the Köterburg, on Ex Rhino Replen

THE RECCE PERSPECTIVE

'Hello, **Captain Anderson**?'

'Yes.'

'This is **Norman Johnson**, QM of the 2nd Bn Royal Regt of Fusiliers up in Celle. You know the garages you wanted for that exercise of yours, well I'm afraid you can't have them.'

'Hang on **Norman** this wasn't just my exercise, this is Rhino Replen the big Divisional one...12,000 Loggies from all over UK and your garages are going to house HQ DSG for a week. It starts in 5 days time.'

'I'm sorry but there are currently 138 very large trees in those garages. That's where the storm has just put them. It has also lifted all the roofs off our blocks and moved the LAD across the parade-square like Dorothy's house in the 'Wizard of Oz'. We're talking millions of deutchmarks!'

So began a frantic hunt by **Capts James Anderson** and **John Townsend** for a suitable site to house HQ DSG, the principal exercising HQ for Ex Rhino Replen. What was supposed to have been a planned deployment, worked out months in advance, had now become a critical exercise. **Cpls Jim Prior** and 'Jock' **Reid**, both probably wished they had never learned to speak German, as they drove round Lower Saxony each day for a week with the Recce Officers. They talked to all sorts of farmers and factory owners to try and find real estate big enough for HQ DSG and locals amenable enough to panzers. DCOS's parting comments, as the intrepid foursome had set off..... 'Well just find me a wood,' (provided an interesting contrast to COSs' comments that threatened violence if he found himself in a wood). This from the chap who had previously discarded all the tables and chairs from the HQ, so he and his staff had to eat all their meals sitting on their webbing. Knowing full well that they would get lynched by their peers if they put HQ DSG into a wood; factories, barns and old camps were paced and locals placated to confirm whether or not the HQ would fit. By the end of the week, tired and weary, the site was found. An abandoned German Barracks not 5kms from the original location. Success not only for this exercise but for any future ones in that area as both Recce Officers turned up a number of potential sites each providing their own challenges.

HQ DIVISIONAL SUPPORT GROUP (211 SIGNAL SQUADRON)

Ex Rhino Replen saw the end of an era for Comd Tp. The Div's HQ had decreed that, in line with Army Doctrine Publication Volume 2–'Command', the Divisional Headquarters needs to be lean, mean, manoeuvrable and survivable. Consequently the 'big tent', which successfully served various HQ configurations throughout the dark years of 3rd Shock Army's stay in Magdeburg, was finally laid to rest. In its place we now have an all singing, all dancing modular MFOT (M = Massive) which can be erected in a variety of shapes and sizes. Historians have already noted that this new tent takes twice as long to erect as its predecessor and is approximately 20% larger. However, not all is doom and gloom. **Sig Nicky Thompson** and **Sig Jessika Limbert** (combined height 7 foot 1 inch) are delighted to report that you have to be at least 5 foot 11 inches if you want to become a professional tent erector. God help **Sig Ky Wilcockson** when he returns from the Falkland Islands. **SSgt Harry Kemp**, recently arrived from RMAS, is delighted with the new tent because erection requires precision timing, teamwork and, allegedly, lots of foot-drill at the halt. The price we pay for progress–talking of which if anyone wants to hire a marquee for social events they should contact **Lt Paul Buck** at the earliest opportunity.

The line section performed heroics throughout the deployment. **Cpl Barney Barnett, Sig Chris** 'Harpo' **Mark** and **Sig Sean** 'Refueller' **Rattenbury** did the work of 9 men. This was rather unfortunate as, if they had bothered to double check, they were only required to do the work of 3 men. They were last seen hauling cable in the direction of Rheindahlen. The Recce Officer, **Capt John Townsend**, has made a big impression in a short time, quickly finding a series of 'ideal' locations. The old chicken factory has running water, that is running as fast as a 5% mercury solution will go. The 'great' site near Celle doesn't have any water purity problems–there's no water or anything else. Apparently we can't sack him because his father is, allegedly, the Regt Ops Offr. RRB Tp haven't changed at all. Despite all the evidence to the contrary, they firmly believe that they are the 'Chosen Men'. Unfortunately, the only similarity between RRB Tp and Sharpe's Rifles, apart from habitual scruffiness, is that they are both 'over the hills and far away'. It is confirmed that **SSgt Graeme Wharton** did not join the Army until after the Battle of Waterloo. The technicians continue to keep us amused. **LCpl Alan Hillard** successfully completed the resupply of two isolated, but not that isolated, detachments in slightly under 17 hours. He never did find the town of Ausfahrt. Even new technicians like **LCpls Kim Croad, Lee Collier, Steve Blood** and **Al Hillard**, straight out of training, didn't escape from the exercise and despite **SSgt Dean Richardson's** attempts to the contrary learnt an awful lot. Speed was of the essence during the exercise and consequently the Squadron was placed under some pressure to make maximum use of low loaders. 'Panzers are unreliable,' we were informed by all the experts. Two of the low loaders are still awaiting recovery somewhere north of Hannover. OC LAD, **Capt Seamus McNally**, hasn't spoken to us for some time.

Finally, a word of thanks to Special Tasks Tp, 212 Sig Sqn for providing a very impressive backdrop for the OC's briefing to the Master of Signals. If there is a next time, it would be appreciated if **LCpl Darren James, LCpl Al Joy** and **LCpl Ivan Muckle** could possibly set up in the specified grid square.

EXCON (212 SIGNAL SQUADRON)

Our mission was to build an Excon within the confines of the existing Div HQ in Wentworth Barracks, Herford. We were given the attic and told not to make any noise (quite a feat when there are two SANs parked outside the Generals' windows). **SSgt Steve Cherry, LCpl Steve Read** and **Sig Gaz Dine** put their combined technical knowledge and experience together and moved furniture for the first three days of the build. They moved it out of the way, which was in the way, so they moved it again. Then they built the Excon in two days when it should have taken five (obviously a poor time appreciation by **SSgt (FofS) Mick Cowie**). Throughout they were ably supported by the Squadron's Line section that did the work of one man because that was all **Sig Trevor Reilly** was.

The Staff, being the Staff, changed the layout of Excon about five times and added to the previously agreed quantities of phones, Ptarmigan and Clansman many times over. The bane of **LCpl Dean Royle** and **Sig Shep Shepherds** lives was the infamous Burger phone (no not one for ordering burgers) which was installed at great haste to allow the German public to ring-in for information about the exercise and then went unmanned during the critical build up phase ('Sorry wrong number'). Many was the time **Cpls Gaz Bailey** and **Bob Littlewood** had to answer a staff officer crying 'It rings but when I pick it up there's no one there' (holding a Clansman handset when his telephone is ringing). Losing one OC Excon would be considered careless but having three in as many days caused no end of consternation for the staff.

OSC 131 GROUP (201 AND 208 SIGNAL SQUADRONS)

Ex Rhino Replen provided OSC 131 with the opportunity to '*Boldly go where no OSC has gone before,*' by remaining resolutely in Hammersmith Barrack by dismounting all the kit into the Squadron conference room. Manpower for this 'mega-OSC' was drawn from OSCs 131 (201 Sig Sqn), 141 (208 Sig Sqn) and 147 (230 Sig Sqn). The exercise saw extensive use of Ptarminet, supergroup working over Rodin Trunks, interfacing into Euromux (provided by 36 Sig Regt) and for the first time ever, trunk links over AP-Netz, the new German fixed communications system. **WO2 (FofS)** 'Red Oktober' **Middleton** had an entertaining time submerged in a Bundeswehr cellar in Minden, re-engineering huge chunks of AP-Netz with the assistance of a 'Hauptsbootsman' (German Submariner Petty Officer) in order to find out how many times he could successfully route a Ptarmigan inter-nodal around Germany. Newly arrived **WO2 (FofS) Solomons** was thrown into a running battle to keep smoking installations running.

PANTHER TROOP–TRUNK NODE 041

2Lt Nat Baker's TN 041 was kept busy providing links into HQs DSG and FSG at Sennelager. **Sgt Richie** 'Gadgetman' **Richardson** was called upon repeatedly to scramble his well equipped SCRA(T) Recce vehicle to provide close support to local SCRA users; on one occasion the only available body to assist him was **Cfn** 'Crash Dummy' **Cutler**, the TN VM, who subsequently found himself demonstrating wider employment by manning a SCRA remote for DCOS at HQ FSG. **Cpl** 'Waggie' **Wagstaff** and his tracked Relay detachment from SAN 814 were absorbed into the Node in order to alleviate the shortage of trunk assets, **Sig** 'Soldier 2000' **Keers** decided to test the strength of its armour with his head and came to the conclusion that 6ft 4in tall operators are better suited to wheeled installations, much to the delight of **Sig** 'GPMG' **Wimpenny**, newly arrived from trade training.

CHEETAH TROOP–TRUNK NODE 051

2Lt Pat Pritchett's TN 051 started the ex with a massive offensive against the flying insect population of their Node Home site. **Cpl** 'Waxoyl' **Finnegan** proved what an experienced T1 Tech can do to SCRA Centrals, and for once **Sgt** 'Gunny' **Moore** had a relatively quiet time with much faulty equipment fixed. **LCpl Mountain** RLC, the TN Chef, once again was awarded the coveted OC's Prize for Most Imaginative Disguising of Compo. **SSgt Jeff Clarke** and **Sgt Pete Preece** were visited by the CO and RSM following rumours that the dets on the Koterburg were not being fed correctly; after three hours and the usual hospitality from 'Red Rudi', they left satisfied and with 051's reputation redeemed. At one of the other Relay sites **Sig Paddy Lynn** (attached from LCP Tp) managed to get his detachment attacked by OPFOR. They then 'captured' his magazines; it is not confirmed what kind of mags these were, but they were returned by a sheepish Infantry Platoon Commander a short time later.

JAGUAR TROOP–TRUNK NODE 071

After a welcome summer leave period Jaguar Tp found itself straight back into the thick of things with Ex Rhino Replen. The deployment found the node deployed to the furthest, most northerly location in Celle in a camp still being rebuilt after a hurricane destroyed most of the perimeter fence and ripped off all the garage doors. Attached to the troop for much of the exercise were **2Lt Adam Honor** and **2Lt Sarah Pedder** who provided a great deal of help and entertainment to the Tp. **Miss Pedder** even managed to match **Sig Jim O'Mahoney** word for word in a 'who talks the most' bout. For **Sgt Chris Symonds** and **Sig** (promoted LCpl during the Exercise) **Mark Gower** it became a real driving endurance competition as they amassed 2263 KM while on Recce tasks. The start of the exercise was incredibly busy for everyone due to the relatively isolated location and although the workload never really eased off, time was found for some particularly brutal games of football. Chief among the on pitch battles was that between **LCpl Jason Woosnam** and **2Lt Adam Honor**.

PUMA TROOP–TRUNK NODE 081

Ex Rhino Replen started well, with links being engineered from our traditional 22 Sig Regt 'COMCEN' site at Pt 309 with little trouble. However, our switch decided to liven things up and with a loud bang, some large orange sparks, and a shout from **Cpl** 'Frankie' **Howard** that, ' The switch has blown up!' things instantly changed. Once he had recovered from the shock of seeing his life flash before him, **LCpl** 'Sparks' **John** set to the task of working out what had actually happened, alongside **Cpl** 'It's worse than that, it's dead Jim' **Boscowan**, and the fault was finally discovered–a blown RF Filter. However, a few hours later after a quick steal from LCP and a mercy dash by **SSgt Mick Swithenbank** the switch was once again back on its wheels ready for action. **Sig** 'Bos-Vet' **Buckle**, det comd of Radio Relay 981, located at Schapdetten earned himself a Gold Star for managing to repair his fused AC distribution system and restoring comms to FSG without damaging himself or his installation. **Sig** 'Big' **Skene** who joined the exercise straight from trade training was observed muttering that he was not taught about the explosive nature of our AC distribution boxes at Blandford. With the Regiment's assets spread far and wide over a massive area the resources of HQ Squadron in the guise of Echelon were stretched far and wide. Working from covert, ramshackle locations with the most rudimentary facilities and in horrendous weather conditions.... well all right then, I know we were based in Hammersmith Barracks and the weather was terrific but.....the Professional

ECHELON (HQ SQUADRON)

It was the dead of night as **LCpl Duncan Windsor** helped set up Echelon's first DP. He approached tactically coming straight off the road in his 8 ton UBRE driven. His years (OK days) of experience becoming a blessing as he cut across country using every fold in the ground until he reached the designated Grid Reference. He then parked unceremoniously at a perfect 45 degree angle, sideways that is, in a rain ditch! 'Not a problem' said **Cpl** 'Pod' **Kirby**. 'Just get out the tow bar and we'll have you out of there in no time'. 'Tow bar?' pondered crewman **Sig** 'Sniper' **Alderson** visualising the said item lying on the garage floor exactly where he had left it.... we leave this scene as the MTO, a quiet and reserved Welshman continued his men's education.

Sigs Jay Grossmith, Kev Chadwick and **Nick Maloney**, all fresh from Blandford, thoroughly enjoyed their baptism of fire on the exercise with Echelon. On their first foray to deliver spares out to a Trunk Node located in Sennelager they were heavily into the journey when the QM(T) enquired as to their route. Now, Moenchengladbach may be renowned for it's night life but it isn't anywhere on the road between Herford and Sennelager!

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

RHQ
CO **Lt Col G.R. Leach**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) K. Fitzpatrick**

The Regiment is shaping up as the Corps' centre of excellence for Association Football and the Regimental six-a-side team is congratulated for the outstanding achievement of winning the 3 (UK) Div Competition, the R SIGNALS Competition and the Army Competition, if only Man United could do as well. The following members of the Regiment played in one or more of the competitions: **SSgt Stillie, CSgt Grundy, Cpl Alford, Cpl Murphy, Sig Galliford, Sig Meacham, Sig Stevenson, Sig Watt** and **Sig Watts**.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

After a well earned rest the Squadron reforms under the command of yet another OC, so much for continuity! We say a sad farewell to **Maj Tim Carmichael,** and his wife **Kate,** who was just getting into the swing of things when he was whisked away to be terribly studious at Shrivenham. We welcome in his place **Maj Fred Whichelo** who has recently returned from being Adjt at 15 Sig Regt. He is currently trying to find his feet during a particularly hectic time for the Squadron. Congratulations to the 2IC Sqn who has recently got married and is now to be known as **Capt Dart**.

We thought it could not get any busier after Ex Lion Sword but surprisingly enough it has, and as ever the Squadron is desperately trying to keep its head above water. Waterloo Tp have just completed Ex Iron Tornado and have been thrown straight into CO's Day followed by Summer Camp and hosting 50 Canadians. Meanwhile, Overloon Tp have been concentrating on the task of preparing for Staff College Demo as well as supporting two lunches in the field for Commander ARRC. Bussaco Tp, besides getting involved in everybody else's exercises, have just been away on a live firing package in Sennybridge in commemoration of their battle honour day. Roll on Christmas, we need another break!

OVERLOON TROOP

The hectic summer season was supposed to be followed by a relaxing autumn with only a few commitments. However, in usual Corps tradition a troop of 42 was soon whittled down to 2 sickies, 2 new boys and a couple of seniors. Preparation for the Staff College Demo still had to be done and the new Tp Comd, **Lt Duncan Parkinson**, found himself learning a new trade with a tin of green paint and a brush. Long may this continue. The Troop has been rapidly depleted by the start of the winter sports season. The Regiment is rapidly assuming the role of the Corps football unit with **Sigs** 'Thickhead' **Galliford,** 'Son of Thickhead' **Watt** and 'Curly' **Watts** all being regular Army football squad players. **Sig** 'Salty' **Southan** has just become Army dinghy sailing champion and spends more time on the water than in camp and **Cpl Drudge-Coates** is regularly away on Corps windsurfing trips. **Sig** 'Thumper' **Knights** spends his time knocking tennis balls around as he is coached for a place in the Army team. In addition to the above the majority of the Regiment's football teams come from the Troop so Wednesday afternoons are sport for all. The Troop would like to congratulate **LCpl** 'Libby' **Peacock** and **LCpl** 'The Attitude' **Williams** on their recent promotions. Farewells on departure to a life in civvies are due to **LCpl** 'Bri' **Owen** and his wife **Sam** and to **LCpl** 'Dot' **Perkins**. We wish them all well for the future. Welcomes to the new boss on his move from ATR Bassingbourn, to **Cpl Drudge-Coates** from across the road in 249 Sig Sqn and to **Sigs Brown, Harper** and **Watt** fresh from training with the 'what's that lump of armour' look.

WATERLOO TROOP

After block leave had passed and everyone's tan had faded it was time to return to the exercise circuit and Salisbury Plain. The Troop was providing Excon to the Divisional Artillery Group for two weeks and as we were static it proved rather staid to say the least. The exercise was a success and was the last one for the year (hopefully). The work did not end there unfortunately as we geared up for the CO's inspection day the following week. After much preparation and stress the day went very smoothly and the afternoon was spent bayonet fighting at Warminster Ranges. Some of the Troop's war cries as they stabbed the dummies were hilarious, with high pitched wailing from **Sig Joyce** to threats of 'Come on you b.....ds' from **LCpl Wilson.** The Troop are now preparing for the Squadron summer camp on the Isle of Wight where they will be in and out of water for a week with some mountain biking thrown in. Considering it is the end of September it should sort the men from the boys somewhat. The Troop is slightly smaller at the moment with **Sig Osgathorpe** and **Sig Greenwood** leaving for civilian pastures and **Cpl Macpherson** and **LCpl Piper** posted to 16 Sigs and 14 Sigs respectively. A final word of congratulations goes to **Sig Young** who has come off the 'G' Board although he doesn't know it yet as he is trekking in Zimbabwe.

BUSSACO TROOP

The majority of the Troop took part in a training exercise at Sennybridge Training Area, 'Exercise Busacco Bull' commemorating the anniversary of the battle of Busacco. This involved training in patrol skills, hides and harbour drills, section battle drills, vehicle anti ambush and defence of a communications site. After a four-hour drive up to Sennybridge everyone was eager to show off their infantry skills. Patrols carried on through the night and culminated in a live firing exercise. We welcome the following people **LCpl** 'Bing' **Crosby, LCpl Jim Stewart, LCpl** 'Taff' **Rees, Sig Joice, Sig Long, Sig Smith, Sig Williams** and **Sig Whetton.** Good luck to **LCpl Kenny Ross** in his new Hat and **Sig** 'Mac' **McGuiness** off to civvy street.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

206 Sig Sqn are away on an exchange visit to Canada, there will be a full report in the next issue.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
ADEN TROOP

During September Aden Tp deployed on Ex Arabian Challenger, a driving exercise with Comd Tp RDG. The group was split in two and went to the loading and firing simulator and the driver training area respectively. After a few helpful hints the groups were let loose and after only a few rounds up the spout the blood and sweat were flowing profusely. A morning well spent with cuts and bruises to show. After a spot of lunch and tiller tuition it was time to be let loose in 70 Tonnes of cold Sheffield steel. SPTA was amuck with Challenger tanks doing J Turns and donuts at the hands of beaming Signallers. With a little rain adding to the fun the afternoon proved that we all really wanted to be tank drivers. The day was rounded off with the traditional barbecue and plenty of beer. An invite was made for us to go back on the live firing ranges for some real action. Watch this space.

MASIRAH TROOP

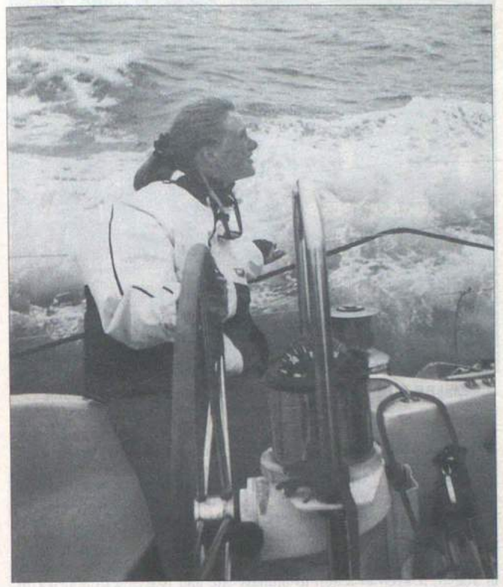
Welcome to Masirah Tp, the fourth and newest Trunk Node in 222 Sqn, forming from the ashes of 257 vehicles and the pool of personnel from locations far and wide. Trunk Node 063 will be ready to 'get the links in' by the end of the year. As it stands we are only a select few, but some would say a mix of the good, the bad, and the ugly. The new team started with Tp Comd, **2Lt Hawes** and **Cpl Steve** 'he was the first' **Davies**. Shortly followed by **Sgt Mark** 'Lofty' **Emmerson**, **Sgt Pete** 'Ghandi' **Howlett, Cpl** 'Punchy' **Punchard, LCpl Cath Burgess** and **Sigs Marcellous Wallis**, 'Chubs' **Claridge** and 'Spotty' **Murphy**. The Troop name (for anyone remotely interested) comes from when 222 Sqn was based in the Arabian Peninsula and had a detachment in Masirah, following the Middle Eastern Suez Crisis of 1956.

OMAN TROOP–EXERCISE BIG CLIMB

On 15th July 1997 a group of intrepid explorers set forth to conquer Mount Snowdon. After the long drive from Bulford, **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Beel** and his merry men arrived at Trevor, in North Wales and immediately started to sample the local brewers' fare. Next morning a not so merry band of men set out to conquer Mount Snowdon. After numerous problems with parking, we headed for the summit. **Sgt** 'mine's a pastie' **Beel, Sgt Andy Hayler** and **Sig** 'Action' **Jackson** took the lead while **Sig** 'Dusty' **Millar**, **Sig** 'Swampy' **Kadlec** and **LCpl Jez Anderson** brought up the rear. After two and a half hours of solid whinging the rear party reached the top of Mount Snowdon only to find we could have let the train take the strain! After a hot brew at the top, we started our descent and drove back to sunny Bulford. All in all a great few days adventure training.

(*L-R*): Sig Millar, Sig Kadlec, LCpl Anderson, Sig Claridge, Sig Lewis, Sig Jackson, Sgt Hayler, Sgt Beel, Sig Walker

SAILING ROUND BRITAIN
EXERCISE SALTY IRON 15 JUNE-1 AUGUST 1997
Report by the Expedition Leader– Lt Fiona Hay



Expedition leader Lt Fiona Hay

As I stood on the quayside at Gosport I could not help thinking that what we were about to attempt was far more adventurous than the 'few weeks around the Channel Islands' which had been the original idea for a spot of sailing in the Regiment. All of a sudden I was embarking on a seven-week circumnavigation of Britain. Great trees from little acorns grow, as they say. However, safe in the knowledge that we just had to keep the big bit of land on our right, we set off. The expedition was split into four legs, each lasting thirteen days, with a different crew for each leg. **Lt Fiona Hay** and **Cpl Dave** 'Stripey Suntan' **Sangster** were on the yacht for the entire trip, for continuity (or so they claimed).

Leg one took the Nicholson 55 yacht *Dasher* from JSASTC Gosport to Holyhead and encompassed some of the worst weather of the entire trip. The highlight of this leg was rounding Land's End that was completed at sunset during some fierce seas. As we came around the famous piece of land, we were joined by porpoises who played in the bow wave of the yacht for over an hour. As the sun set on Land's End I had a real sense of achievement such as is felt when reaching the summit of a mountain or the end of a long race. We had completed the first major part of the voyage and now we were on a bearing of 0 degrees until we hit the North of Scotland. The crew managed to answer this with some impressive visits from **Capt Chunder** and his crew. The prize for the most seasick soldier in NATO must go to **Sig Keith** 'Geordie' **Lewis** who tried every cure for the curse but to no avail. On the theme of prizes, **Sigs** 'Stu' **Southan, Vick Vernon**, **Ronnie Allan** and 'Chubbs' **Claridge** must win the silly hat prize, for wearing their 'see you Jimmy' hats for the entire trip.

Sigs Stu Southan and Keith Lewis posing as minority Scottish transvestites

Sig Keith Lewis supervising Sig Vick Vernon at the Helm

All too soon we were waving goodbye to Crew One and welcoming Crew Two to the joys of sailing. Having spent the first two days in sunny Holyhead riding out a storm we were all keen to set sail. However, in customary tradition, when the wind blew and the sea rolled a few members of the crew found themselves the worse for wear and didn't see the funny side of cooking at a forty degree angle in a force seven–some people have no sense of humour! Even **SSM Andy Campbell** found himself being very unmilitary and succumbing to seasickness. However, when the seas calmed the crew found themselves ably fed by 'Vick and Bob's Caff' run by **Sig Vicky Ashworth** and **Sig** 'Bob' **Graham**–awright mate? This crew even managed to have an introduction to the rigours of racing when we took part in a Round Mull race during the trip. So what if we spent two hours becalmed. It was soon forgotten as tales of the high seas were recounted over a pint in 'Saucy Mary's Bar'. The impressive scenery combined with some excellent sailing to ensure the crew had a good introduction to life on the ocean wave. How many people can say they have sailed past the famous island of Staffa in brilliant sunshine with perfect winds for their yacht, able to soak in the atmosphere of racing and the sheer pleasure of sailing?

Crew Three arrived to join the good ship *Dasher* in Kyle of Lochalsh nursing sore heads from their overnight stay in Edinburgh on the journey north. This was undoubtedly the highlight of the expedition in terms of scenery and interest. Well, we believe the scenery was good, we just couldn't see it through the fog! The yacht visited both the Orkney and Shetland Islands where we were able to indulge in a little R&R, discovering the sights and scenes of this stunning part of the country. **LCpl Seth Campbell** showed us all how to really sail, by spending the entire trip with no shoes on and eating nothing. In contrast, **LCpl Rob** 'I've got a nice headband' **Luke** managed to eat loads and get bossed around by every female on the crew. Is there a moral here? **SSgt Steve** 'Baldrick' **Matthews** was undoubtedly the Delia Smith of the crew, producing wonderful food every time he cooked. Having experienced Orkney and Shetland we soon came down to earth with a bump when we moored alongside some 'fragrant' fishing boats in the harbours of Fraserburgh and Peterhead. At Peterhead we changed crews once again and suddenly we were on the last leg of the trip. Unfortunately the East coast of Britain does not offer the stunning scenery found on the West coast. However, the crew were more than compensated for this by ending the trip with a visit to Honfleur in France where they were able to spend their R&R time sampling the local cuisine washed down with a little vino. Unfortunately **Cpls Jack Hawkins** and 'Stu' **Turner** found out that wine and sailing don't always mix. **Lt Col** 'Black Jack' **Amberton** managed to smile happily through the roughest sea, smoking a cigarette and laughing at the rest of us.

All too soon we were back in Gosport, seven weeks after leaving on our 'big adventure'. The expedition was not only great fun, it also introduced over thirty people to sailing and provided excellent adventure training. Do not underestimate the value of offshore sailing as a training tool. Few can fail to develop in cold, wet, rough conditions. If you have the chance to take soldiers away sailing or are given the opportunity to send them on courses you will find that it is one of the most memorable forms of adventure training available.

Sunset in the Western Isles of Scotland

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS (JCUFI) 257 SIGNAL SQUADRON 'THE FINAL DISPATCH.'

Our tour of the Falklands was finally coming to an end, only one more week to go before we would be back home in the land of flowing lager and real draft beer. The packing, partying and most importantly of all, the handover to 1 Div. Nothing could get in our way, all except that is, the one final exercise in which CBF decreed JCUFI was to play a vital role. As the exercise ended the Army Element of JCUFI sat in the departure lounge waiting to board that plane home to freedom, only to be told that some bright spark, who will remain nameless, had lost his passport. Due to the time taken to get his luggage off the plane, we could not fly on this day. Thanks **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Makin**. So yet another 24 hours was spent on the sunny island.

ALPHA TROOP MEMOIRES FROM RADCON'S ROADSIDE CAFE

Eventually, it was over. The stores were handed to 1 Division by a trusting **Cpl** '1+1 = 3' **Kutzner**. **LCpl** 'Easy' **Bonham** and **Sig** 'Finbar' **Saunders** spent the remaining last few days drowning their sorrows on how much they were going to miss The Falklands. **Sig** 'can't cook, won't cook' **Gardyne** and **Sig Hodgson** declared World War III on Radcon's tastebuds by cooking the food for the farewell bash. No wonder everyone was ill the next morning–it had nothing to do with the beer–honest. **SSgt** 'squared away' **Flooks** did exactly that, even making sure that the cats were signed for. What a joy it is to know that on his return to the UK he will be an SQMS. Squaring away to his heart's content.

BRAVO TROOP

The COMCEN buzzed during the last few weeks of our tour. Our departure date loomed temptingly on the horizon, and, headed by our illustrious leader **Sgt** 'JP' **Partridge** we survived the long hours on shift with the usual abusive banter. The title of 'Abuser of the tour' has to go to **Sig Andy** 'Ginge' **Wright.** The witty put downs seemed to flow naturally and I have to say we did laugh (sometimes)! **Sig Wright's** partner in crime **LCpl** 'Ski' **McKie** kept us enthralled to the end with his antics which sometimes got him into a spot of bother. The invincible team were not phased by anything in those last few weeks, not even on exercise. Security for this exercise fell into the trusty hands of **LCpl** 'no ones got that long' **Scully** and **Sig** 'I've got a teddy on' **Angus**. Security however meant nothing to **LCpl** 'I don't do 6 months' **Wells** whose efforts during a simulated air raid resulted in him on his hands and knees under a desk. **Sig** 'Taff' **Butt** managed to talk endlessly about rugby especially to local Andover newspapers who after listening to his stories decided they'd had best leave the Island before they met another Rugby mad Welsh man. All of this brought our tour to an end in true Falklands style and someone was even heard to say they enjoyed their time there. Now back in Bulford we no longer spend night shifts on exchange writing to everyone we know. We're glad to be back but I don't think we'll ever forget COMCEN Falklands.

CHARLIE TROOP

The last few weeks of the tour were very hectic for Charlie Tp, although this didn't stop the Troop engaging in several social gatherings. The JNCO's of the FITS team, **Cpl** 'Paul' **Drysdale**, **Cpl** 'Ian' **Elson, LCpl** 'Andy' **Porter** and **LCpl** 'Lee' **Howard** for some unknown reason all sported swimming caps and drawn on moustaches on the last night at the famous Sharkies bar. There was also a 'Thank you' dinner hosted by the officers and SNCO's to show their appreciation of the efforts of all the Squadron's soldiers during the tour. A special mention must go to **Lt Helen Bosley**'s maids outfit.

On the sporting front, **Cpl** 'Sibby' **Sibbald**, **Cpl Wayne Hilton**, **Cpl** 'Al' **Dawes** and **Sig Ian Shaw** took part in the Rock Hopper Challenge which was a 17-mile cross country run. It should be noted that they succeeded in thrashing the highly fancied Radcon team. Finally it was time to leave and it must be said that everyone was ready to go home! After we had taken some much needed leave the troop began to disperse back to their original units leaving only a handful in 257. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Sibby' **Sibbald** and his wife **Wendy** on the birth of their daughter **Daniela**. Sibby is quite a different man!

REAR PARTY

During July, the Rear Party of 257 Sig Sqn, Sword Tp embarked on summer camp, Ex Weymouth Sword. A variety of activities including Scuba Diving, Rock-Climbing and Windsurfing were enjoyed by all. The week started enthusiastically with a Karaoke night and everyone attempting to 'Take That'. The night belonged to **LCpl** 'Terry the Turtle' **Madgwick** with a version of Fire-starter which the population of Weymouth is still believed to be recovering from. Other highlights of the week included the culinary debate between **Cpl** 'Swampy' **Kerr** and **Cpl** 'its Shikkers' **Fairclough**. A new arrival and a few goodbyes in the Troop, the Troop would like to welcome **Cpl** 'Lee' **Irvine**, his wife **Karen** and children **Ashley** and **Josh** and goodbye almost straight away as he goes to 222. Goodbye also to **Cpl Fairclough**, **Cpl Sale, Sig Cooper** and **Sig Musk** to 222, **LCpl Corcoran** and **LCpl Conlon** to 206. Finally congratulations to **Sig** 'Pete' **Toms** and **Lucy** on their recent marriage.

RAO

The past few months have been a time of great change within the Regt Admin Office, both in personalities and working practices. We said a fond farewell to one RAO, **Maj Moffatt** and welcomed another, **Maj Wells**, back to civilisation from the Outer Hebrides. Other departures were **LCpl Anderson** to ATR Winchester (to join **Maj Moffatt**) and

Maj P.B.F. Fensom hands over the Tri-Service Stable belt of the OC JCUFI to Maj Adams

LCpl Pickering to 2LI. New internees include **LCpl Schieder**, freed from the spit and polish of the Guards; **Pte English**, all the way from AMF (L) Arty at Larkhill; and **Pte Schubert**, fresh from training. Also re-welcomed to the RAO was **Pte Douglas**, who returned to the Regiment with a new coloured beret. At the time of writing, the outgoing RAOWO, **WO1 (SSM) Payne** is handing over to **WO2 (SQMS) Leahy**. **WO1 (SSM) Payne** is about to become a real 'Mr' as he returns to civvy street. **WO2 (SQMS) Leahy**, fresh from the deprivations of Embassy life in Tokyo, is keen to return to military life and is trying to drag **LCpl Pollitt** with him; are those sideburns and haircut really Government issue? And last but not least, we say goodbye to **Laura Branton**, Discipline Clerk and **Jo Scarrot**, Registry Clerk, who both leave on 3 October; is it something we said?

There have been some refreshing breaks from the routine of administration. In April, we were delighted to welcome to the Regiment our Deputy Commander in Chief, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester. We believe her lasting impression of the visit was **Pte Ashman's** ingenious ability to twist a conversation about the characteristics of her rifle to a dialogue on her hometown, Doncaster. A politician in the making .... Most of the RAO clerks were able to participate in the HQ Sqn adventurous training expedition to Capel Curig, with 'adventurous' being the key word; but it was good fun. However, **LCpl Pollitt** managed to weasel his way on to a 2MI Bn expedition to Bavaria, where, we are led to believe, the emphasis was on imbibing rather than adventuring. But as he had just returned from the Falkland Islands, he was almost forgiven. **Sgt Jackman** and **Pte Ashman** managed to stay on the Falkland Islands until August; as quiet a place as any in which to study for CIMA exams, according to **Sgt Jackman.**

On the sporting front, **Sgt Fairclough** has been making up for everyone else by playing basketball for the AGC and Army, netball for the AGC, Army and Combined Services teams, and rounders at Regimental and AGC level; is there no stopping her? Not to be out done, The AGC Det Comd, **Capt Gillies** dragged **LCpls Bland, Schieder** and **Pte Schubert** around the Regimental Kiwi Half Marathon. The women, having shown the way, have declared that next year it's the men's turn!

Her Royal Highness: 'So, tell me about your rifle.'
Pte Ashman: 'Oooh, I'm from Doncaster, Ma'am ...'

REGIMENTAL MT

As a Troop we have just been through a busy and eventful few months, starting with the troop supporting the Regiment on exercise Red-Tricorn 3/Second Foray/Lion Sword upon which numerous events took place. Starting with the arrival of **SSM Steve Jackson** to Ech, where he made many more friends after leaving a lasting impression on the JNCOs of the MT. Also during the exercise **Capt Charlie Tomkins** (MTO) had a eventful time, paying more attention to real estate and new types of military vehicles than to which way he was supposed to be going, to the amusement of the divisional staff who were following him at the time. On a plus note he did manage to direct the armour in the correct direction when carrying out a beach landing during the exercise. Another of the MT's leaders is **WO2 Shaun Wilson (MTWO)** who whilst carrying out his duties, as one of the movement cell teams during the exercise still managed to carry out some extra recce's of his own with a view to his future employment as a landlord, let's hope his customers take to his dry sense of humour as we all have learned to do.

As a Troop we like to say welcome to the following people: **Sgt** 'Taff' **Williams, Cpl Paul Woodward, Pte Andrew Lewis, Sig** 'Aggy' **Agnew, Mr Steve Young.** We would also like to say farewell and good luck to the following: **Cpl Ian** 'I know best' **Jenkins, Cpl Ray** 'I'm not leaving this chair' **Watt, LCpl Tanya** 'I want more' **Hackett, Pte Dawn** 'Sticky fridge' **Connor, Pte Mark** 'One for the road' **Scott, Mr Tom** 'BP station' **Boucher.** We would like to pass on our congratulations to **Mrs Leslie Skinner** the better half of **LCpl John Skinner** on the birth of their baby daughter. Also congratulations to **Mrs Tracey Allen**, definitely the better half of **LCpl Jason Allen** on the birth of their baby daughter.

REGIMENTAL WEEK PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT
Sunday 14th September	KREFELD HORSE RACING ASCOT MEETING
Tuesday 16th September	BEATING OF RETREAT
Friday 19th September	FREEDOM OF KREFELD PARADE
Saturday 20th September	BRADBURY FAIR & ALL RANKS SUMMER BALL

KREFELD HORSE RACING ASCOT MEETING

Every year the Stadt organise a British meeting at the Rennebahn, Krefeld and name it the Ascot Meet. It encourages the local community to wear their Ascot hats and even awards a prize for the most extravagant one worn on the day. Traditionally, the Regiment has become heavily involved; sponsoring a race in the 7 Sig Regt Stakes; providing a 'Fish & Chip' stall and creating a typical British Pub. HQ Sqn Comd, **Maj Bob O'Hara** was the nominated project Officer, ably assisted by the RSM, **WO1 Griffiths. SSgt** 'JR' **Ewing, SSgt Martin Alder** and **SSgt Rick Thorne** who were the main stalwarts behind the scene and were instrumental in helping to make the occasion a grand day for all. The weather on the day was exceptional and the throng of people around the beer tent rarely went below 3 deep at the bar. An enjoyable day was had by all, with the local community appreciating the three members of the Corps Band of the Royal Corps of Signals who provided the Fanfares for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

BEATING OF RETREAT

At 1800 the Officers of 7 Sig Regt assembled in the Mess bar to await the arrival of several British and German VIPs, before the Beating of Retreat. A couple of cocktails later and the CO **Lt Col M.J.M. Dyer** had enough dutch courage to address the Ober Burgermeister and the local dignitaries in their native tongue (allegedly the speech went very well). Meanwhile the RSM had assembled his motley crew of SNCO's for a Mess photograph (and a couple of cocktails too)! All assembled on the parade square to await the Band of The Royal Corps Of Signals. Beating of Retreat was traditionally played as a roll of drums across the countryside, to warn those without shelter to return to the town or Barracks before the gates were closed for the night. With the advent of modern communications the Beating of Retreat has developed into a ceremonial exercise, remaining as a piece of traditional pageantry to remind us of those long past and colourful days.

THE FREEDOM OF KREFELD PARADE

On the 15th August 1997 the Stadt Council of the city of Krefeld offered the Regiment the honour of the Freedom of the City. On Friday 19th September, after many mornings spent square bashing under the critical eye of the RSM, the Regiment finally had its moment of glory. The town-square outside the Rathaus was not the ideal parade ground, but the assembled ranks performed miracles within such a small confine, supported by the Corps Band. The parade started with a rousing march on, followed by an inspection by the Master of Signals **Maj Gen I.O.J. Sprackling OBE,** escorted by his two stick orderlies **Sgt Cooper** and **Sgt Artherton**. Other personalities to join in the festivities were Commander UKSC(G) **Maj Gen C.H. Elliott CBE** and SOinC **Brig N.F. Wood ADC MA AMIEE**, plus former COs of 7 Sig Regt.

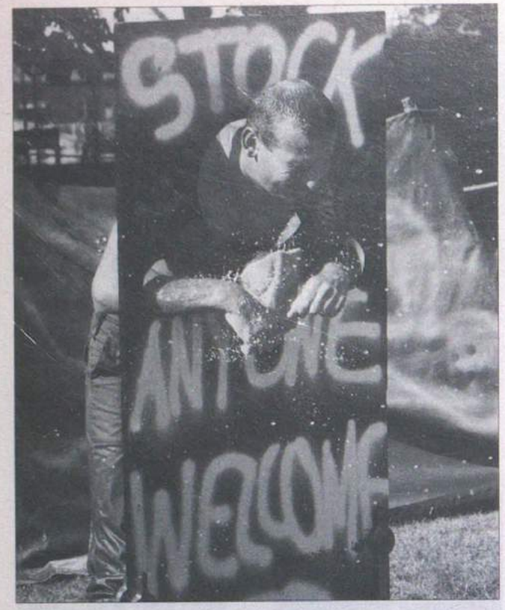
The crowd slowly swelled, throughout the morning, whether this was through interest or just curiosity one could not be sure. By the time the

7 Sig Regt
BFPO 35

Ober Burgermeister rose to speak, the square was taking on a carnival atmosphere, with bustling crowds and balcony spectators. The Ober Burgermeister addressed the parade first in his native tongue and then kindly repeated his speech in English for the linguistically challenged amongst us. The scroll, encased in a highly polished copper tube, was received by **Lt Pete Young.** The Master Of Signals replied on behalf of the Regiment and thanked the Stadt for the great honour being bestowed on 7 Sig Regt. The Regiment exercised its newly won freedom to parade through the town with bayonets fixed and Colours flying. With the band again leading the way, the Master of Signals took the salute from the Regimental Second in Command, **Maj M.A. Coupar,** as the parade marched off into Krefeld.

THE BRADBURY FAIR

It was a bright and sunny Saturday morning and after weeks of preparation the gates to Bradbury Barracks were opened to floods of families, soldiers and many of the local German community for the annual Bradbury Fair. As you looked across the expanse of West Park, the rugby and cricket pitches could no longer be seen and what stood in its place were a number of interesting and innovative stalls to tantalise all. There was the familiar lucky dip, coconut shy, and burger and fish bars. 'Welly wanging' seemed to interest the more physical among us, and it was all pot luck on the Odd Darts and Treasure Hunt stalls. A popular favourite was of course the stocks and the sale of sopping wet sponges seemed to increase when the RSM **WO1 Pete** 'I always did like the water' **Griffiths** found himself locked in for over half an hour.



As the crowds started to swell the Master of Signals **Maj Gen I.O.J. Sprackling OBE** cut the ribbon to indicate the formal opening of the Fair. Once again we were blessed with an outstanding display by the Corps Band in the Main Arena. Also to be seen was an admirable display of speed, agility and concentration by the Adjt **Capt Andy** 'Sensei' **Knott**'s Karate Kids.

The other end of the Arena sported the Inter Squadron 7's Rugby Competition, which was played throughout the day and featured a guest appearance from the Krefeld Barbarians Rugby Club. After an extremely hard fought battle 232 Sqn were victorious by the narrowest of margins to win the Rover Cup.

Also to be seen, and rather unexpected, was Bruce Forsyth, better known as **Sig** 'Ruby' **Murray** and his able assistant Debbie, alias **Sig George Spence** in a rather fetching blue dress and makeup, to run the Play Your Cards Right stall.

After an admirable running commentary of the whole of the days events by **Capt John** 'The Concierge' **Russell** there was just the winners of the infamous Fair raffle to be drawn. The day was a complete success with a considerable amount of money being raised for charity. This would of no doubt been doubled had more Officers volunteered themselves for the Stocks!

THE ALL RANKS SUMMER BALL

The Regimental Summer Ball was a fitting end to a poignant and successful Regimental week. The Band of The Royal Corps of Signals once again graced us with a superb Concert performance during the evening. The Master of Signals could not let the occasion pass without addressing the Regiment and to the surprise of the recipients, promoted **LCpl Rodway, Sig Clancy** and **Sig Aitchson.**

The evening really kicked into gear when the Band, 'Monte Carlo' struck up and one was spoilt for choice, as to whether to play 'Bar Fly' or 'Bucking Bronco'. As one would expect from 7 Sig Regt, the party continued into the small hours and to the great relief of the RSM and CO, the jail remained empty all evening. All who attended agreed it was a terrific party and should be repeated.

RHQ

REGIMENTAL OPS

Very little has been mentioned about the Regimental Ops cell over the past couple of years, mainly because they have been too busy! Time has come however to say goodbye to a couple of faces. The Technical Adjt, **Capt Jim Leggate** is moving up in the world, bypassing our betters further up the chain at 1 Sig Bde to become one of their task masters at HQ ARRC. We hope it takes more than 3 weeks before he forgets the Regiment's equipment holdings completely and starts asking for returns. Also a sad farewell to the Traffic Officer **Capt Pete Barron** and **Lynn** on posting to 30 Sig Regt. Although quite busy over the past 3 years, he has still had time to wear out 2 Ops Offrs (both retiring to Civ Div) and almost managed to break a third, in fact it took major surgery to bring back **Maj** 'Ticker' **Ford**. The Regt YofS **WO1 Mick Purves** is also on the move to Aldershot, via the Officers' Mess. At least this gives someone else a chance to win the best suntan contest.

QM (T) DEPARTMENT

QM(T)	**Maj Pete Docherty**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 Ged Keane**

The department has had a tremendous turnover of personalities in recent months, our best wishes go to **Maj Chas Greig** and family on his promotion and move to Bramcote **WO2 Brian Alexander** and family on his promotion and move to Birmingham UOTC. By the time of going to press, we will also have posted out **Cpl** 'Taff' **Waters** to Norway and HQ PSC North, **Cpl Mickey** 'Just like watching Brazil' **Potter** to Bramcote, **LCpl** 'Minty' **Murray** with all his ailments to Cyprus and **Sig Virgil** 'call me local LCpl' **Verril** detached to Split on an extended holiday. Our best wishes go to them and their long suffering families. We welcome to the department the new (or is it old?) QM **Maj Pete Docherty** and wife **Jacquie**, **WO2 Ged Keane** and family. We also welcome **LCpl Des Lang** and family from Northern Ireland. Welcome to the real world of stores accounting with fixed budget.

CIS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Captain Noddy Baugh**
Tp SSgt's	**SSgt Al Churchward**
	SSgt Patrick Hurge-Mogg

A sad farewell to **SSgt Dave** 'look I was awake' **Marshall** who has been lured away with the promises of new shiny toys to HQ ARRC! **Sgt Vince** 'I am a line man extraordinaire' **Body** has heard about life in HQ ARRC and has volunteered for a detachment to sample it for himself. Welcome to **SSgt Al Churchward** and his family, also a strong 'G' Day mate' to **Sgt Graeme Love** who has joined us on Ex Long Look from New Zealand. Last but not least, welcome to **LCpl** 'mind the ceiling' **Dunnington.**

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Alan Stringer**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tony** 'Trainspotter' **Barry**

SHQ

As ever, the brave men and woman (that individual being our Squadron Clerk **Sig Danni Tutton**) of SHQ have been labouring long and hard in order to keep the wheels of the Squadron grinding along. Having recovered from our well earned Summer leave, we soon found ourselves busy preparing for such delights as the Freedom of Krefeld Parade (well, the SSM enjoyed it!) and this year's Bradbury Fair–which the Squadron did a superb job of organising. We are now gearing up for Ex Woodland Flight 3/97, which signals the beginning of the Autumn exercise season.

There have been a number of changes to the Squadron since we last put fingers to the keyboard. **SSgt (FofS) Frank Cowan** has lost his partner in crime **SSgt (YofS)** 'Hodge' **Arthurs** who has left us on a free transfer to 231 Sig Sqn, however we welcome his replacement, **SSgt (YofS) Steve White.** Both **SSgt Rob Hood** and **Cpl** 'Digger' **Brooks** have been sent forth from the SQMS stores to the wilds of Westpark, in order to supervise the birth of Uniform Tp (responsible for the maintenance of out of use vehicles and equipment). Our New SQMS **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Taff' **Webb** and his family are warmly welcomed–his 9 Sig Regt tan having already faded away.

Down at the tech workshops (or is that coffee shop), congratulations are in order for **Cpl Craig Jones,** upon both his marriage to **Anna** and his recent promotion. Meanwhile around the corner at Sqn MT, **Sgt Des Holroyd** is congratulated together with his wife **Jenny,** upon the birth of their son **Harry.**

UNIFORM TROOP

Tp SSgt	**SSgt Rob Hood**

The newly formed Uniform Tp is led by **SSgt** 'Robin' **Hood** and **Sgt Mick** 'Angry' **Angove.** The team comprises **Cpl** 'Digger' **Brooks** (Tp Storeman), **LCpl** 'Blackie' **Blacklock** (Tp MT), **LCpl Paul Brown** (JNCO without portfolio) and **Sigs Shaun Fielding,** 'Fitz' **Fitzpatrick-Swallow** and **Steve** 'Tp Clerk' **Kennedy.** The Troop has an enormous task ahead of them, their role being to maintain the Regimental 'Fleet' of out of use vehicles and trailers. With their current manpower being stretched in every direction, it will be interesting to witness them in action over the coming months! The question on everyone's mind at present is 'Are we moving to Ayrshire Barracks for the winter, or are we going to freeze our nuts and bolts off up on the arctic wasteland known as Westpark?'

WHISKEY TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Trudy Robinson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Robson**

The Tp Comd breathed a sigh of relief when everyone returned off Summer Leave to report that no one had been arrested. There wasn't much time to catch up on the gossip as we were straight into Ex Woodland Flight 2/97–a Regiment Ex with a difference! The first phase of the exercise was so technical that only a select few understood what happened. Apparently it went well! The Ops team cut about the position and issued frequencies and bearings and **Sgt** 'Mac' **Mckinnon** drank tea.

'An Art shot' taken during Ex Woodland Flight

Cpl Spittles (top left)) and 232 Sqn repairing a rover during Ex Woodland Flight

The next phase consisted of initiative command tasks and potted sports. Half the Troop ran around camp like lunatics, whilst the other half were dispatched to Dusseldorf with 50DM and a list of 10 achievements–for the real story you will have to interrogate **Cpl** 'Skully' **Halliwell** and **Cpl** 'Mad Mick' **Heathcote**, who have already claimed the fifth amendment.

The rest of the Troops time has been taken up with Bradbury Fair preparation and a little bit of work. Congratulations to everyone in the troop who managed to win the Regt football competition. Congratulations also to **LCpl** 'Perry' **Mason** and his wife on the birth of their second child **Tamara.** A warm welcome to **Cpl Gaz Barlow** and wife from 1 (UK) Div and Sig Regt and **Sig** 'Sidy' **Byrne** straight from training.

LCpl Evans during Ex Woodland Flight–leaving a trail of bodies behind him

BOURNEMOUTH CCF VISIT

229 Sig Sqn hosted the combined Cadet Force of Bournemouth this summer. **Sgt** 'Mac' **Mckinnon** and **Cpl** (now Sgt) 'Tosh' **Hodgskins** set off bright and early to pick up the cadet contingent from the port of Ostende. Once the boys had settled into their accommodation, there followed a hectic period of kit issue and camp familiarisation. A good nights' sleep was welcomed by the travel weary Cadet Force.

The week began in earnest, with a parade on the square. There was an air of anticipation and to the delight of the Permanent Staff the turnout was first class. There followed a hectic few days of events that included a visit to Arnhem War Museum, an indoor assault course and a team race setting up Scam 12 masts. Undoubtedly the time enjoyed most by the visitors was the Exercise at Arsbeck Ranges organised by **Cpl Mick Heathcote,** the well thought out programme included subjects such as setting up observation posts and the giving of Orders.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Keith Whitehead**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Chris Ward**

The Squadron is at last coming out of its long metamorphosis and now numbers four field Tps; Oscar (MAN 097), Papa (MAN 098), Lima (Line and Techs) and Quebec (Staff Support). The main effort has gone towards re-establishing the Squadron's role when deployed with Sp Bn and ARRC HQ. However, there have been a few highlights to relieve the tedium of SOP revising and egg sucking. The Squadron summer ball was held in the exotic location of the NAAFI in September, to celebrate the safe return from summer leave. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all who attended and thanks must go to **SSgt** 'Is he dancing with a chair?' **Norris,** who organised the whole affair.

Three adventure training expeditions have been organised and executed from within the Squadron in the last three months. First off was Ex Bradbury Backstop, a 10 day Squadron challenge pursuit camp held in Haus Santisblick in Bavaria. All went well thanks to **Sgt** 'Short Gobby Manq' **Ratcliffe** and his admin team. However **Capt Bill Anderson** needs to practise his freefall climbing techniques. Next was Oscar Tp's highly successful Ex Oscar Backstop, a week-long expedition taking in one of the high altitude routes over the Pyrennes. It started with a 16 hour drive to the start locations, in which all adults (Sgt and above) and children (Cpls and below, with Officers) travelled in separate buses, **Cpls Frankie Greenwood** and **Chris Glover** were deemed to be responsible; not a good choice in hindsight. Ex Jock Jaunt was the final adventure training exercise of the year with Quebec and Lima Tps, under the watchful eye of **Lt Angela** 'Granny' **Galli**, embarking upon the West Highland Way. Although for the most part the weather was bearable, a good time was had by all, including the midges.

In between adventure training, the Squadron has had time to host a two week long Cadet visit. The cadets, who came from London area, were hosted by a select few from the Squadron, under the calm, nanny like control of **Lt** 'Which way's the beach?' **Scott**. Week one was an introduction and familiarisation to the Corps and Regiment, with week two taking the form of a Low Level Infantry Training Camp on Leuth training area. In between section attacks, patrol harbours and navigation exercises the Cadets, contrary to popular belief did get a little sleep.

Congratulations go to **LCpls Longbottom, McMillan, Clancy** and **Cpl** 'Flower Pot' **Rodway** on their recent promotion. In a time of reorganisation there have been too many farewells to mention them all. A few in particular deserve a special mention. **Sgt** 'Braveheart' **Sala** has moved on promotion to 21 Sig Regt (AS) and **SSgt** 'Carl' **Smales** who is easing himself into civilian life by being posted to 35 Sig Regt (V). **SSgt** 'You'll only be there for a year' **Thorne** has moved to the Officers' Mess as Mess Manager, and **Sgt Wain Ratcliffe** who has made it to the sunnier climate of 9 Sig Regt. A warm welcome to all the new members of the Squadron, who for once are too many to mention! Finally congratulations to **Cpl Adele Robins** on the birth of her son **Lyndon** it can't be any worse than baby-sitting SHQ!

EXERCISE BRADBURY BOMB BURST

As part of Ex Woodland Flight 2/97, and as a welcome back from Summer Leave, the CO had a surprise up his sleeve, Ex Bradbury Bomb Burst, a surprise for not just the participants but also for the Ex Co-ordinator who, up until 12 hours before Startex, also knew nothing about it. Ex Bradbury Bomb Burst was a 36 hour initiative exercise with the aim being to travel as far as physically possible in 24 hours whilst remaining within the borders of Germany. This was the primary task and carried the most points. The secondary aim was to complete as many of the detailed command tasks as possible: ranging from working with a grave digger to flying anywhere in Germany. Each task was given a score to count towards the CO's Challenge Cup. This particular challenge was being competed for by the Squadrons back in Krefeld whilst, the Bomb Burst teams were 'out on the ground'.

The Exercise commenced under the guise of a Civ pop exercise with 30 members of all ranks, from across the Regiment being told to report to the Gym. The only other details given were that sufficient kit was to be brought by the individuals to ensure their comfort on the Civ pop exercise. Once briefed, the teams all had the 'rabbit in the headlights' look and not wanting to delay the evening's entertainment any longer, the teams were loaded onto two 4t Bedford's and dropped off at various points outside a 50km radius from Barracks. The Exercise co-ordinator **Capt Bill Anderson** and his team now had to adopt the expectant father approach and await each team reporting their progress until Endex, 36 hours hence. In the ensuing 36 hours teams managed to reach the Austrian and Polish borders, fly on commercial jets, sleep in five star hotels, get arrested (not one of the tasks), play with a First Division Bundesleague team and work with a grave digger. Endex was at 1500hrs on the last day of Ex Woodland Flight 2/97 and coincided with the start of the Regiment barbecue. All teams made it in on times although some modes of transport possessed more flair than the others. Mentioning no names of course but, the hippie-van that **Sgt Stu Sanderson** and his team acquired was 'dodgy' to say the least!!! Lets hope there is no CDT for a while.

Congratulations go to Team Four under the unique leadership of **Lt Pete** 'Euro-Boy' **Young** on winning this particular round and for his excellent choice of hire car.

231 on CO's Challenge

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Mark Thorek**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Chris Naylor**

DELTA TROOP

As the weather warmed up, so did things in Delta Tp. A week long Battle Camp was planned to test the skills and abilities of the Troop. Congratulations, to **Sig** 'Badger' **Culver** who was best shot of the week and to **Sig 'Scottie' West** who was awarded best soldier. Well done also to our two new sprogs, **Sig Paula Barrett** and **Sig Diane Turner** who got to meet the whole Troop in one day of arriving, by joining in the fun and games.

We would like to say a big welcome to **SSgt Farrar** and wife **Jill**, **Cpl Steve Templeman** who is a proud father to be with wife **Joe.** Goodbyes to our new and old crewmen, **Cpl Sid James,** off to Aldershot on promotion, **Sigs Dave Bovey, Scott West** and **Diane Turner**, all poached by Tango Tp. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl Debbie Hunter** on her recent engagement to **LCpl Jason Wood**.

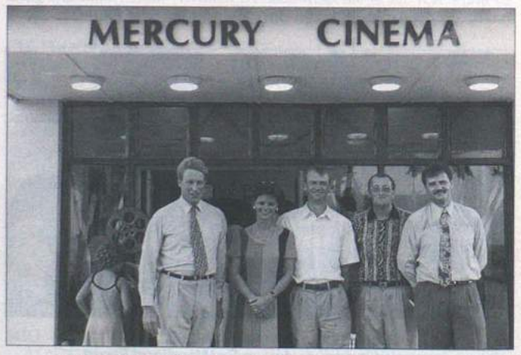
9 Sig Regt
BFPO 59

THE MERCURY CINEMA

Anyone who has served recently in Ayios Nikolaos will know that the Mercury Cinema has been run on a 'wing and a prayer' for a number of years. The projectors in the Cinema were a pair of Kalee 18's, manufactured in the mid 1930s, which were carefully nurtured into life twice a week by a small band of dedicated enthusiasts. They were, as we understand, the last working examples of this type of projector and spare parts for them ran out several years ago. It was realised by all concerned that if the projectors could not be replaced soon then it was only going to be a matter of time until the Cinema had to close its doors for good. The first blow for those who dreamed of a refurbished Mercury Cinema was the estimate that it would cost over £43,000 to replace the projectors and their associated sound system. The next blow was being told that new projectors would have to be paid for exclusively from non-public funds.

A cinema improvements fund was opened and managed to raise a few thousand pounds. A number of unsuccessful attempts were also made to obtain grants from the Army and Air Force Amenities Funds and from Central Welfare Funds. Then, after months of detailed staff work a Nuffield Trust grant of £30,000 was finally obtained earlier this year thanks to support from HQ Dhekelia Garrison, HQ British Forces Cyprus, HQ AG and the RAF's Personnel & Training Command. On the day that the award from Nuffield Trust was confirmed an order was placed with SSVC for two new projectors. The very next day as if sensing that they were soon to be destined for that great cinema in the sky, one of the two Kalee 18 projectors broke down for the final time and was declared to be beyond repair. The next few months, whilst the new projectors were being built to order in Italy, demonstrated the dedication and loyalty of the Ayios Nikolaos audiences as they had to endure a reel change every twenty minutes on the one remaining projector. 'Evita', for example, was shown with seven intervals of five minutes each! These intervals helped to dramatically improve the takings in the cinema kiosk but did nothing to improve the artistic quality of the film!

Finally, at the beginning of July the Mercury Cinema's one remaining Kalee 18 ran its last performance. The next day the projection room was decommissioned and installation work on the new sound system and



(*L-R*): Maj Nigel Harrison (the project manager for the refurbishment), Ms Renate Foster Hd of SSVC Cinemas (the prime contractor), Mr Steve Case of Sound Associates Ltd (the installation engineer), Cpl Dan Archer of 33 SU (the Manager of the Mercury Cinema) Flt Lt Marcus Barber of 33 SU (the OIC of the Mercury Cinema)

projectors began. The Mercury Cinema was scheduled to reopen on Thursday 24th July with the Forces premier of the new 'Batman and Robin' film that had only just been released in the West End. The film itself was hand delivered to Cyprus by **Ms Renate Foster,** head of SSVC Cinemas, on the very morning that the cinema was due to reopen. Everything else was also running up against the deadline and that Thursday saw the installation engineer, **Mr Steve Case,** and the Cinema Manager, **Cpl Dan Archer,** still making adjustments to the projectors and the sound system as well as running a one day course for the team of volunteer projectionists!

Like all good stories this one has a happy ending and the cinema reopened without a hitch, on schedule and on budget! The opening ceremony was conducted by Commander Dhekelia Garrison, **Col Mike Brooke OBE,** in front of a packed audience, who were eager to take part in rather a novel experience for the residents of Ayios Nikolaos. That of going to watch a film that was in focus, well illuminated and audible! Let's see if these latest projectors are still going in the year 2059!

P.S. Does anyone know of a good home for two rather grand old gentlemen of the silver screen who are retiring after 62 years of service? The photograph shows the project team smiling (at last) at the start of the opening night.

Incidentally, **Renate Foster** is the daughter of **Capt (Retd) Gordon Raku** who was in the Royal Signals from 1953 to 1979. His service included two tours in Cyprus; one in the late 1950s and one in 1974. **Gordon** and his wife **Maisie** now live in Spring Hill, Florida. Thank you **Renate,** the project would not have been successful without your help and encouragement!

OFFICERS' MESS V SERGEANTS' MESS CRICKET
WEDNESDAY 20TH AUGUST 1997

Flushed with success from the recent Officers' Mess victory over Civilian Wing in July, the CO thought that the time was ripe to challenge the gladiators from the Sgts' Mess to a game of cricket, the 'gentlemen's game'. The gauntlet was picked up by the RSM, and it was agreed that hostilities would commence at 1600 hrs on 20th August 1997. At the appointed time, the day was still hot and sticky, (well this is Cyprus!) and following a short briefing of the do's and don'ts by **WO1 (RSM) Jon Duckworth,** the Officers' Mess skipper, **Capt** 'JJ' **Smith** elected to field. This appeared to be a bad move when the Sgts' Mess opening batsmen **Sgt** 'Snowy' **Shotton** RAF (33 SU), promptly lofted the ball over **Capt** 'Fiery Ray' **Patrickson** (not hard admittedly) for six! The Officers' Team fought back well however and began to take wickets steadily. Highlights of the innings were a stunning one handed catch by the catlike Budman, **Tony Oakes,** to see off **SSgt Nick Evans,** and a brilliant piece of fielding by the CO, **Lt Col Tim Inshaw,** to dismiss **SSgt Pete Beale.** Top scorers for the Sgts' Mess were **Sgt Shotton** and **SSgt Beale.** The final score was 105 for 7 wickets after 20 overs.

Following a delicious high tea of cream cakes and sandwiches, it was the Officers' Mess turn to bat chasing a target of 106 to win. Surprise, surprise, the Sgts' Mess Manager was the opening bowler who was seen disappearing into the pavilion to start his run up! The opening batsmen the Families Officer, **Capt Ray Patrickson** and **Bob Walker** (Civ Wing) seemed to be coping well until the RSM introduced his Joker in the form of a round of port, swiftly followed by another! Not renowned for his drinking prowess, the Families Officer soon returned to the pavilion when he chose to hit the wrong ball of three that appeared to be heading towards him! This only resulted in the appearance of **Capt** 'JJ' **Smith** who proceeded to hit the Sgts' Mess to all parts of the ground to continue his outstanding form from the previous match. Thanks to 'JJ', and some sound batting from the CO and **Brian Billingham** (Civ Wing) it wasn't too long before the Sgts' Mess total was reached.

It was at this point, in the gathering gloom, that the CO decided to declare the Officers' Mess innings and claim an honourable draw. The RSM had other ideas after discussions with **Lt Col Chris .lackson** (RAMC) a challenge was offered up to the Officers' Mess. It was to be one final delivery from the Sgts' Mess star, the somewhat intimidating **Sgt Roger Thompson** who had been the umpire for the day, against the Officers' Mess number 11 batsman, **Capt Dave Edwards.** If the batsman was bowled out the game would be a draw; if the batsman scored any runs, it would be a victory to the Officers' Mess. Amazing tension! As **Roger** came in to bowl off his intimidating run up, the crowd were going wild?! **Dave** calmly stroked the ball over the ring of fielders to claim a deserved victory for the Officers' Mess! Thanks must be extended to the two umpires, the Mess staff, chefs, the Rugby club barmen, the players and the spectators for making it an excellent sport, played in the almost true spirit of the game.

The Officers' Cricket Team

THE BOB COOK MEMORIAL RUN
by Captain J.E. Mullender

Gen Bob Cook was SOinC from 1988 to 1992 and had a long distinguished career before his retirement in 1992. **Gen Bob** died from Motor Neurone disease in February this year, and two days after his death his son **Tim** pledged to run across Cyprus to fund research for the disease. **Tim,** a sales director, who had served as an IRTR Officer and in 23 SAS, subsequently planned an extremely arduous route. It was to take **Tim** from Cape Arnaoutis in the west of the island via Mount Olympus, which is 1500metres above sea level in the Troodos mountains, to Cape Greko in the east. The run was planned to commence on Sunday 24th August and to finish on Saturday 30th August at the latest with temperatures ranging from 15°C to 40°C. **Tim** obviously realised that this would require a great deal of support as his route was over some of the most rugged terrain in the Eastern Mediterranean. Away from the beaches the Cyprus mountains present a phenomenal challenge off road and thus **Tim** requested help from the Corps to achieve his aim.

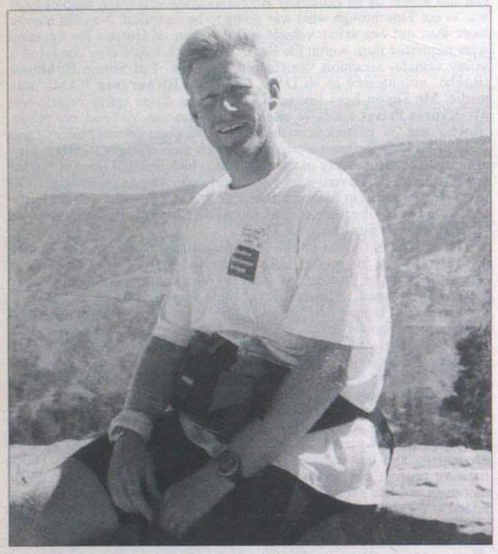
Lt Col Tim Inshaw, CO of 9 Sig Regt (R) was asked to assist, thus my involvement to plan the event. I soon realised after surveying the area that this would be an extremely ambitious quest and if the support team was to get **Tim** through what was going to be an ordeal, it would require more than just one safety vehicle and two men. Volunteers for the team were requested from within the Regiment, which would now consist of a safety vehicle, a support vehicle and four men. **Cpl Simon Robinson** 'Robbo' volunteered as NCO IC, **Cpl John Richardson** RAMC was medic, **Mr Simon Lees** 'Si' (ex CORPS) was driver safety vehicle and **Mr Kypros Petsas** a locally employed civilian was VM and interpreter. 'Robbo' and 'Si' embarked on the recce. After eight days of planning and 2000 miles later the team were ready to link their 6 stages together. This also involved the delivery of supplies which included 420 litres of bottled water to farms and tavernas on route. Early one August morning at 0130 hrs we departed from Mercury Barracks to Cape Arnaoutis to drive the course and prove the route card of 180 miles. Some twelve hours later we felt that we were now ready for **Tim**.

Tim arrived in Cyprus on the 22nd August and based his wife **Louise** and their 3 boys, his mother **Gilly,** sister **Annie** and cousin **Emma** and son at the resort of Pissouri. At 1600 hrs on Saturday 23rd due to safety reasons **Tim** started 12 hours early at Cape Arnaoutis which was at 40°C even with a sea breeze. The CO and RSM, **WO1 Jon Duckworth** arrived in style by helicopter to run the initial first few miles and to wish him luck. This stage would cover 37 miles over what was known to be some of the most difficult terrain in the area. **Tim** finished at Vretsia a deserted Turkish village in the Troodos foothills, and at this point he was pretty tired already, mainly due to the lack of acclimatisation to the heat and the sight of the daunting Mount Olympus, some 33 miles away. This was to be the end of his second stage. It was here that he was joined by his family for a brief period. Also runners from 259 Sig Sqn who were to accompany him on the miles ahead joined him here. From here **Tim's** running routine settled down as he found it preferable to run early mornings and late evenings, averaging 5mph. During stage two **Tim** was joined at 0400 hrs in an extremely remote area by **Maj Phil Davies** and his team from 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn who were in Cyprus on Ex Lion Sun. They accompanied **Tim** for the remainder of this stage and the climb to Mount Olympus. **Tim** now had a chance for some quality rest time, hot food and a long soak in the bath, in the somewhat luxury surrounding of Troodos Camp. Although tired, **Tim** was now half a day ahead of schedule. However, he was feeling apprehensive about the next stage, a long haul of 47 miles down to Zygi on the coast.

Tim embarked on what proved to be his hardest stage at midnight after a long rest, but very little sleep with runners who had joined him from 9 Sig Regt (R). Half way through Stage 3 tiredness was not just taking its toll on **Tim,** but also on the support team, in particular the safety vehicle drivers, who were following behind him and the runners in first gear! 'Robbo' had set up breakfast camp some 27 miles into this stage, when **Tim** arrived much to 'Robbo's' astonishment he said 'Onwards' and carried on running for a further 10 miles stopping at Asgata only 10 miles away from Zygi. Here the medic was kept busy sorting out blisters on blisters, but despite this, morale was very high since the coast that would lead **Tim** to Cape Creko was now in sight. On arrival at Zygi, **Kypros** found a friendly Taverna owner who gave the team rooms for the night and a very welcome fish meze, at this stage the 24hr compo packs were getting somewhat repetitive.

Tim started the 27 miles leg to Larnaca, with fresh runners from the Regiment at a blistering pace. He arrived at the Salt Lakes just outside of Larnaca airport well ahead of time. After resting during the heat of the day **Tim** was ready to embark on the fifth stage with a 15-mile leg to Dhekelia Garrison, where he was to receive a cheque for C£250 from the Garrison Commander, **Col Mike Brooke OBE.** Unfortunately this proved to be a bit of a nightmare when **Tim** pulled his achilles tendon 4 miles short of the Garrison. However, **Tim** limped in only 30 minutes behind his appointed time despite being in great pain. After resting overnight at **Kypros**'s family apartments just outside Dhekelia they embarked early on Thursday 28th August for the sixth and final stage of 22 miles to Cape Greko. **Tim** was suffering with his injury and was advised to walk, time was on his side. He was not due to arrive at Cape Greko until 1600 hrs that day. Later that morning **Tim** was stopped for several hours (the only way to slow this running machine down) just outside the infamous resort of Ayia Napa. Here **Tim** was joined by additional runners from the Regt and 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. Armed with buckets and after live interviews on BFBS and Napa radio the team of runners led by **Tim** hit the resort's topless beaches and the many street bars. Within 25 minutes C£120 was raised and **Tim** had only 7 miles to

go to the finish. Meanwhile in the grounds of a French rebroadcast station at Cape Greko, **Sgt Christopher** SQMS HQ Sqn, **Sgt Tilley** the chef and the rest of the admin staff had been preparing an elaborate champagne finish. **Tim** was stopped once again for two hours and was eventually released at 1500 hrs for a slow 5 miles. Family, press and members from the participating unit's gathered for the finish. Right on time the runners behind a somewhat gaunt but smiling **Tim** entered the station for the last 200metres. To an amazed gathering with just 50metres to go, **Tim** broke into a sprint through to the finish. During the subsequent celebrations **Lt Col Inshaw** addressed all assembled, congratulating **Tim** on his heroic and remarkable achievement. A cheque for C£1000 was presented from the Regiment. **Tim** duly responded expressing his gratitude, and presented the Regiment with a silver Quaich in memory of his father, which he had carried throughout his run. He further stated that his family hoped the Quaich would be presented annually for a suitable challenge and to raise funds for Motor Neurone Disease. **Tim,** who is 35 accompanied by 32 runners at different stages ran the equivalent of 7 marathons in under 5 days. £2,200 was raised in Cyprus towards his goal of £57,000.



Tim Cook resting at Mount Olympus
1500 metres above sea level, having covered 70 miles in 2 days

The team at Mount Olympus with 110 miles to go

QMSI Wiscombe administering some physio, with his next patient LCpl Jones RLC looking somewhat apprehensive

'Robo' discussing tactics at Vretsia
'Tim has only got 33 miles to Mount Olympus'

9 Sig Regt (R) and 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn runners, with a strong Tim in Ayia Napa with only 7 miles to the finish

Lt Col Tim Inshaw at the finish congratulating Tim and presenting a cheque for C£1000.

'FINISH' the smiles say it all

3 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Chris Thain**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) John Riley**

CONGRATULATIONS

Sincere congratulations go out to CPO **Matt Helm** and his wife **Niki** on the birth of their son **Jack** and **LCpl Billy Kidd** and his wife **Jo** on the birth of their daughter **Lucy.** Well done.

EXERCISE SEA SOJOURNER

A week off work, sailing around Cyprus in the September sunshine, oh yes, and some adventure training as well, who could refuse? 3 Sqn chartered the *Ensign Dyas 11*, a 33ft yacht owned by 1st Bn The Light Infantry for a week of offshore sailing training. The crew consisted of **Lt Fiona Galbraith** (CC EX), **SSgt Steve Smith** (Skipper), **Cpl Vicky Sproule** (First Mate), **Cpl Roger Wilson** (Cabin Boy), **Cpl Andy Wallace** and **LCpls Sarah Harrison** and **Clair Sharples.**

Captains' Log - Day 1. As the crew was of mixed abilities, the first day was spent around Akrotiri Bay, getting a feel for sailing and what the yacht was capable of. For some, **(Cpl Sproule)** steering in a straight line was an achievement. Unfortunately, as we prepared to return to Akrotiri Mole to anchor for the night we found the foresail, which we had painstakingly raised, refused to move. **SSgt Steve Smith** had the unenviable task of navigating the yacht around the harbour with the foresail billowing in the wind of the day.

Captains' Log - Day 2. The Met Office at RAF Akrotiri promised good weather and fair winds, which roughly translated, meant that to 'go anywhere' the engine would definitely be part of the equation. The plan for day 2, was to sail to Paphos harbour, during this voyage essential safety drills were practiced, and all hands had the opportunity the take the helm.

Captains' Log - Day 3. On the third day, the weather was on our side and the yacht saw some action. The engine was killed upon leaving Paphos harbour, and the sails were unfurled. Towards the afternoon, the wind really picked up, and the crew was ordered to strap themselves to the deck. **LCpl Clair Sharples** had seen enough, and went down below, and spent the remainder of the day sat on the floor, thinking of the large breakfast she had that morning. Most of the crew was now confident in basic boat handling, and the more experienced crew used the day to teach chart work and log keeping.

Captains' Log - Day 4. The fourth day was spent motoring back to Akrotiri as again the weather had let us down. By this time, **Cpl Andy Wallace** had had enough of the sun and plastered sun factor 35 all over his face, and spent the remainder of the day imitating a ghost.

Captains' Log - Day 5. The final day was spent very much like the first, in and around Akrotiri Bay, with time thrown in for swimming and relaxing. **Cpl Sproule** eventually managed unsupervised to tie a bowline. It only took her 5 days to master. Overall, the Exercise was a great success, a week off work sailing around Cyprus, and, oh yes some adventurous training as well.

EXERCISE HOT PURSUIT

Ex Hot Pursuit was a 3 Sqn adventure training exercise conducted in Troodos, Happy Valley and Dhekelia. 36 members of the Squadron took part with each 'Volunteer' completing 5 days training over a 3 week period.

After a lengthy discussion on how all the passengers and training stores were not going to fit into the mini-buses, the members of Phase 3 arrived at the Joint Services Training Centre in Troodos. The initial day of adventure, whilst promising to be slow and non-eventful, soon turned into an afternoon of intense mountain biking, with **Lee** 'absolutely no sense of direction' **Spiers** sharing his biking expertise. **Capt Cheryl Durrant** (Aust Int) demonstrated the correct landing procedures when the cycle ejector seat was operated, the scars have almost healed. Not to be outdone, **Maj Chris Thain** demonstrated the 'Back of the bike over the head' method of mountain biking, causing much merriment amongst the remainder of the team.

Sgt Tim Stevens out for the day fly catching

The next phase was water-sports at Happy Valley, and a chance to show coordination and finesse whilst water skiing. The majority managed to stand up for at least 30 seconds, and all achieved water burns in the obvious places. The next morning we all eagerly got up for a gentle 1km swim at Cape Greco, and an opportunity for those who had not swallowed enough sea water to do so, then like lemmings, cliff-jumping into the sea was the order of the day, followed by canoeing. The remainder of the exercise was spent realising our childhood dream of being Spider Man, on a rock face.

Cpl Jackson, SSgt Hall, LCpl Janvier, LCpl Roberts, LCpl Jures, Cpl Thomas

LCpl 'I'm not really scared' Howard

14 Sig Regt (EW)

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd **Maj R.N. Clapp**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Couston**

As the summer in Brawdy draws to an end, the 'two-twenty sixth' prepares to enter the main exercise season. The past two months have been filled with Adv Trg in Newquay, a visit from **Brig J. H. Griffin**, a little summer leave, the attachment of two POs, lots of ATD activities and the implementation of UNICOM! Naturally, the usual mundane activities of manning EW operations around the Globe continues throughout–but we don't like to talk about those.

GREAT NORTH RUN

On the 13th September 1997 five members of the Squadron left Cawdor Barracks for more sunny climes. Later that day they arrived in Newcastle. The five had been organised by **SSgt** 'Alf' **Kirkham,** later to be known as Magellan **Kirkham**, to raise funds for the 'Leukaemia Research Fund'–by running the thirteen and a half miles that is the Great North Run. The other four members of the team were **Cpl** 'Jonny Boy' **Perry, LCpl** 'Geeky' **Fenwick** and the 'Calorie twins', **LCpl Lisa Stansforth** and **LCpl Laura Shaw.** Magellan had also managed to rope in the assistance of a civilian from his hometown, **Charlie Broadhurst.** This group of inexperienced runners had trained for 'months' to join over 30,000 other runners to compete in this competition. At 0830 the following morning they left camp to park their mini bus in the finish area of South Shields. They also used this time to 'recce' the route they would be running later that day, this was a planned action and had nothing to do with Magellan's map reading. 'Trust me I know where we are going.'

The mini bus safely parked, and deciding their meeting point after the race (the nearest Pub to the finish), they joined the growing throng taking the Metro to the Haymarket district of Newcastle city centre and the start of the race. They arrived in time to see the start of the 'elite woman's' race. Soon it would be their turn to start and they nervously joined the crowd that had formed behind the start line. All that was required was for some footballer or other to start the race, I believe it was **Shearer** or something like that! We were off. The weather was good and with no real wind, it was expected to be a fast race. This was the case–the fastest time of the group being 1hr 20mins and the slowest being 2hrs and 10mins. After receiving their medals and T-shirts they all sat around in the 'RV' swapping stories on how the race had gone. The consensus was that we would all be back next year to improve on our time.

EXERCISE WHALE ADVENTURE

As any estate agent worth their salt will tell you, there are three important things about a property, they are location, location and location. The same could well be said for Adv Trg. Thus, congratulations are in order for **SSgt Alfie Kirkham** for choosing Newquay, in Cornwall, which was recently named as the setting for the British version of Baywatch. Okay, so we're from 14 Sig Regt and Newquay was a mere 7 hour drive away, but to be honest most of us have now become immune to travelling times. We arrived at Penhale Camp mid afternoon on Sun 3 Aug. Within moments everybody was unpacked, the bar was set up and the race was on. It being a Sunday, the day of Worship, we thought it unlikely that much would be going on that evening. Surprising then that the majority of the Squadron found themselves in a club in the middle of Newquay at 11pm. Not just any club mind you, a decent club (and thus a distinct change from Haverfordwest). Call it fate, or religious intervention, but the fact remains that 226 Sqn was Adv trg in Newquay at the same time as the professional surf championships were being held. After a quiet kebab we caught the transport home.

The Squadron was divided into four groups, rotating through different activities: deep-sea fishing, mountain biking, rock climbing and canoeing. The deep-sea fishing was extremely popular, with the obvious exception of **LCpl Stansforth** who discovered that she could never have a career in the Navy. A number of different species were fooled into thinking that a hook was in fact a delicious morsel just ready for the picking (a number of members of 226 have now taken up fishing having finally found something they can outwit). A number of 'monsters' were caught and **Sig Robinson**'s catch even joined us for the beach barbecue, and delicious it was too. The mountain biking route was a 17mile stretch of the Camel Trail that runs through some of the most picturesque parts of the local countryside. Unfortunately we didn't get to see much of this as it flew by. The order of the day was head down, work hard and try to catch up with **WO2 Harris.** The YofS and **Sgt Price** acted as blockers clearing the path for the following 12 or so mud splattered lemmings piling down the path with wild abandon. The last half mile or so was uphill, in fact very steeply uphill, in fact pretty much vertical I would say. Here people discovered the joys of pushing a bike up the hill as opposed to riding it. Climbing took place on one of the local beaches. **WO2 Couston** and **SSgt Kirkham** set up a number of challenging climbs in full view of the public sunning themselves mere feet away. Never being ones to resist a challenge (or the opportunity to show off in front of bikini clad civvies) everyone attempted at least two climbs. The lack of technique was more than compensated for by the 'helpful' tips from the other group members (such as 'hurry up the sun is going down in five hours'). Those not climbing at the time had to keep themselves amused by sunbathing, eating ice creams, playing football and swimming this was adventurous training at its most arduous. Then there was the sea canoeing. Now a three-foot wave may not look that big from the shore, but when it hits a canoe it is actually quite powerful. These were the thoughts we were thinking as our faces were ground into the seabed. **Cpl Staff** did an excellent job of teaching us the theory of wave surfing in a canoe, but translating that into practice proved eventful.

On the Wednesday **Sgt Meek** and **Sgt Gibbins** set up an orienteering course on the training area at the back of the camp. This was a particularly arduous course and visiting all the points proved beyond the ability of many. In the afternoon the Squadron held a beach barbecue. After a few beers, the games commenced: rugby, football, swimming and frisbee, a number of people commented that it looked like a scene out of Top Gun, honed and toned bronzed bodies. Before we finish it is necessary to mention the nightlife in Newquay, which to be honest rivals the best in the country during the summer. Many a happy hour was spent dancing away in places such as Sailors, Treetops and Berties. A special award must go to the OC, **Major Clapp** who has discovered a niche all of his own on the dance floor. His dancing at one stage was likened to that of a 70's German on acid.

So that was it, 226 Sig Sqn adventurous training. In summary, it was an excellent week, the activities were all well organised and pitched at the right level. The Squadron worked together during the day and then played together at night. I would thoroughly recommend Newquay as an ideal spot for adventurous training, providing excellent facilities both for the activities and the après-activities.

226 at Newquay–Note the buried OC!

226 Sea-canoeing in Cornwall

SQUADRON SUMMER FUNCTION

On the 10th September 1997, to break up ATD week, 226 Sqn held a summer function at Haverfordwest Rugby Club. When the buffet had finished the Squadron was once again treated to a display of dancing by the Sqn Comd **Maj Clapp.** He has obviously watched one too many 'Prodigy' videos. It was about this time that we lost **Potential Officer Steve Buckton,** who faded fast under a barrage of Alcopops–kindly forced upon him by **Capt Mark Smith** and **Lt Jim Brown,** under the guise of 'character development'. We are pretty sure that he enjoyed his two hours spent asleep outside. Then unfortunately the Karaoke started. **Capt Niall Stokoe,** the ginger Elvis, showed us what a great career in pop he thought he could not have had. The finale to the evening was a rendition of 'Tubthumping'–a Squadron anthem, and during this **SSgt Richie Angove** showed us all what really bad dancing was all about. It was a good evening, enjoyed by all, many thanks to **Sgt Mark Harbin** for all his hard work.

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Brown Int Corps**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Angove**

The Troop would like to say hello to **Cpl Danny Clayton,** and **LCpl Katie Leak** and a big welcome back to **LCpl Andy Knowles** who returns from the Emerald Isle. Farewell to **Cpl Sarah Jenkins** (instructing at Comms & Sy) and **Cpl** (Whoops!!) **Mr Andy Clarke,** who, after serving 11 years has finally called it a day. The Troop's final farewell is to **Sgt Al Elderbrant** who is starting a new career with Northumbria Police Force. Good luck **Al, Angie** and **Sean-Paul** and best wishes.

August got off to a lazy start with it being a maximum leave period within the Regiment. The majority of the Troop were either playing in the Adv Trg tent in Cornwall or sending postcards back from distant shores. Still, some of the Troop managed to get on diving and sailing courses–**Sgt** 'Fi' **Fielder** and **Sgt** 'Fi' **Fielder,** and then get some leave in. September came with a bang, with a two day exercise shaking off all the summertime blues. In 7 months time the Troop will be getting additional manpower from **Cpl Di Mulvaney** as she prepares herself for a new addition to her family. Congratulations. Not forgetting all the lads and lasses away on Roulement Tours and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Flatman** at Headley Court, hurry back, we need the manpower. On the sporting front, H Tp prove that they have some Gladiators, with **Sgt Andy Ball** representing the Corps and Army at Badminton, **Sig Naomi Wilson**–Army Swimming Team, **Cpl Danny Clayton**–Corps Cricket, and **LCpl Jay Waites** breaking into the Corps Football Team. The Troop looks forward to the forthcoming exercises in October and November with **Sgt** 'Fi' **Fielder** already putting her non-availability in due to Adv Trg commitments.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1 Stapleton**
SSgt **SSgt Fuller**

Once again the Troop has gone through a steady change of personnel. A warm welcome to **Sgt Paul** 'Jacques Cousteau' **Rowlands,** wife **Ruth** and family from N. Ireland, **Cpl Paul Browne** and wife **Sarah** from 9 Sig Regt and not too far away, **LCpl** 'Sully' **Sullivan** from 237 Sig Sqn. A big welcome back to **Sgt Chris** 'Funky' **Gibbins** and **Sgt Bob** 'Ackers' **Ackland-Snow** fresh from Bosnia. We must bid a fond farewell to **Cpl Greg** 'Scouse' **Cropper** who's off to his native Liverpool to teach the part-timers a thing or two, or is that the other way round, **Cpl Stu** 'Rocky' **Ramage** and **LCpl Martin Barker** join the ranks in civvy street and last but not least **LCpl Stu** 'A Job' **Bailey** who plans to prop up the student union bar for 2 years.

On the sporting front, **Sgt Loz** 'Supersub' **Hill** has switched from Corps Rugby League to Regimental football whilst **Sgt Mark** 'Van Basten' **Harbin** and **Cpl Daz** 'Blade' **Brown** turn out for arch rivals Haverfordwest AFC in the third division of the Welsh Pembrokeshire League. **Sgt Chris Gibbins, Cpl Daz Brown** and **LCpl Col Davies** represented the Regiment at the Corps Badminton Championships held at Colerne with **Sgt Chris Gibbins** finishing runner-up in the Veterans Cup. The Troop began its' Ryder Cup selection process with **Cpl Steve** 'Round the World' **Lyne** organising a Golf afternoon at the local pitch and putt course which turned out to be a crash course in landscape gardening. **Sgt Gibbins** recorded the best score of the afternoon whilst **WO1 Dave** 'Tiger' **Stapleton** and **Sgt Mark** 'Monty' **Harbin** tied for longest drive . . . 10 yards. **LCpl Martin Barker** could still be found scouring the golf course by torchlight for the head of his golf club which ended up travelling further than his golf ball and **Cpl Vinny** 'Soggy' **Shepherd** contemplated a return to darts as his number one sport. A good time was had by all however. After a hectic 1st and 2nd Lines Inspection period, the Troop deployed to a local disused airfield for a tactical shakeout prior to the forthcoming Sqn Exercise. With new blood added to the Troops' ranks it was important to practice the Troops' role in a tactical situation, under the supervision of **WO1 Dave Stapleton** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Dave Fuller.** For several days both Beady Eye and NCC crews deployed to various locations, refreshing their skills in tactical awareness, convoy drills, navigation, and voice procedure, much to the satisfaction of our resident Radio Op, **LCpl** 'Buster' **Keeton.** It was in the final phase of the exercise involving a crash move, that **WO1 Dave Stapleton** thought that all his hard work and preparation had paid off. **Sgt Harbin, SSgt Kev** 'Butch' **Jones, Sgt Michael** 'Icky' **Kenyon, Sgt Bob Ackland Snow** and **LCpl Paul** 'Ambrose' **Rice** vanished from their location to the ERV within minutes.

WO1 Dave Stapleton: 'Excellent. That's one of the quickest moves I've ever seen. How did you manage it?'

Sgt Mark Harbin: 'That's okay Sir, anytime. Now can I go back and pick up all the kit we've just left behind?'

Several expletives later we were on our way back to Brawdy having learnt some valuable lessons.

HAVERFORDWEST IT'S A KNOCKOUT COMPETITION 1997

The call went out for willing volunteers to take part in the annual Haverfordwest It's a Knockout Competition. Four women and four men were required to represent the Regiment. The wives volunteered with great gusto, and then began volunteering husbands and press ganging alcoholically impaired singlies with words such as 'Go on, it'll be good fun!' Eventually the team was formed consisting of **Anne-Marie Clapp** (Team Captain and general all round organiser), **Linda Mason** (Quiet intimidator of judges), **Mel Marshalsey** (Aggression Incorporated) and **Bev Davies** (Very loud intimidator of judges). Through embarrassment the men have asked to remain nameless, so no need to worry **SSgt Kev Jones, Cpl Rob Tubbs, Cpl Jock Marshalsey** and **Cpl Ted Page,** no-one will ever know.

On a hot (well hot for Haverfordwest!) Sunday afternoon the eight warriors set about defeating the 15 civilian teams in an event consisting of silly games involving water, inflatables, washing up liquid and more water. The judges, dressed like Coco the Clown, controlled the event and created a scoring system that would baffle Einstein. The Team 'did good' competing aggressively against strong opposition and carrying out manoeuvres that in any other areas of life would have resulted in sexual assault charges and long prison sentences. Is it our fault that the women chose to wear short gymslips? (optional for the men). Unbelievably the team made the final stage of the competition consisting of a play off between the 'best' six teams. There is a theory that the judges were too scared of **Bev Davies** and **Anne-Marie Clapp** to not allow them into the final. Whatever happened it worked and in preparation the women withdrew to discuss tactics whilst the men withdrew to discuss the beer tent. (An event such as this cannot be done totally sober.)

After the Final, consisting of building shapes, milking cows and, for the men, avoiding the judge with the somewhat questionable sexual orientation, the result was awaited with bated breath. The women were buzzing with excitement at the prospect of meeting television's **Sean Maguire** (who?), the presenter of prizes. After being finally humiliated by having to sing 'New York' in front of the entire population of Haverfordwest (yes, both of them), the results were announced. The winners were indeed 14 Sig Regt (EW) and the team were awarded small plastic trophies from **Sean Maguire** (Who?) to remind them of their day of 'fun'. It just goes to show that if strong military style planning and fitness don't work then cheating and threats of violence come up trumps every time. On the whole it was a good day and even if it was no good for **Cpl Rob Tubbs'** selection training, all the washing up liquid used negated the need for a shower afterwards and gave a slinky sheen to the hair. The event raised a considerable sum of money for charity and thanks must go to **Anne-Marie Clapp** for finding a team (no matter how hard the men tried to hide). Also thanks go to the remainder of the team who will, for the remainder of their tours, have to wear disguises in town for fear of being recognised.

The It's a Knockout Winning Team

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd **Maj J. J. Cole**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Cox**

After Ex Pegasus Strike the Squadron has been on a max leave period. Twenty people from the Squadron participated in a week long Adv Trg package at St David's that comprised climbing, surfing, sea canoeing and jumping off cliffs. **Cpl Trump** had a near death experience while coasteering when he slipped into the famous 'washing machine' and was sucked under. **LCpl Hodson** was desperate to prove his manhood by jumping off cliffs that were at least two metres high.

The Squadron says goodbye to **Maj Alan Hill** who goes to Staff College and welcomes in **Maj Jon Cole** from the Adjt position. Kilo Tp welcomes Australians **Cpl Kinslow** and **Cpl Quaife** on Ex Long Look who, after a month travelling in Europe, were then whisked off to LEWT and are now preparing to go to Egypt on Ex Bright Star. They assure the Squadron that they would rather spend their time in Wales. Victor Tp welcomes **SSgt** 'Daggers' **Dagnall** and **LCpl Dean,** and says farewell to **LCpl Baker** who starts a university course in Sept. Congratulations to **SSgt Tony Watters** and his wife **Teresa** for giving birth to a baby girl. Tango Tp welcomes **SSgt Glen Kitchen, Sgt Saunders, LCpl Dave Drummond** and **Sig Danny Clark.** Congratulations to **Cpl Andy Staff** and his wife **Abby** for giving birth to a baby girl. **Cpl** 'Bish' **Bishop, LCpl Reardon** and **Sig** 'Gaj' **Gajic** are off on yet another tour in Bosnia. Meanwhile **Sig** 'the generators are on fire' **Priestley** has been kept away

from generators after Ex Pegasus Strike. The LEWT is preparing to deploy to Egypt on Ex Bright Star with the Household Cavalry Regiment, This should provide the Troop with plenty of opportunities for posing for 'Lawrence of Arabia' photographs, getting a tan, and a chance to try out our fluent Arabic.

EXERCISE DRAGONS PICOS 25 AUGUST-5 SEPTEMBER 1997

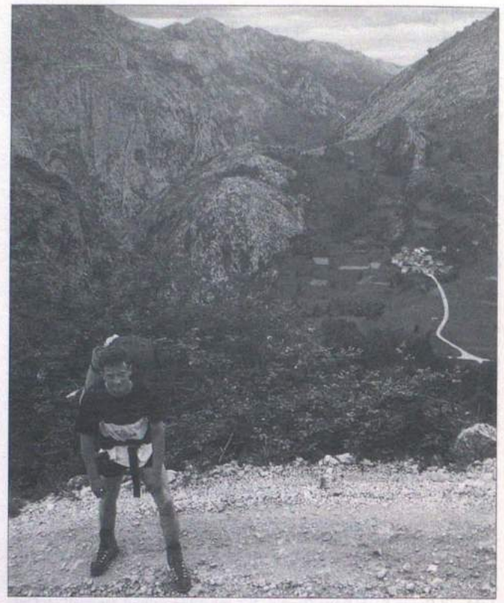
Ten members of 14 Sig Regt (EW) left a windy Brawdy for the sunny mountains of Los Picos de Europa in the North of Spain. The thirty hours that were spent being cooped up in a small Renault Traffic minibus were soon rewarded by an excellent six days trekking in the mountains. We left the minibus in the small village of La Hermida and started on the 110km circuit. Within ten minutes people were stopping to tie laces and pick up items that had fallen off their rucksack. **Sig** 'Priesters' **Priestley**'s rucksack was more of a mobile washing line, and our 'medic' **Cpl** 'Bish' **Bishop** spent half of his time applying zinc oxide tape to various feet. Personal administration could only improve. The area is remote, relatively untouched and in its own way attractively backward. Many of the villages have been long abandoned and are now inhabited by sheep and cattle. Navigation was fairly easy but the thick red lines marked on the map were no more than pot-holed roads and the dotted lines were hard to find. Many of the group were expecting something more lively and less arduous but they all soon adjusted to the idyllic and spectacular surroundings of mountains, valleys, gorges and waterfalls. Some were more reluctant to adjust to some of the gradients that gave the goats vertigo. We bought food locally, if the village actually had a shop. It was always a choice of bread and either ham, cheese or ham and cheese. We soon became rather sick of endless cheese and it was seen as somewhat of a blessing when one night a wild goat invaded one of the tents, ripped open all the bags of food and devoured an entire cheese, leaving only traces of tin foil.

Finding a spare plot of green land was never a problem. Finding a plot of flat green land was more of a challenge and we often put considerable faith in the strength of the tent pegs to avoid being washed downstream. The local goats always seemed intrigued by our presence to the extent that one was kind enough to give **Sig Phil Lee** some of its fleas. Despite the blisters and sunburn, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the week and even more so the day R & R that was spent on Santander beach.

245 SQUADRON
TRACK BASH 1997

The 245 Sig Sqn (EW) Track Bash course was run to teach the Squadron's 'Panzer Virgins' the ins and outs of the much loved AFV 432 over a period of 3 weeks. The 10 individuals on course 2/97 formed up on the first day under it's two God Like instructors, **Cpl** Rab 'Tee Hons' **Grice** and **Cpl** Spike 'Pork Sausage' **Milligan**, for an initial classroom bound week of theory. This week culminated in a comprehensive written test to see who had managed to remain awake! Unwittingly, those of us who scored well were lining ourselves up for a DMI course in Bovington. **Cpl** 'No Holiday in Cyprus' **Townsend** being the first to be dispatched with only a few days notice.

The second week was given over to a more hands on approach. However, during this week many of the pupils were suffering from brain strain and an incentive was introduced to keep people 'sparking'. Needless to say the end of course party was very good!



Los Pilos Mountains

In the third week we actually got to drive the AFVS. As expected some people were more adept at driving the 'panzers' than others. **Sig Merv** 'Club Foot' **Young** excelled in a number of areas. Firstly he performed an incredible version of an emergency stop when he failed to take his foot off of the accelerator and apparently forgot to pull back on both tillers. Then he managed to throw a track on the only part of the cross-country course to be covered in 2 feet of marsh, sided by gorse-bush. **Sig Young's** final contribution was to be awarded the accolade of 'Mr Casual Panzer Crew', having been spotted by a certain member of the Regimental hierarchy in a 'panzer' wearing a T-shirt, sunglasses and helmet whilst on a public highway. **Sig** Tel 'Spatial Awareness' **Bacon** also slightly swerved off of the straight and narrow. Pembrokeshire Council gardeners now have a new pattern in their roadside lawns and the Council Dustcart nearly had a 432 added to the back of it. All said and done the course was very well instructed and all those who took the tests passed. Just remember 'panzer' is a dirty word.

16 Sig Regt

RHQ

CO — **Lt Col G.A. James**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Boyle**

It has finally happened, the RSM has at last tasked me, the Orderly Room Sgt to write a few notes for *The Wire*. Since the last instalment, thanks to my good friend **Sgt O'Brien**, quite a few changes have happened within RHQ. We welcome the arrival of our new Adjt, **Capt Arnold**, fresh from sunning himself down under. Congratulations to **Pte Teasdale** who went off on maternity leave and gave birth to a baby girl called **Paige**. All our congratulations go out to her and her husband who works in the COMMCEN in 252 Sig Sqn. We've also had to say goodbye to **Cpl Kelly** who was posted to HQ MWF in Chilwell near Nottingham and **LCpl Lewis** (HQ Sqn Clk) who left us to join the ARRC. The replacements have now arrived in the form of **LCpl George** 'Too smooth to move' **Lukins** and 'The Ginger Ninja' **Pte** 'Super glue' **Bostock**.

The Ops room has had a complete changeover with the Ops Officer, **Capt Ian Parry** departing for Blandford. Taking over is **Capt Keith Bell**. Regt FofS **WO1 Nigel Cullen** has now been commissioned and moved on to 3 (UK) Armd Div in Bulford. Regt YofS **WO2 Phil Jones** has also left RHQ to chill out down in Krefeld lines and now his replacement is in situ, welcome **WO1 Keith Emmerson**. We also have to say farewell to **Capt Willy Dott** and welcome the new tech Adjt, **Capt Dave Boxhall** (nice to see another hockey player joining RHQ).

HOCKEY SEVENS, ALDERSHOT 13-14 SEPTEMBER 1997

Ten girls were selected to represent 16th Sig Regt in the women's hockey sevens that is held annually at Aldershot. Chosen from a cast of thousands were **Sgt Fran Graham, Cpl Tina Whalen, LCpl Ann-Marie Ambury, LCpl Cassy Maycock, LCpl Susan Learmonth, Sig Holly Glen, Sig Louise Underwood, Sig Julia Dolan** and **Sig Sarah James**. The girls arrived in Aldershot on the Friday afternoon, to do a bit of shopping, followed by one or two alcoholic beverages that night. This was only to prepare them for the two days ahead.

Day one of the competition and the girls were fighting fit, they started off quite well, winning the first game 2-1. In total that day they played five matches, winning two, losing two, and drawing one. This put them into the second pool for the next days' matches. Day two and feeling stiff as a board, as all the hockey players around will know, hockey touches parts of the body that not a lot of sports do. The girls managed to pull themselves out of bed. A couple of coffees and a hearty English breakfast later, the girls were ready. Unfortunately the girls didn't manage to win any games but they did manage to draw two and lose three. Overall this left the girls in twelfth position out of eighteen.

FAREWELL DINNER–IN THE FIELD

It was just another exercise for the Officers, WO's and SNCOs of 16 Sig Regt–or so we thought. It became apparent early on in the exercise that this was going to be **Willy Dott**'s last appearance in the 'Baggy Green Skin'. It was agreed that an impromptu dinner night was to be arranged at a suitable venue. **Lt John Carter** was tasked with providing a suitable location and found an historic castle at Berg Linn that fitted the bill rather too nicely. (Well done **John**). **SSgt (SQMS) Les North** raced around and sorted out the admin with **2Lt Simmonds**.

The evening kicked off with the normal wind up with **WO2 (YofS) Phil Jones** taking **Willy** to a 'PXR conference', one of the few meetings he attended, which had nothing to do with resettlement! But why he thought the CO was having a PXR meeting in a castle I will never know! The gourmet meal prepared by 255 Sig Sqn Master Chef, **Sgt Kenny Barron** was excellent, the meal was served by volunteers from E Tp, 255 Sig Sqn. After the meal a small gift was presented in the form of a Regiment Plaque which came as another shock to **Willy** who was so tongue-tied because he had not made a speech before. (Another first!) With the toasts all done it was time to retire and continue on with the exercise. The Regt would like to wish **Willy** all the best in his new career with the civilian telecoms industry.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Jim Wood**
2IC — **Capt Louise** 'Not here very often' **Tomkins**

Since returning from Summer block leave the Squadron has been busy preparing for exercise, rehearsals for a Regiment IFOR medal parade and the Regiment Inter Troop Hockey competition. On deployment the Squadron proudly formed the backbone of communications for Ex Rhino Replen, we were in support of a 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt exercise. Deployments varied from Wentworth Barracks in Herford to a site on the former border between East/West Germany. Whilst on the exercise TN 16 had a torrid time, firstly with 'Maam Magellen' **McAnulty's** map reading and secondly their Crypto was corrupt hence having to re-role to TN 095.

SHQ TROOP

The sleepy hollow that is SHQ continues to slumber along punctuated only by occasional frantic burst of activity when the coffee runs out!

The ball is static! However back in the not too dim and distant past our erstwhile 2IC, **Capt Louise Tomkins,** held a conversation with an old Staff College colleague who is at present the British liaison officer and 2IC of an infantry company with Gebirgsjager Bn 233 (mountain infantry to the uninitiated), and the possibility of some Squadron members going to give a little bit of voice procedure training to them was discussed. 'No problem, we can do that'. *The ball starts to roll!*

The 2IC zooms off to Bosnia for another holiday and the 'ball' is left floating in Sqn Ops with **SSgt (FofS) Harper, SSgt (YofS) Evans** and **SSgt Davies.** The Foreman dodged the ball, the Yeoman sidestepped it and **SSgt Ian Davies** (who has a bad ankle), didn't! *The ball gains momentum!*

The Regiment soon became aware of the visit and it gained official sanction (more momentum), and was planned for the end of July. The week prior to departure **Lt Col James** was heard to remark to **SSgt Davies**–'I've seen your name somewhere Staff,–you're up to something soon'. To which the reply was, 'Who Sir, me Sir, no Sir'. **Colonel:** 'Oh yes that's it, this trip to the German Army next week. **SSgt D:** 'Oh that. Yes I'm doing that Sir'. Further remarks followed from the CO in the area of 'high profile visit', 'standards', 'reflective of the Corps' etc. *The ball rolls downhill!*

So, one fine summer's morning (28th July to be exact), **SSgt Davies, LCpl E. Roberts** and **Sig I. A. Clark** departed JHQ for an eleven-hour trial of strength against the worst that the German motorway system and holiday traffic could throw at them. *The ball is hurtling at breakneck speed!*

The maxim 'no plan survives contact with the enemy' applied perfectly to the occasion. **Capt Head**, our Liaison officer, mentor, guide and translator was being deployed on flood relief duties and his parting words as we drove in and he drove off were, 'I left some notes for you'. *The ball is slowing down.*

The language barrier had been anticipated, although so had the use of the LO as a translator. However, we persevered and the next day an assortment of Germany's best arrived. After a short introduction the immortal words, ' How much English do you speak?' was met by a total and very solid wall of silence. *The ball is now only subsonic.*

The impressive and Hi-Tech powerpoint presentation, the plasma screen, and all the other useful pieces of equipment lose a little of their attraction when the students can't read it. Thus, we fell back on the old favourite Talk and Chalk. The result was three days of intensive, but highly enjoyable joint voice procedure training. *The ball is at running speed.*

The culmination of the course was a short but intensive 'radio' exercise (with no radios) and a swapping of gifts. All of the course members received a 'Jimmy' cap badge that they wanted to wear, one had to be handed over to their Colonel as well. (It increases the chance of wearing one if the boss has one too.) *The ball is creeping along.*

After the ceremonies we returned to JHQ with a feeling that it was not only a job well done but more importantly a job over . . .'Oh yes Staff, *The Wire* notes . . .' *The ball never stops moving!*

TRUNK NODE 014

Firstly, the Troop would like to say some fond farewells to the following people: **SSgt Kev** 'Crazy Horse' **Curlett** who is off to the Royal School of Signals, **Sig Dawn Hague** as she leaves the Signals for civvy street and finally **LCpl Lenny** 'I can't be late again' **Hendry** who leaves for 2 Sig Regt in York.

CONGRATULATIONS

Well done by the way to the hot hipped Mexican cowboy **Sig Danny** 'Pedro' **Nelson** who won the Bucking Bronco competition during the Squadron annual barbecue. Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Tiz' **Tyrrell** and also to **LCpl Illman.** The Troop have now got a new mascot in the small and slightly round form of **Lewis** 'Babyface' **Robinson**, well done **Steve** and **Vicki** (but especially **Vicki**!!) on the birth. Best of luck to **Tiz** and **Lyndsey Tyrrell** with the birth of their child in the very near future as well. The Troop will also be losing their Tp Comd, **2Lt Tim Grey** who goes to read a degree at RMCS Shrivenham, he will be greatly missed by all the lads.

TRUNK NODE 015
EXERCISE ABLE CONDOR

Since the last issue of *The Wire* the Troop has been involved in numerous work rest and play activities. The first being all work, namely Ex Able Condor.

TROOP PARTY

On return from Ex Able Condor, the Troop was forced into participating in a very demanding weekend. This started on the Friday evening with a Troop function in the Wall and Willow Club. Nearly all turned out with their other halves for a very sociable, alcoholic and joyous occasion!

SQUADRON BARBY

On the Saturday the Troop embarked on another mission namely the 'baby paddling pool play day', (or more formally known as the annual Squadron barbecue). Blessed with gorgeous hot weather we all arrived with husbands/wives, girlfriends/boyfriends, sons/ daughters and sunglasses to enjoy the abuse of alcohol and the pleasure of some exceptionally well cooked typical barbecue cuisine (if not just a little bit late Chef!). On the whole, a good day was had by all, even though everyone went home wet. Also would someone please ask **Sgt White** to come off the bouncy castle now?

A special mention should go to **LCpl Grant Smith** who is so keen to involve his whole family into Army life, he makes his son who is only 2½, call him by his rank. When his son misbehaves he puts him on ROP's giving him jobs such as painting his front steps in Corps colours. Other troop personalities who are either feeling left out or who haven't had a mention in *The Wire* for a long time are **SSgt Nick Bell, Sgt Chalky White, LCpl Ian Hare, Sig Paul King.** Finally, Sir you've not got away with it–our Tp Comd **2Lt Jim Balfour.**

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

The Troop would like to welcome the following personalities into the fold: **Cpl Vince Saunders** and wife **Zoe, LCpl Richie Sheard** and his wife **Julie, Sig Tom McLoughlin** and **Sig Jona Jones.** We hope you all have a rewarding 3 years with the Troop. Farewell and good luck go to **Sig Anne Doick** in Civ Div, even though she is working again for the Forces in HQ ARRC. On a sad note we are saying goodbye to **LCpl John Ward**. **John** is known as a bit of a cowboy, and is renowned for his monthly orders of black nasty from the squadron MT.

CONGRATULATIONS

Go to **LCpl Grant Smith** and wife **Claire** on their recent marriage and also to **Sig Scouse Fearns** and **Sarah** for their newborn **Daniel**. Not forgetting **LCpl Tony Orange** and his wife **Annette** for their newborn **Cameron.**

TRUNK NODE 016
HELLO'S AND GOODBYE'S

We would like to begin by saying a few hellos and farewells. Firstly the goodbyes go to **LCpl Collins** who has left to go to 11 Sig Regt. Unfortunately for him however, we have sent his MFO to 9 Sig Regt in Cyprus! Then there is **Sig Irons** who is now at 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **Sig Andy Adam** has now left his very long time job of troop fixture to go on to Ireland. On to a quick hello to **Sigs Tony** 'DJ' **Blackburn, Lee** 'Stenny' **Stenning** and **Jan** 'Huge' **Aanes.**

CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to congratulate **LCpl O'Brien** for getting his haircut after setting it on fire whilst on exercise. (Wasn't this predicted by a certain Tp Comd?). As this is a very rare occasion another one won't matter! Well done to **Sig Sarah Clarke** and **Kev** on becoming parents to their son **Daniel**, we wish you all a lot of happiness for the future.

252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj** 'Alf' **Thomas**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM)** 'Too tall' **McKenna**

COMMCEN
SUMMER CAMP–25 JULY-9 AUG 1997

Ex CPC or should I say 20 young thrusting soldiers go mad in Bavaria. The Regimental Summer Camp was upon us once more, Ex CPC, an Adventure Training Exercise over the course of a two week period with members of the Squadron throwing themselves open to a world of arduous physical exercise. This comprised of Go-Karting, Bungee Jumping, Canoeing, Rock-Climbing, Swimming, Hill Walking (something the Army insist on doing every Summer Camp) and the odd evening beverage. The intrepid team was in high spirits as the mini-bus rolled out of JHQ and deployed on towards Bavaria. The scenic route was taken and after a nine-hour journey we arrived at our location.

Day One: there was no messing about, straight on the Rock-Climbing phase. After the safety brief we were all trying to re-enact scenes from the film 'Cliff Hanger', although, unlike the film, the weather was not in our favour. It was just chucking down with rain. We then moved on to the indoor Go-Karting, which proved to be a huge success due to the fact that we were out of the rain and had a chance to dry out. Then it was the time for the stroll in the park, otherwise known as the Hill Walking phase, although we believe that they used the term 'hill' very loosely. By the time we had finished the 'Hill-Walking' we all felt more like mountain goats scaling the North Face of Mount Everest. Top Tip of the day came from **Lt Simmonds'** when I quote a song 'these boots were made for walking',

however, in **Lt Simmonds'** case it was 'this boot was made for walking'. After making sure that everybody had sturdy enough footwear **Mam Simmonds** failed to check her own. Only at the start of the 'walk/tab' did she find that only the one boot was packed and to coin an old phrase she was 'hopping mad'.

The final day was a free day to do what we liked. Some of the lads went Bungee-Jumping, the rest of us did something less stressful and spent the day Go-Karting.

SQUADRON CRICKET MATCH

Saturday 20th September was the day that the cricket skills of the Officers, Seniors, and all other ranks were tested, in a friendly match on a glorious sunny day in JHQ, Rheindahlen. The "other ranks" started off the match by putting the two female members of the team, **Sig Jules Dolan**, and **LCpl Jo Quinn**, into bat first. This turned out to be quite frustrating for the opposition who quite obviously wanted to try out their high speed over-arm bowls, but were told due to revised rules for the day, the ladies of the team were to be bowled at under-arm. It wasn't long before the real cricket players got their turn on the green and began to take the Officers and Seniors by storm.

Special thanks go to **Maj Thomas** for dropping 3 catches, and also to **WO2 (SSM) Mick McKenna** for dropping 1 catch in sympathy with the OC. Stars of the other ranks team turned out to be **Cpl Phil Whitehead** and **Cpl** 'Lofty' **Lofthouse**, with **Cpl Rick Howlett** looking semi-professional until he ran three of his team-mates out. Cheers **Rick**!!! After 87 superb runs, it was finally time for a little light refreshment before the Seniors and Officers had their chance to show us what they were made of.

The Officers and Seniors team also started their innings with the female aspect of their team, **Mrs Sue Thomas**, and **Mrs Sharron Clubb**, closely followed by **Mrs Debbie McKenna**. A good effort was put in by all the ladies, even though most of them found it difficult to walk in the leg pads, let alone run! **Maj Thomas** put in a stirling performance scoring 20 runs and was then forced to retire, to prevent further embarrassment for his younger team mates. **SSgt Bob Clubb** played as could be expected. He was even brave enough to take **LCpl Toby Brookesbank**'s supersonic bowls without gloves on. Needless to say he was bowled out before he got a chance to show his real talent. The talent of this team turned out to be **Sgt Tony Law** who was not out for 6, and also the heroic **Sgt Frank Nevens**, who even with a knee injury, battled on and managed to score some runs for his team. The final results after the match were, other ranks 87, Officers and Seniors 86.

EXERCISE ROAD RAGE–KOWLOON TROOP'S DET DAY
by Sig 'Jacko' **Jackson**

Ex Road Rage 97 was held on 30th July 1997 as COMMCEN Paderborns "Det day". These det days are a regular occurrence within Kowloon Tp, 16 Sig Regt and are aimed at encouraging teamwork and bringing the far-flung members of the Troop together as often as possible. The day started with everyone arriving at COMMCEN Paderborn, and then going to the conference room for a brief on the days' events. Once this had been done a coach arrived to transport everyone to the days main event-indoor karting at a local raceway. From the start it became clear that we have a few closet Schumachers and Hills within the Troop as well as a couple of memorable Sunday drivers. The most memorable of these being **Sgt Danny Thwart**–who appeared to want to know where the rear view mirrors and indicators were on her Go-Kart. The event was run as a knockout event with the fastest two drivers from each heat progressing to the next round and ending up with the final race of the six most demonic drivers battling it out for the honours. In the end it was left to **Sig** 'Peck' **Ramsden**, who triumphed by a couple of nano-seconds over **LCpl Mick Durrant**, to lift the trophy and spray the proverbial champagne.

On a more serious note, after participating in the Regimental Challenge Pursuit Camp, **Sig Marie Rowe** from the Hohne det was involved in a serious RTA, resulting in several injuries. Since 8th August 1997, **Marie** has been in hospital in Koblenz. She has shown great courage and resilience and she is now starting to make a good recovery. The thoughts of the whole Squadron are with **Marie** and her family.

Sig Marie Rowe–Get well soon–Kowloon Troop

SYSTEMS TROOP

The Troop has just completed Ex Able Condor and we have had an almost complete re-vamp of Troop members (more on that later). Members of the Troop had a brilliant and very entertaining time Adventurous Training in Bavaria and Austria, yes lots of mountains, steep hills and yodelling (Julie Andrews would have been proud). **Sgt Mick** 'landlubber' **Knowles** eventually conquered his fear of going underwater in his canoe, only to attract the local leeches (in the lake!!!).

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

A big hello goes to **SSgt (FofS) Paul Lewis, Sgt Ron Atkinson** and their families also to **LCpl's Toby Brooksbank, George Harrison,** and **Sig's Scott Ayscough, Paul Buchanan** and **Steve** 'loose change' **Kelly**. Congratulations to **Sgt Ray King** on his promotion to Staffy and also to **Sig Jo Barry** on becoming **LCpl Jo Quinn** within 2 weeks! Good luck to **Capt Dave Boxhall** who is taking on the responsibilities of Tech Adjt. Farewell to **WO2 (FofS) John Dennis** who has moved to JDCMS to prepare them for the amalgamation with us. Goodbye to **Cpl Si Jervis, Cpl Lee Crossland, Cpl Steve Watson, LCpl Lee Street,** who all leave us for civvy street. We would like to give a special farewell to **Sgt Roelf Bruinsma** and his wife **Martine** who also leave us for civilian life after a staggering 23 years service. We wish them all the best for the future

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Al Ross**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Oakley**

It's been a busy period for the Squadron with RSIT rapidly approaching. A large percentage of the Squadron has been posted away, where are all the replacements?? As well as the never ending RSIT prep we have had to establish a new Step Up HQ for ARRC Rear. We have, however, had time for numerous leaving do's, the first being a Squadron barbecue with a Vicars and Tarts theme. **LCpl** 'Skimpy Knickers' **Hitchmough** and **LCpl** 'Stockings' **Wilson** are believed to have an SIB investigation pending!

A special mention must go to **Sig Jim Speakman** who is recovering in hospital after an unfortunate RTA whilst returning from the Regt CPC. From everyone in the Squadron we hope you get well soon.

YOUR CORPS NEEDS YOU

TO ASSIST IN RECRUITING

1000 NEW RECRUITS ARE NEEDED THIS YEAR TO REDUCE UNDERMANNING

IF YOU MEET POTENTIAL RECRUITS GIVE THEM A ROYAL SIGNALS COMMITTED SOLDIER CARD AND INVITE THEM TO TAKE IT TO THEIR LOCAL CAREERS OFFICE

CARDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR SQUADRON OFFICE - GET ONE BEFORE YOU GO ON LEAVE.

21 Sig Regt (AS) Colerne

This has been a quiet period for the Regiment, August being the maximum leave period and September being dominated by the regimental deployment on Ex Rhino Replen, in Germany. This was a huge exercise for the unit; not simply because of the number of soldiers involved, which totalled almost 13,000, but because it was one of the first opportunities to exercise the Regular and TA elements alongside each other, with our prime customer, the RAF Support Helicopter Force.

EXERCISE RHINO REPLEN–244 SIG SQN PERSPECTIVE

Whilst Alpha (AMF(L)) Tp, 244 Sig Sqn deployed to Sardinia, Italy on Ex Dynamic Mix, the remainder were involved in Ex Rhino Replen in support of the Support Helicopter Force. The following is a compilation of the recorded thoughts of those that took part. Selected excerpts from: **Cpl Martin Dixon, Sigs** 'Birty' **Baxter** and **Al Taylor** and **LCpl Martin Fowler**

'Recently the Squadron went to sunny Germany to take part in Ex Rhino Replen. This had been much hyped, and described to us as the biggest British Forces exercise this decade. On 5th September, we packed our kit, hitched our trailers and made our way in convoy to Harwich for the ferry crossing. Assisted by the RLC movement staff, we managed to make our way to RAF Laarbruch in a record-breaking 56 hours, eating only a stale pasty and drinking out-of-date Panda pops! The ferry took us to the port of Flushing in Holland, from where we set off for RAF Laarbruck arriving late in the afternoon on Sunday 7th September.

Phase 1, was a CPX in Laarbruck where we carried out a plug-up, setting up the various radio nets and providing Ptarmigan access to the Logistic Support Squadron (LSS) and Support Helicopter Force Headquarters (SHFHQ). The linemen, with very welcome assistance from Telemechs of both 216 (Para) and 220 (Airfield Comms) Sig Sqns, were busy getting all the necessary cables laid. The techs did what they do best.... manning the ERV, supporting the SHFHQ and the Flying Sites (FS). This phase allowed us to practice for the forthcoming FTX phases, and to rectify some of the kinks in the system. **Phase 2,** which the RAF quaintly called 'The Sanctuary Training Phase', we moved to a Schloss just outside Lippstadt. Here we prepared for the final FTX phase, adding helmets, webbing, weapons, camouflage and blackout drills to what we had practiced in Laarbruch. The RAF remained oblivious to all this, continuing to party whenever possible, their blackout consisting of keeping their phosphorescent floodlighting to their areas. Morale was really aided when the boys had only just got their heads down, shortly after a long night move when they were awakened by the sound of the RAF playing 'Name that tune' with tent poles (whilst putting up their tents)! By 18th September, we were ready for the FTX and deployed further east to a place called Gut Grevenburg. We continued to provide comms and support to SHFHQ and LSS, with one Secondary Access Node (SAN) deploying to a Flying Site. During this phase, we learned that the RAF did have helmets and webbing they just did not want to wear them before! We were all happy to hear endex called on 23rd September, after which we spent 2 days on R & R in Laarbruch before the long journey back to Colerne. Ale R&R, which itself was hectic, consisted of a variety of brewery trips, BBQs and trips to Arnhem and Amsterdam. The details of these activities now seem somewhat 'blurry', especially the trip to Amsterdam! All in all, a good end to a long, long exercise, from which we all came away with something.'

HQ SQUADRON

Congratulations to **WO2 (SSM) Chris Skelton** and **June** on their recent 'early' arrival of twins **Ben** and **Alice,** now the fun starts. Congratulations also go to **SSgt Steve Shaw** and his wife **Wendy** on the birth of their son **Michael,** and to **Cpl Lorna Daniels** and **Paul** on the birth of their daughter **Chloe.**

HQ TROOP AND FAC TROOP (V)

Tp Comd **Maj P. Conners**
SSM **SSgt (SSM) Beeley**

This has been a sad period for the unit with the untimely deaths of **Sig Richard Windsor** and **Sig Kate Walden** who were both killed in a traffic accident on Thursday 17th July 1997. The funerals were attended by the Squadron Commander and supported by the vast majority of TA members. **Richard** and **Kate** were extremely popular and were stalwart members of our unit. We all shall miss their presence.

Based in Trowbridge and only 30 minutes from RHQ the TA element of HQ Sqn and FAC Tp (V) is now firmly established. Recruiting has been quite excellent and out of an establishment of 84 we currently have 98. Retention is not a problem, largely because of the quality training programme set out by our PSI **Sgt Daz Sheerin** and the enthusiastic endeavours of our NCO I/C Recruit **Tp SSgt Jackie Herbert.** Our SSM **SSgt Trevor Beeley** has again completed the Nijmegen Marches for the 5th time and as we write is about to take part in the Manchester Marathon. **Cpl Tom Pollard** is now back in training for the Welsh National Squash Championships. He won the over 35 Championship last year. Finally, another of the **Jenkins** brothers has had to retire from FAC Tp (V) (old Echo Tp 244 Sig Sqn). This time we have had to say farewell to **Sgt Barry Jenkins** who's new civilian work commitments have proved too much. This now only leaves **Cpl John Jenkins** to hold the fort.

ALPHA TROOP–EXERCISE DYNAMIC MIX
Some thoughts from a new arrival.

As a recent arrival at 21 Sig Regt (AS), straight from a 2-year apprenticeship, I was happy to discover that my Troop exercised in different parts of the world around the year. During my first week, I was told that the Troop were deploying to Sardinia on Ex Dynamic Mix 1997. We left RAF Lyneham on a cold and wet September night, arriving to be met by a hot Mediterranean sun. The Exercise was a CPX and once the initial set-up was complete we established an Ex routine, which included 'cultural visits' to the military beach–the suntan competition was started on day 1!

The Force Helicopter Unit (FHU) once again got the better deal by being accommodated with the RAF in an air-conditioned, all-facilities building, whilst the rest of us roughed it on the Ex Area. The Troop Mobile Air Operations Teams (MAOTS) had a quiet time apart from one night when **Sig** 'Simmerman' **Simpson,** aided and abetted by **Sig** '12 year' **Lavender** decided to bury their Land Rover in the sand and, much to their embarrassment, had to be rescued by colleagues. The rest of the Troop distributed their very heavy workload at the Tactical Operations Centre (TOC) by working 24-hour shifts. The weather stayed warm throughout the Exercise with temperatures up to 35 degrees Celsius, which proved too much for **Sig** 'Ruthy' **MacKenzie,** who, whilst on the convoy to the airport, forgot that the Italians drove on the wrong side of the road and got involved in a minor accident. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my first exercise with the Troop and look forward to Norway next year. Finally, Alpha Tp sends its thanks to all the attached personnel, namely **Cpl Spencer, LCpls Graham** and **Pendleton** and **Cfn Noon** for keeping the show on the road.

EXERCISE GREEN ROOK
VISIT OF BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL CCF
TO 220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

It was in the early hours of the morning on 3rd August, that a group of 12 tired cadets from Barnard Castle School arrived at RAF Bruggen, the home of H Tp, 220 Sig Sqn. The cadets had been on the road since 1000 hrs the previous day when they climbed aboard their school minibus and left for Dover, under the watchful eye of the driver, **Sgt Robin Smith** RE of 11 Cadet Training Team based in Newcastle. The group was quickly provided with their accommodation and left to catch up on their lost sleep till the following morning. After not too early a breakfast the same day they were given an introductory briefing from **Capt John Oakes** about the Squadron and more specifically about their weeks activities on Ex Green Rook. Whilst still recovering from that they were quickly organised into groups by the ever present **SSgt Jonah Jones** and issued with their kit for the forthcoming week. The remainder of the day was taken up by personal admin, which in the cadets' case was enjoying themselves in the Station swimming pool and still catching up on lost sleep. Little did they know that during the coming week they would need all the sleep they could snatch!

Monday morning saw the cadets being issued with weapons and then being brushed up on their weapon handling skills. They then departed for Leuth Training Area, their home for the next 3 days, where they were joined by three Signallers from the Squadron, **Sigs White, Stowell** and **Stewart,** the three Musketeers! These three would become a mixture of mother, father, brother and tormentor to the group during the rest of their time at Leuth. Once the Cadets had established their patrol harbour area and dug their home for the night, they were issued with their rations for the next 24 hours and then given a lecture on how to effectively use them without starving to death. The day didn't end with the evening meal and a sing-song round the campfire however, as they all familiarised themselves with the training area by taking part in a short orienteering competition.

Tuesday greeted them nice and early with a stand-to to be followed by clearance patrols. After all that they then had breakfast. The rest of the morning saw them being given a pyro safety brief and demo followed by duties of a sentry and basic patrolling skills. During the afternoon and evening the pace picked up with patrol formations, pairs fire and manoeuvre followed by ambush drills then recce patrols. By this time they were well and truly ready for bed.

Wednesday was another hot and hectic day. The exercise continued with plenty of movement with the cadets practicing half section fire and manoeuvre with loads of enthusiasm, pyro and smoke. By lunch-time it was so hot that the cadets spent the rest of the afternoon catching up on personal admin! During the cool of the evening they continued with withdrawal under fire and ambush drills. The day finished in the early hours of the morning with the 3 Musketeers being ambushed by the cadets!

Thursday started very early with the three Musketeers getting their own back on the cadets by attacking their harbour area. The cadets

bugging out reminded onlookers of the retreat from Moscow with all sorts of items of kit being strewn about the place! Once back in their harbour area the cadets sorted their lives out, had breakfast, started to back fill the harbour area and packed their kit ready for departure back to Bruggen. The remainder of the day was spent cleaning and returning kit in the comfort of RAF Bruggen.

Friday the last day of the exercise was a day on the ranges. After the initial safety briefs, NSP's and zeroing of all the weapons it was competition time. All the cadets fired in the competition that comprised of firing the 5.56, LSW and pistol. The end of the range day and of the exercise finished with the inevitable presentations. Squadron plaques were awarded to the Best Shot, **Ben Cooper** and to the long-suffering nanny to the party, **Sgt Robin Smith** of 11 CTT. The most improved student was **Mark Milne** who was presented with a bronze Jimmy! Not to be out done the cadets presented each of the DS with an 'Ex Green Rook' T-shirt which they had designed themselves. The exercise had only been a week but to some of the cadets it must have felt at times like a lifetime. They had all enjoyed themselves and some even wanted to come back again. Hopefully as a result of the exercise the Corps will have a few more volunteers!

30 Sig Regt
Bramcote

CO — **Lt Col Paul Oldfield**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Gary Johnson**

THE LANYARD TROPHY 1997

Once again the Regiment decided to enter a team into the Lanyard Trophy which this year was held in the Brecon Beacons over the period 11th-13th June 1997. A comprehensive training programme was put into place designed by the Trg Offr, **WO1 (YofS) Guy Benson** and **QMSI John** 'Mad Dog' **Morton** APTC. A number of female members of the Regiment got together and decided that they wished to enter a team for the full event, enabling the Regiment to field 2 teams. So under the Team Capt training started in late February 1997. Training was going well, although some members of the team had to drop out with injuries. The Regiment still managed to put in a male team and a mixed team.

At 0530 hrs and 0630 hrs on a damp, misty and very cold morning the mixed team headed by **Lt Graham Jeffries** and consisting of **Maj Paterson** AGC ETS, **SSgt Rick Buxton**, **Cpl Andrea Mills**, **Sigs Tracy Baker**, **Clare Allsop**, **Clare Sturdy**, **Kaz Burrows**, **John Pozo** and **Mark Fielding** and the all male A team commanded by **Lt Guy Benson** and team members of **Capt Alan Owen**, **Sgt Tom Gibbens**, **Cpls Craig Sneddon**, **Phil Foulkes**, **John Burton**, **Steff Crouchman**, **John Sneath**, **Sigs Jason Wing**, Scotty **Scott** started their 'tab' of 40 miles. Both teams started well, although the male team was geographically embarrassed between checkpoints 2 and 3 which lost them over an hour. However, still being the consummate professionals they soldiered on into a well deserved 5th place in a time of just under 14 hrs. The mixed team finally finished in a time of 14hrs with all the girls finishing (well done). All team members therefore achieved the aim of covering a distance of 40 miles with a military load of 40lbs (male) and 25lbs (female) in the fastest possible time.

A final word of thanks to the CO, **Lt Col Paul Oldfield** and **RSM** Gaz **Johnson** who met the teams at most of the check points and last but not least to the support team of QMSI **John Morton, Sgts** Brummy **Taylor, Phil Dixon** and the rest of the team. Names of those interested personnel for next year's competition should be passed to the RSM soonest!

30 Sig Regt 'A' Team at the start
The A Team pose for the camera
in their 'Gucci' new white T shirts as provided by the PRI
(*L-R*): LCpl Crouchman, Capt Owen, Sig Wing, Lt Benson,
LCpl Foulkes, Cpl Sneddon, LCpl Burton, LCpl Sneath,
Sig Scott and Sgt Gibbens

30 Sig Regt 'B' Team take a break
The CO and RSM inspect members of the B Team.
Cpl Mills and Sig Baker check their nail varnish
prior to leaving the check point while
the CO, RSM and Sgt Dixon offers advice on colour!

143 (WM) BRIGADE SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 1997
by Cpl Nirmal Gurung of 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron

As in previous years, 143 West Midlands Bde Annual Skill At Arms Meeting was held on 17th-18th May 1997 at Kingsbury Ranges. Being an Ops Regt undertaking various commitments both at home and abroad, the Regiment has always been stretched and experienced a shortage of manpower. However, to keep the interest alive in the shooting field the Regiment managed to enter a team. There were altogether 18 teams of which 8 were Reg and 10 TA.

As the competitions unfolded, the weather turned out to be warm but hazy. A team of skilled and experienced shooters captained by **Lt Hitman Gurung** made an almost clean sweep of the team events as well as the individuals. Worthy of mention particularly is **Cpl Nirmal Gurung** the winner of the Pistol Championship and the Runner up in the overall Rifle Championship. The most exciting and enjoyable event as far as the spectators were concerned was the Falling Plate competition, in which the team took only 22 seconds to knock down all 10 plates. The falling plate team displayed and proved not only their shooting skills but also their physical fitness. The competition came to an end for the year after the final prizegiving. Once again 30 Sig Regt managed to retain the overall champion status in the 143 West Midlands Bde SAAM.

Winners of the 143 (WM) Bde SAAM 1997
30th Sig Regt with the CO, GM and the Shooting Officer

Cpl Nirmal Gurung, the winner of Pistol Competition
receiving his prize from Comd 143 (WM) Bde

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON
48 YEARS OF HISTORY

'By your badge men shall know you, by your loyalty, by your behaviour and by your technical skill they will judge you as men and measure your efficiency as soldiers'.

These very famous words were first delivered by the then MGBG **Maj Gen L. E. C. M. Perowne CB CBE** on 23rd September 1954 at Lamjung Camp, Malaya, which signalled the birth of a new Gurkha Signals Regiment with its distinct identity. This memorable moment unfolded itself once again on Saturday 20th September 1997 when the Queen's Gurkha Signals celebrated its 48th Regimental birthday with style at Bramcote Barracks in Nuneaton.

More than 200 servicemen and ex-servicemen from within the UK attended the celebration that was witnessed and pleasantly complemented by the presence of 40 Gurkha wives and children for the first time. The parade started off at 1300 hrs at the main Parade Square with the birthday speech by **Maj (Retd) Ridge**, who commanded one of the Squadrons during the original parade in Malaya. This was followed by the same speech in Nepali by the GM QG Signals, **Maj (QGO) Karnasher Tamang** in the presence of the Colonel of the Regiment, **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**. The parade came to an end after the tunes of '23rd of September' and 'Scotland the Brave', the Regimental March were played by **Sgt Mangalsing Tamang** and **LCpl Dhalbahadur Sahi**.

Four different sporting events got underway as the next phase of the celebration that was held in and around the gymnasium. As always, the invincible basketball team led by **Brig Lee Saheb** managed to overwhelm the other teams and produce an overall winning aggregate and win the overall competition by the Officers' and Senior NCOs Team. The Corporals' Team won football but unlike last year, they had to satisfy themselves with a second overall placing. The children also managed to enjoy themselves and were presented with various prizes by **Mrs Lee** in the end. As tradition dictates various achievement awards for individuals were presented to the winners of this year; they were:

Sig Santosh Gurung–The best Trainee of the year
LCpl Dhir Bahadur Khokaja Pun–The best Sportsman of the year
LCpl Dhal Bahadur Sahi–The best Piper of the year
LCpl Un Bahadur Thapa–The Ridlington Trophy for loyalty and hard work.

This was then followed by the Regimental Birthday cake cutting ceremony by CO's Memsahib, **Mrs Oldfield** assisted by **Mrs Kamasher Tamang**. The day proved to be a great success and everybody enjoyed themselves thoroughly. We look forward to celebrating our next birthday with equal success.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals–**Signaller Rup Kumar Gurung**

The Regimental birthday speech being read by Maj (Retd) Ridge
The Colonel of the Regiment and the Comd QG Signals are on
the dias while the GM QG Signals looks on

THE ROYAL TOURNAMENT 1997

Every year each of the three Services sponsors the Tournament on a rotational basis. This year's event was organised by the Army with an emphasis placed on the development of Artillery. The Royal Tournament this year took place at Earls Court Exhibition Hall in London over the period 15th-27th July. Once again the opportunity to participate was presented to 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn and of course it was an opportunity not to be missed. **LCpl Dhalbahadur Sahi** and I were fortunate enough to take part as members of the Tournament Technical Team. There were altogether nine of us in the team. Our task was to provide communications for the administration of the Tournament including telephones, radios and microphones for the participants. The Tournament highlighted many traditions that the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force uphold and which make them unique. Besides Her Majesty's Forces, the audience was also delighted to see stars from the popular TV series, The Gladiators. They were also amazed by the fierce dance performed by the seventy strong Maori Cultural group from the New Zealand Defence Force.

The show proved to be a great success with a member of the Royal family present at each event as patrons. All of us had an opportunity to meet the Royals. **LCpl Dhal** met **HRH The Duchess of Kent** while I met **HRH The Princess Margaret**. We thoroughly enjoyed the work that was very demanding, challenging but equally interesting.

Jai 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn–**Signaller Deepak Gurung–Xray Troop**

Sig Deepak meets HRH Princess Margaret
while the Arena Manager looks on

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON
EXERCISE XENON MERCURY–21 JUNE TO 13 JULY 1997

Ex Xenon Mercury was a contingency communications exercise to prove the capabilities of a PJHQ deployment. 30 Sig Regt deployed to Qatar to establish a land based JFHQ, whilst elements of Tactical Communications Wing (TCW), RAF deployed to Nepal to simulate the forward airhead.

This year's major Regimental Exercise was led by 256 Sig Sqn under command of **Maj Nick Metcalfe**. After a great deal of planning by the Sqn Ops team a detailed recce and endless air-prepping of equipment over 60 members of the Regiment flew out to the Gulf via Egypt courtesy of the RAF. On being met by the advance party of **Capt Dom Sharkey** and **FofS Graham Ramsdale** who had been slumming it in the 5-star Doha Sheraton, the priorities were air conditioning and water as the daily temperatures were in excess of 400 in the shade! Hosted by the Qatari Armed Forces, the exercise was based in New North Camp the barracks of the Hamad Mechanised Infantry Battalion in the scrubland desert of the Qatari interior. New North Camp provided the Squadron with excellent facilities such as a 25m indoor swimming pool, an air-conditioned gymnasium and air-conditioned accommodation for all personnel. In

addition to this the camp had a parade square that we felt even **SSM Steve Lockwood's** voice would not travel across. With much humping and dumping of equipment, dehydration and continuous attempts to re-hydrate the detachments were re-established and ready to speak to the world, providing of course that they were there and ready to listen! The key detachments deployed were:

VSC 501.

LCpls Neal McMullen and **Steve Smith** provided more circuits than we had Techs or power and were aided by **Sigs Scott Chamberlain, Johnny Devine** and **Anton Pozo**. With the ASMA chat line established the detachment was declared open to the world and the generation of up to 200 drill messages per day was one of the priorities while the Techs led by **Sgt** 'Tosh' **Leyland** worked on providing the plethora of CIS equipment the modern HQ requires.

TRC 522.

Two detachments under **Cpls Daz Field** and **Andy Bailey**, and a wide assortment of operators established links into all corners of the globe. At various times they gained connectivity with: Cyprus, Gibraltar, Canberra, Boddington and even Nepal on occasions. One of the hardest tasks was erecting antennas in the midday heat of 50°+ and hammering earthspikes into near rocklike ground.

VRC 321 & 322.

Testing a variety of HF equipment the crews of these detachments had varying degrees of success while establishing links to HMS *Invincible* in the South China Sea, HMS *Guernsey* and HMS *Illustrious* in the Outer Hebrides and 7 (Armoured) Bde at HG MND (SW) in Banja Luka. Yet somehow the detachments found it impossible to communicate the 50km to the British Embassy in Doha! HF management and antenna changing and 13 modifications kept the crew of **LCpls Andy Taylor, Dave Holden, Paul Burton, Stef Crouchman** and **Sigs Dan Cooksey, Max Eyres** and **Andy Moores** busy and they became more prune-like as the exercise progressed.

As Ex Xenon Mercury continued a variety of visits to the detachments were organised. These included visits by various members of the Qatari Armed Forces from a Pte soldier to the fourth in line to the throne and for us many visits into Doha to sample Eastern and Ex-Pat lifestyle. One of the latter included a memorable visit to the Wale's house for a Pub Night, Doha Rugby Club for the final Lions Test in South Africa and an evening with the crew onboard HMS *Westminster*. We would all like to take this chance to again thank all of the above for their excellent spirit and friendship shown towards the Regiment during our stay in Qatar.

A modest R&R programme was put together by **Lt Tom Jeffries** involving the Gulf Sheraton Hotel, Doha to make full use of their facilities and to use the Hotel as a base for further exploration of Doha. Whether the jet skis have been repaired or the Doha watch sellers have recovered from such a huge increase in profit is not yet known. Ex Xenon Mercury proved to be a great success for all concerned with its many aspects from Trade Training to R&R and liaison with other Armed Forces of the world. We proved that the Regiment's operators are capable of working to a very high standard in the harsh conditions experienced. All are safely back in Bramcote eagerly awaiting the next trip; so long as **Sig** 'Good Bloke' **Worthington** is not there to take the daily early morning gym sessions.

EXERCISE SWAN KAPE–7 TO 12 AUGUST 1997

IC:	**Cpl Sara Scott**
Tech:	**Cpl Surendra Kumar Gurung**
Ops:	**LCpl Tony Hoyle**
	LCpl Anne Morrison
	LCpl Sam Rowley
	LCpl Roy Constable

The Army Benevolent Fund Guernsey approached the Regiment and asked if we could provide some form of display showing examples of the types of equipment used by the Royal Signals today as 'an attraction' at their annual Car Festival held on Sunday 10th August 1997. So we dutifully boarded our landing craft at Marchwood and spent 12 hours crossing the channel to arrive at St Peter Port for the display. The display consisted of a TSC501 detachment, a Combat Net Radio Detachment and a tent with various photographs and videos of 30 Sig Regt 'in action'. We were very pleased with the interest shown by all of the visitors to the display. The main highlight turned out to be the GS Wolf Landrover. Not particularly interesting in itself I agree but **Cpl Surendra** had converted it into a mobile kitchen to make a curry for some of the braver visitors to our display.

LCpl Anne Morrison and LCpl Tony Hoyle setting up the TSC 501 Dish for their display in Guernsey

SUMMER CAMP–AUGUST 1997
by Sig Phelps

The big day arrived when we departed for Penhale Training Camp in Newquay. It turned out to be one of the hottest days of the year, so it was a great delight for us to discover that the coach had air conditioning and not the sort you find on a Bedford. The journey down took 8 hours which included a surprise stop by the Boys in Blue, it turned out that they were looking for a bus which had been stolen by 40 football hooligans! All members on board, including the SSM, were somewhat shocked when the constable informed us that we fitted the description perfectly. When we finally arrived at Penhale Camp, **Lt Ingram** and his outstanding Instructional Team met us. We were then given a briefing and shown to our 5 star (you could see them through the roof) corrugated iron nissen hut with en-suite facilities only a mile down a 1in 3 hill.

The week consisted of a multitude of activities including Surfing, Rock-Climbing, Quad Bike Racing, Pony Trekking, Sailing and Mountain Biking. Canoeing did appear on the original programme, however there seems to be a world shortage of Canoeing Instructors. For most of the groups the first day was a bit hazy as they were still recovering from the Newquay nightlife (England's equivalent to Ibiza). As the week progressed, information was passed along the ever growing grapevine about certain incidents occurring within the Groups. During the Pony Trekking (Donkey Walloping in **Lt Ingram** speak) with beasts not quite ready for glue factory but almost, one of the lads who shall remain anonymous for fear of being crated was blessed with 'Peggy' a horse with a mind of its own. 'Nice girl' we heard the unsuspecting and reluctant rider utter as he mounted Peggy. During the trek Peggy and rider crossed the estuary, not impressed by the rider's chat up line, Peggy decided to go for a swim complete with the baggage on its back, much to the delight of the rest of the group.

The most popular activity was undoubtedly the Quad Bike racing. The main gas was who could get around the circuit fastest without killing themselves or the other riders along with the quickest changeovers with their team-mates. However, **Lt Jeffries** gets the Eddie Kid award for jumping off the wrong side of his bike straight into the path of another bike that was doing Mach 2. How we laughed as **Lt Jeffries** danced his jig, much to his disgust, with his multi-coloured leg. The rest of the week flew by as it does when you are having a good time with many amusing incidents I could mention. Everyone had many yarns to tell on their return to Bramcote. On a final note the 'Best Shorts Award' goes to **SSM Lockwood**. (You only got it because the Foreman was in Bosnia Sir!!!!)

EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT
by Sig Bill Harris

(*L-R*): WO2 Frank Roberts 'Mr Topham Hatt', LCpl John Inglis, LCpl Alex Howell, Sig Bill Harris, Cpl Richie Ayling (16 Sigs)

For those of you wondering why on earth the exercise received such a name as Topham Hatt, cast your mind back to your childhood times and think of Thomas the Tank Engine and you may remember a certain character who has a similar name. Every year many soldiers of the Royal Signals go to Swanage Railway voluntarily to help with restoration and improvement. Located on the Isle of Purbeck, Swanage Railway is a private line supported by donations and the Southern Steam Trust, a registered charity. Topham Hatt has been running since 1984 averaging one every year. Hundreds of Corps members have participated, some of whom have joined the Mercury Group which was organised in 1992 and now there are over 130 members in the group, 80% of whom are members or former members of the Corps.

Ex Topham Hatt started for us on Friday 29th August and after driving around Swanage a couple of times we finally arrived at the station. After parking we all got acquainted and after a health and safety briefing and a background brief we all got stuck in. The current project was an old and battered parcels wagon, we had a week to strip and re-paint the outside, clean and re-paint the inside, install electrics, a sleeping area, kitchen area and a messing area and boy was it tough–tough but fun in a weird way. As well as restoring the wagon other jobs were track clearing, fence repairing and line cable work but the wagon was eventually ready to rock and roll. When not working most of our spare time was spent in Swanage

itself checking out various places of interest. Well if it sells beer it's got to be interesting and we always ended up in the Purbeck Hotel, and I have never seen such an amazing collection of Signals plaques in a civilian place in my life. The hosts of the Purbeck were extremely friendly and understanding, especially where I was concerned, believe me I don't always sit in fireplaces! And I'm pretty certain that **LCpl John Inglis** doesn't always fall asleep in mid conversation and **LCpl Alex Howell** also fell asleep in the pub. All in all the exercise was thoroughly enjoyable and I extend thanks to **WO2 Frank Roberts** I/C of the exercise and to all of those at the Purbeck Hotel.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ingram**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Gratrick**

Alpha Tp would like to say farewell to **Cpl Ackland** and **LCpl Bowler** to Civvy Street, **Cpl Field** to 3 Cdo Bde and **LCpl Harding** to 3 Inf Bde. A warm hello is extended to **Cpl Baker, Cpl Barker** and **Sigs Clarke** and **Wooton** straight in from the factory. Members of the Troop are currently deployed in Egypt on Ex Bright Star and looking forward to Ex Grand Prix in Kenya in months to come, as well as the constant tour of lovely Bos! Apart from **Lt** 'Scarlet Pimpernel' **Ingram** hosting **OCdt Catherine Jardine** in the delights of 30 Sig Regt there's nothing further to report!!!

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON
BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Tom Jeffries**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Ian Thorburn**

Bravo Tp has seen some dramatic changes in the last few months. **SSgt Ian Thorburn** has taken over as Tp SSgt and is immediately off to Egypt on his first 'Swan' with the HCR, and **Sgt Andy Winckle** has returned from his Balkan sojourn. Meanwhile **Sgt Sandi Samuel** has taken on Europe with a Satcom deployment to Ex Rhino Replen. Over the summer many new faces have arrived, and even older ones have left to pastures new. **Cpls Gordon Lloyd** and 'Tomo' **Thomson** from the Panzers of 1 Div, and **Al Moffat** from NI. **LCpls Neil Coils, Dave Holden, Tony Hoyle**, and **Tracie Main. Sigs Steve Air, Shaun Finnegan, Jamie Matthews, John McCarthy, Paul Smith** (450) and **Wayne Taylor**. The roulement through Bosnia continues and is too numerous to mention individuals. Posting out: **Cpl Si Barker** to 5 Airborne Bde, **LCpl Nick Kerslake** to 16 Sig Regt and **Sigs Tony Adams** and **George Marshall** to NI. Those on the Civ Div posting; **Sig Amanda Gould** and **LCpl Lisa Conley** who are wished all the best from the Troop.

The Summer holidays now over with various tales of adventure, particularly from the Squadron Summer Camp to England's 'Ibiza', Newquay (if the White Helmets need Quad Bike riders then Bravo Tp can supply). Bosnia roulement, 501 Purple in and out of Germany, and 522 White is off to Brunei for a short Autumn sunshine break. The normal routine continues, and if anyone has managed to escape a crating offence above then they will be crated next time.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Gary Sniith**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paul Ellis**

The Squadron would like to say farewell to **Capt Andy Mould** who has left to be educated and posted, all the best, and welcome to his replacement **Capt Chris Wood** recently transferred across from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. We would like to congratulate the Sqn Clerk, **LCpl Jo Godfrey** who has recently been selected for promotion to full Cpl. Congratulations also to **Cpl Tim Parkins** on his promotion to Sgt and his posting over to 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Harvey Woods**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Boughey**

Busy month in the Troop firstly with the Sqn Trg Exercise that saw us deploy to Stanta in Norfolk, for a fully tactical two-week comms exercise. After turnaround it was time for Adv Trg in Brawdy in Pembrokeshire. Plenty of power boating, fishing, surfing, walking was to be had along with the obligatory wine, women and song. Those left behind had to contend with the Regimental Driver Skills competition, which was won by 250 Sig Sqn, better luck next time lads!

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Welcome to **Sig** 'Arry' **Harrison** fresh in from Blandford, and **LCpl** 'Not a Tech' **Tek**. Goodbye to **LCpl Paul** 'Blah' **Shotton**, off to Brunei Garrison. Finally congratulations to **Sig Donnelly** for getting a gold medal in the under 71kg category in the Army Judo Championship, we never knew you had it in you!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt John Collyer**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**

September started with a bang and Ex Training Bear, so the Troop got the wagons ready and departed early Friday morning (yes, that's right exercise started on Friday). The move was going well until the first stop when, like all good series three landrovers, it broke down–one down, seven to go. **LCpl Chris Trundley** decided that he was getting bored on his CNR det and thought he would mention the fact to the Sqn Comd and Yeoman. So himself and his crew were tasked with a bit of cross training at 3 o'clock in the morning. So his crew were taken off the CNR and placed on the 501 to do a night shift and learn satcom... Oh, and do guards of course. The crew learnt a lot but I think he will wait until endex to say anything. **Sig Vinny McShane** and crew had an excellent exercise apart from breaking down at the first stop and not getting any comms till the final day. His crew can now do guards better than anyone else.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Farewell to **Cpl Nige Brewin** to School of Sigs, **Cpl Andy Shaw** to 280 Sig Sqn, **Sig** 'Millie' **Milligan** to NI, **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** and **Sig Keira Thomson** to civvy street. Welcome to **Sig Perkins** from NI, **Sigs Thom** and **Spinks** from Blandford. Congratulations to **Cpl Craig Scotson** on his selection for promotion to Sgt.

POST SANDHURST ATTACHMENT WITH 30TH SIG REGT
by 2Lt David Jackson

I reported for duty in the 'real army' with all the confidence of a pseudo platoon commander entering a non-infantry environment. On my tour of camp I received my first compliment as an officer and was shocked to see that it was me who was being saluted. My meeting with the Sqn Comd went very well, I stood rigidly to attention while the Major introduced himself as **Nick. Nick! Nick!** The Company Commander at Sandhurst never had a first name. An introduction to Satcom was what I was to receive on my attachment. Most people who are signals trained do not see this unless they visit 30 Sigs, so explaining this to a non-technical, non-signals trained officer took many hours of slow patient explanation from the dets within the Troop and a little technical information thrown in from TM Tp to completely confuse me. I have now seen how a Sig Tp differs in manning from an infantry platoon and with their specialist role and commitments what problems this causes on the normal manning or the day to day running of the Regiment. I believe that this 10 week attachment is long enough to experience the many aspects of life in the Troop such as exercises, adventure training, duties and socials yet does not allow you to get too settled. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here with the officers and soldiers of 30 Sig Regt and hope that I can remember all the wise words of advice given to me from across the board.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. M. Bryan TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. B. Waterhouse**

US/UK RESERVE OFFICERS EXCHANGE

Lt Jackie Blake applied for and was selected to take part in this year's US/UK Reserve Officers Exchange programme. Here she records some of the events and her thoughts on 2 weeks with Uncle Sam.

The journey from hell, it most definitely was. The flight from Heathrow to Washington had been cancelled due to the BA strike, but a hasty spot of juggling had produced seats on alternative flights.

Our group of 13 British Reserve Officers finally arrived rather bleary-eyed. Alas, not due to over-indulgence of the in-flight complimentary drinks service, but due instead to having completed a journey of Michael Palin-like proportions, flying from Gatwick to Manchester, to New York, to Washington Baltimore, then on by bus to our hotel, another hour away. Amazingly, not one piece of luggage had gone astray, though unfortunately the same could not be said of the British officers. We discovered that one of our number (not, of course, a Royal Signals Officer, but an unfortunate Marine) had made an executive decision to fly to a different airport from the rest of us. He was, for several hours, missing, wandering lost along the corridors of Washington National while frantic phone calls to and from the Embassy attempted to locate him. This was not the most auspicious start to an eagerly anticipated two-week exchange between officers of the UK and US reserve forces! However, our Marine was eventually returned to the fold and we spent a peaceful night before scattering to the far corners of the United States, each of us attached to an equivalent type of unit, as far, as possible, to our own.

2Lt Jo Howard of 34 Sig Regt (V) and I were despatched to the 2362nd Signal Detachment based in Columbus, Ohio, and training at Camp Ripley, Minnesota, approximately 4½ hours travelling time from Washington. En route from Minneapolis the unit's CO, **Lt Col Thomas J. Steinbrunner**, briefed us on his unit's role and activities. We quickly realised that this was a signals unit unlike any other we had come across. The detachment, which has an establishment of around 70, is part of the US Army Reserve. It is fairly unusual in being commanded by a Lt Col and has a high percentage of senior ranks, due in part to the particular specialisation's found within the unit. It has, amongst other things, an air traffic controller, a complete postal section, line section, computerised records management section and an emergency comms section. Its wartime role is to reinforce the permanent elements stationed at Camp Ripley that would become a huge mobilisation centre. However, it is due to be deactivated next year as part of the US defence cuts and some of the elements it would normally expect to link up with at Ripley have already disappeared so, we were warned, annual training (AT) this year was not quite as well-defined as previously. Armed with this information, we arrived at Ripley to meet the 25 members of the 2362nd who had come for AT. They had just flown in from Ohio and descending from the bus, presented a somewhat bizarre picture, filing past in all manner and colour of weird and wonderful head gear, sunglasses and footwear, speaking in strange tongues! And surely that was George Clooney there in the middle, flanked by Jack Nicholson. The resemblance's were uncanny! **2Lt Howard** and I exchanged raised eyebrows. This was going to be interesting…

In fact the soldiers of the 2362nd could not have been more hospitable, friendly and professional (though we were definitely two nations divided

by one language at times!) Throughout our 2 weeks every one of them went out of his or her way to make us feel part of the unit and to make our stay memorable. This extended to participation of 'the Brits' in the daily PT sessions at 0530, when most of the resident mosquito population, (fondly known as the State Bird of Minnesota) was supposed to be dormant. Though nobody seemed to have mentioned this to the vicious monsters that lay in wait for any sign of exposed flesh and tucked in mercilessly. The result was that PT was accompanied by yells and the sound of slapping and scratching which had nothing to do with the beasting being given by the PT instructor!

A good part of the first week was taken up by a series of tours of Camp Ripley, one of the largest National Guard installations in the country with 53,000 acres. More than 60,000 troops train there each year. It is also the second largest wildlife refuge in Minnesota with special reserves for endangered species of turtle, deer, 25 black bears, beavers, snakes and porcupines. Towards the end of WW2 it was used as a POW camp for well-behaved German prisoners and was the chosen site for the first radar shot to the moon in 1949. We were shown round the Education Centre which can be used by up to 700 students at one time. Then there was The Medical Unit Training Facility that was like a high-tech mini hospital-cum-dental surgery. The Troop Issue Subsistence Activity where the giant freezers gave a welcome respite from the 90degree heat and humidity outside, and the Mobilisation And Training Equipment Site which provides maintenance for around 900 tracked and wheeled vehicles. We also managed to hitch ourselves a fast and furious ride on an Abrams tank and to have a go on the ETS range. Here it was that a rapid lesson on the M16 was followed by a jaw-tingling session in which the main tenet was 'Just rock & roll!' rather than go for aimed shots!

In all this excitement it was easy to lose sight of the main reason for our attachment to the 2362nd which was, of course, communications. This was remedied by the extremely keen **SSgt Myron Baughmann** who showed us all we needed to know about the Harris radios used by the unit in its role as part of the military/civilian MARS network. The system has come into its own on several occasions, such as earlier this year when it was used to help coordinate the relief efforts during the Red River floods around Moorhead.

As part of the annual maintenance programme, trips were made to various armouries all over Minnesota to check out their radio equipment. We travelled with **Chief Warrant Officer Chuck Maconkey** to Brainerd, Fargo, Moorhead and Duluth amongst others and were left with an unforgettable impression of the sheer size of the country with mile upon mile of beautiful countryside, farmland and lakes. Size was also the watchword during our day off when we travelled down to Minneapolis to the Mall of America, the biggest shopping mall in the country, so huge it even has its own amusement park, complete with roller-coaster! Amazing!

Sadly, all good things have to come to an end and all too soon our time was up and we had to say our fond farewells to the 2362nd before flying back to Washington for the final day's programme at the Pentagon. There we met the Assistant Secretary of Defence for Reserve Affairs and were given briefings and a fascinating tour of the Pentagon itself. This was through the courtesy of one of the Honour Guard, who could have stepped straight out of a Hollywood film and who talked and walked backwards the whole time without once getting lost in the 17½ miles of corridors! Then it was on to the airport and the flight home, reminiscing on a great two weeks. It was a worthwhile and highly recommended exchange.

PROMOTION

The Squadron congratulate **Capt Jackie Blake** on her recent promotion. It is expected that there will be a number of applications to go to the States next year, if the trip is followed by promotion!

SSgt Myron Baughmann explains the intricacies of SINGARS radio to Lt (now Capt) Jackie Blake

Not a caravan, but the Minnesota National Guard Mobile Command Post!

31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V)

CO **Lt Col R.T. Weston**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D.E. Hall**

The last couple of months have seen the Regiment continue in a busy vein, with the main event being the Regt Annual Camp. Amongst many other events, we continue to take the opportunity to send personnel on exchange trips both to the USA and with the Navy. Somewhere in all these activities most people were also fitting in a couple of week's leave. At this rate it will be 1998 before we know it!

HQ SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj B. McAneny**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. J. McMahon**

HELLO'S AND GOODBYES

A very warm welcome goes to all new members of staff, in particular to **SSgt** 'Daz' **Eldridge** who has taken over the reins as PSI Mil Trg, and to **SSgt Keith Finnemore** as the new PSI LAD. They have replaced the recent leader of the escape committee in the form of **SSgt Jack Hawkins** who has returned 'home' to 5 AB HQ & Sig Sqn (216 Para). **SSgt Pete Jones** leaves us on promotion to 12 Regt RA Wksp. Congratulations, and we wish both of you all the best for the future. Furthermore we all congratulate **Maj Brian McAneny,** a former PSAO of HQ Sqn, on his appointment as Sqn Comd vice **Maj Mike Jackson** who leaves us for the easy life of 83 Sig Sqn–bon voyage and make sure you come back every now and then. Our final piece of praise is reserved for **Capt Emma Orrell** on her commissioning and appointment as RAO (V)–well done.

ANNUAL CAMP 1997

Throughout this period the Squadron has continued a varied training programme including ranges, physical and trade training all aimed at ensuring the Squadron was fit to carry out it's role on the Regt Annual Camp in Belgium. This was the first time many of the Squadron had been abroad on exercise so an exciting venture was expected–especially if you were the passenger with **LCpl Sadie Curtin**! Deploying straight into the field following an extremely tiring 30 hour journey from Southfields to Arlon in Belgium did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the Squadron with detachments and communications being set up speedily and effectively. Following a 6 day communication exercise during which many skills were polished and new ones learn, a week of military activities took place including helicopter familiarisation, ranges, orienteering, and FIBUA. During the FIBUA phase there was an opportunity to stand in a hole while a Belgian tank moved directly overhead with individuals only lowering their heads when the tank tracks had come into contact with the individuals head. Rumour reports that considerable damage was done to the tank tracks!

During the middle weekend of the camp there was an opportunity for recreation that included a Squadron Barbecue. For this we thank **SSgt Fred Bramble** and his chefs who provided excellent food at very short notice, and a day off when individuals took the opportunity to see the local beauty spots, travel to Luxembourg or visit the American PX. **Maj Mike Jackson** ensured the Gurkha element who were attached to us had the opportunity to celebrate a Regt Anniversary by cooking a curry which was enjoyed along with the barbecue. We now look forward to a busy period including a comms ex, the Remembrance parade, and Bounty Testing before making the most of the festive season.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj S. Baker**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paine**

ANNUAL CAMP 1997

'Camp 1997' probably had the smallest commitment from 41 Sig Sqn ever, as the majority of soldiers were committed to trade courses. Undeterred however, we were 'augmented' by 4 Gurkhas from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn who were chaperoned by their attached subaltern, **2Lt Stuart Whitley.** The Gurkhas' enthusiasm and humour were infectious and they particularly enjoyed themselves when teaching us a thing or two about patrolling! We were also joined by 2 OCdts from London University OTC; **OCdts Hillier** and **May**. So young in fact that **LCpl 'Ollie' North** spent an age explaining the origins of his nickname to them. The comms ex was enjoyed by all, aided undoubtedly by the incredible weather which carried on into the second week. Everyone appreciated the second week's round robin of activities. The vehicle navigation exercise (worked in pairs) will especially remain in **LCpl Ian Byrne**'s memory for a long time to come. He is still recovering from **Capt Kate Harris** offering to treat him to a waffle half way around the course, only to find that when the bill came she was embarrassingly short, and **LCpl Byrne** doing the decent thing became BF5000 (£10) poorer. That will serve him right for trusting an officer–and she was carrying a map on the navex as well! **LCpl** 'Elvis' **Presley** made a name for himself as he was the only member of the Regiment that our friends from 71 (Y) Sig Regt met during the first week of the exercise. He achieved a certain notoriety by all accounts. All in all it was a good camp, but we have no doubt that it will be even better next year when the remainder of the Squadron is fully trained.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj M. Jackson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R. Harding**

EXERCISE ORIENT EXPRESS

Camp 1997 was undoubtedly a good one. We deployed as a Squadron on the evening of Saturday 13th September 1997, picking up some members of the Squadron on the way–**LCpl Martin Woodhouse** at Ramsgate Station, for instance. During deployment it became apparent that a pad of 1045s would be of some use. We finally arrived at our destination midday the following day having been subjected to the longest and slowest convoy on mainland Europe, ably led by our comrades in arms (the Belgian MPs).

The good, the bad and the ugly on Ex Orient Express

Week one commenced with communications being the objective. The day off on the Sunday of the middle weekend was a trip for the uninitiated. We left Arlon, then Belgium heading East. for those who stayed awake long enough they then saw the sights of Luxembourg and the heart of Germany along the Mosel valley. Our destination was that local beauty spot called Cochem or Coacham as our Australian friend **Lt Pete Evans** would like it pronounced. The day was finely rounded off when we stumbled upon Trier's Wine Festival shame!

Week two started early with a parade at 0615hrs on the Monday morning. The events for that week were military skills and incorporated vehicle navigation, ranges, helicopter handling and aerial observation. Finally a day at the FIBUA (now renamed FISH–Fighting In Someone else's House) village also included the 'opportunity' for members of the Squadron to let themselves be run over by a tank not once but twice (lucky devils).

Maj John Irvine v Tank

WELCOMES & GOODBYES

Our loss is obviously the University of London OTC's gain as we say goodbye to both **Maj John Irvine** and **Lt John Symmons.** I'm sure we'll see you both in the bar from time to time. We are able to bid a hearty welcome to the new Sqn Comd, **Maj Mike Jackson** on his move from HQ Sqn, and also to **Capt Guy Bewsher** who has joined us from 39 Sig Regt (V). Welcome!

PROMOTIONS

We have had a number of promotions in the Squadron of late. Congratulations are passed to **2Lts Paul Ukpai** and **Vicky Sheriff** on their recent successes at TACC, also to **Cpls** 'Beckie' **Strickland, Dana Grills, Louise Hall, LCpls Colin Anderson**, and **Juliet Jarvis** congratulations to you all.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please advise the Subscriptions Clerk,
at RHQ, IN WRITING, of any change of address.
This information should not be telephoned.

32 Sig Regt (V)
Glasgow

CO **Lt Col A.C.C. Lapsley**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J. McLachlan**

WO & SGTS' MESS

The mess held a dinner on 9th August 1997 to bid farewell to two of our members, namely **WO1 Grant** and **WO2 McNamara**. The dinner was held in Glasgow and was superbly put together by the PMC, **WO2 (AQMS) Davidson,** and his committee. As with all functions held by the mess it was not a quiet affair as the RSM's fine port shelf will testify. The crime is getting caught! Life in the mess continues with a never-ending procession of dinners, happy hours, and monthly functions. The committee are due to be replaced in November, much to their great happiness, the TARAS' attitude of I WANT IT DONE NOT NOW, BUT RIGHT NOW, has finally worn them out (send new committee, this one is broken over).

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ian Walker**

EXERCISE DEEP GORGE 51(H) BDE SIGNAL SQUADRON–THE ENEMY

Life in the Squadron has pivoted around our annual camp Ex Deep Gorge a Yeomanry exercise covering the Border country–the fact that Scotland had just voted for its own independent parliament a few days before was purely coincidental! Our role in the exercise was in support of 51(H) Bde in the field who provided the controlling HQ for Orange forces. The Exercise was fluid and fast moving and we soon got up to speed in the art of set up and tear down. Believe it or not, the weather was superb and at times it was too hot to work!! Everyone appreciated the fact

that although it was just an exercise–the size and complexity of the participating units made it seem as realistic as it is possible to get in peacetime.

There were a few lighter moments during the exercise with **Cpl Boris Butler** hoarding his crisps only to have a mouse eat through the bag and devour the lot. Again the bold **Boris** had a hand in the vital art of communications–**Maj Patchet** shouted from the G3 wagon "Get on to admin and save me a late meal"–this finally arrived at the cooks' tent as "Bob Cratchett wants his dinner" well done **Boris**. Another vaguely embarrassing experience happened to our ex 2IC, **Capt John Mackie** whilst walking from the cook tent to the accommodation–he saw a figure skylined ahead of him and was keeping well clear when the following conversation took place:

fig. "Hello there."
2IC "Hello to you too."
fig. "How are you keeping?"
2IC "I'm fine thanks."
fig. " How's your mother?"
2IC " She's well too, last time I heard."
fig. "You know I love you don't you?"

It was at this exact moment that the penny dropped and the 2IC, to his immense relief, saw it was one of the Int guys on his mobile! Another nice touch happened on Friday 26th September. It was **Sig Ali** 'Baby tech' **Jamiesons'** 21st Birthday so **Brig Grant** of 51 Bde gave him his first tape as a present. (**Ali** claims since it was a field promotion it can't be taken from him.) (Oh yes it can. SSM.) Our photograph shows **Brig Grant** presenting **LCpl Jamieson** with his first.

A vote of thanks must go to the Rebro crews from 55 Sig Sqn, 34 Sig Regt and 245 Sig Sqn 14 Sig Regt (EW) who helped us tremendously during the exercise–well done all. Our photograph shows the (245) rebro crew giving a practical demonstration to their TA counterparts–oops! (RSM s' note. This did not happen when I was their SSM!!)

Not to forget our atts **Maj Brian Murray** and **SSgt John Leach** both from 61 (City of Edinburgh) Sig Sqn (V) who gave us a much needed boost in the morale department. (We did not realise just how good the Squadron was until **Maj Murray** turned up.) Thanks for all your help–come back anytime. Finally a word for **Sgt Harry Buck**, **Capt John Mackie** and **Capt (PSAO) Bob Greenhowe**–it was their last TA camp and it was a cracker to bow out on.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Andrews**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) McVey**

Ex Deep Gorge II heralded the start of a new era for 52 Sig Sqn. Not since the reorganisation of the TA in 1967 had they acted in their original role as a Bde Sig Sqn. After an in depth briefing from the CO, **Lt Col Alan Lapsley**, "You are supporting the courageous and gallant Blue Forces, while 51 Sqn will be supporting the dastardly and underhanded Orange Forces." The Squadron headed out of barracks to take up position in its secret hide location. The mere mention of the word hide caused some confusion with the Recce 2IC, **Sgt Steven** 'Mad Dog' **McVey**. Every time the Recce Team moved into location, **Sgt McVey** hid, so that nobody could find him, not even the rest of the Recce Team. Despite the shortage of personnel and equipment, the Recce Team proved their worth by aggressively pushing forward the limits of exploitation of the Blue Forces. Despite the fact that the Recce Team were only supposed to site their Bde HQ within areas cleared by Blue Forces, they decided to push deep into Orange Forces territory. Unfortunately the Orange Forces did not wish to give ground as easily as first suspected. Despite being outnumbered 40 to 1, the Recce Team attacked an Orange Forces Armoured Recce Sqn, and after a very brief firefight, were completely wiped out. Unsportingly, the Recce Team was informed by the Ex Umpires, that 5.56 ball ammo cannot penetrate the armoured plating of a Scimitar tank. While all this front line action was taking place, the Sqn Comms Ops was kept going by the resourcefulness and sheer dogged determination of **Capt Mike** 'Pugwash' **Sperinck** and **Lt Steve** '40 winks' **McBride**. Despite the Orange and Blue Forces being evenly matched, the dastardly and underhanded Orange Forces were pushed back to the West Coast of Scotland. On Thursday 2nd October 1997, after a fish supper and a brief walk along the beach, the Orange Forces finally capitulated and asked for all their previous crimes to be taken into consideration. The noble and gallant Blue Forces accepted their terms of surrender and both forces returned to barracks in time for tea, scones and medals.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj F. Farquharson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) G. Garland**

DINING OUT

August saw the Officers' and Sgt' Mess immersed in nostalgia with the dining out of the Regimental Master Chef, **WO2** 'Rab' **Meldrum** after 39 years service in the TA with 38 of those years being spent in 61 Sig Regt/Sqn. Traffic Officer, **Maj** 'Mayhem' **Brian Murray** now the sole survivor from "Regiment" days did the honours. He was presented with crystal flower vases and a canteen of cutlery and a sample haverbag as his departing gifts. (There were those in the company who mischievously suggested a cookery manual!)

NORMANDY VISIT

August also saw a group of Sqn Officers tour the battlefields of Normandy under the expert guidance of the Regimental 2IC **Maj David Harvey.** It was quite a moving experience and one to be recommended to any soldier. Only by visiting the actual countryside and landing beaches can one begin to gauge the enormity of Operation Overlord. Very chastening indeed was the American and British military cemeteries at Bayeux. So many, so young.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations are to be extended to **Cpl John** 'FM' **Faichney** on two counts. His promotion to Sergeant and the presentation by his wife **Pauline** of a daughter **Francesca.** Best wishes to his ever-extending family. Congrats too to **Sig Glen Davidson** on his well earned promotion to LCpl. It inspired him so much that he has now decided to tear a ligament–he would play with the girls!

ANNUAL CAMP 1997

Before departure on Exercise the Squadron fielded a cracking football team to take on 51 (H) Sig Sqn our friends from the North. With a comfortable 7 goal lead towards the last ten minutes of the match the Squadron felt sufficiently confident to field their ageing traffic officer **Maj** 'Mayhem' **Brian Murray.** In 34 years with the Squadron this was his moment–picked to represent the Squadron in his debut football match. With a totally unjustified reputation for breaking things his one and only contact with the ball placed it well into the middle of the nearby River Lune. **Sgt John Gorman** (51 Sqn) did his Springer Spaniel impression and bravely encouraged by the aforementioned Major retrieved the ball for a throw-in only to find everybody had gone home by the time he got back to the football park.

If you're visiting
Bournemouth or Poole,
why not combine it with a visit to

The Royal Signals Museum

Blandford Camp
Tel: 01258 482248

Camp 1997 was an unusual Camp in the respect that the Squadron and the Regiment was providing comms well outside its normal HDRS role in support of Ex Deep Gorge. The Exercise was principally a Yeomanry "thing" with 32 Sig Regt providing Bde signals, manning hilltop sites and providing support elements. In his own inimitable way PSAO **Capt Peter Campbell** managed to get himself set up so far in the rear that it must have been uncomfortable! He along with 'Gazza'–his wee dog–manned Z Echelon or more correctly ZZZZZZZZ Echelon. Ex Deep Gorge saw elements of the Squadron scattered far and wide with a miscellany of roles to play. **LCpl Andy Ramsay** was kept well busy in maintaining power units in the field and yet still had time to smile. **Maj Brian Murray** was exhibiting signs of sleep deprivation peculiar to the over 50's and was seen fumbling in the dark (like always) trying to insert a tube of Setlers into his torch!

Like any exercise it all ends abruptly with cleaning up left in the hands of too few. SQMS, **SSgt Frank Patterson** ably helped by the Civilian storeman 'Dinger' **Bell** with help from **Sgt** 'Nettie' **Mitchell** and **LCpl** 'Chizzie' **Chisholm** (pictured left) were main players in the humping and heaving party.

They were expertly watched by **LCpl** 'Saucy' **Saunders** and **Sgt Roy Taylor,** with all others pitching in at the death managed to clear up most of the muddle. It will doubtless be months before the SQMS and his storeman are happy. We look forward to it.

REGIMENTAL RECRUITING TRAINING TEAM

The RRTT held a joint recruit selection and phase 4 training weekend at the Barry Buddon Training Area on the 22nd-23rd August 1997. A total of 16 potential recruits attended in an effort to join Scotlands' finest. 15 of the 16 were accepted and continue on their recruit training. Well done to those who were accepted but keep going that was the easy part. The Phase 4 recruits then received their first taste of live firing, with the standards ranging from very good to barn door unharmed level. However, the recruits were impressed by the capability of the weapon and are always eager to improve their shooting.

34 Sig Regt (V)
Middlesbrough

EXERCISE RURAL INPACT–THE ENEMY PERSPECTIVE

Ex Rural Impact was held on the Catterick Training Area over the weekend 8th-10th August 1997. It was an Exercise designed to test the defensive skills of the Regiment. The LAD, **SSgt Shepherd** from the Training Wing and **Capt Cooper** rose to the challenge of providing a realistic enemy, by masquerading as the Yosef Yarwood Terrorist Force. The Force was determined to seek retribution for the callous murder of their leader, Yosef Yarwood, a poor, fairly innocent civilian, at the hands of the bloodthirsty 34 Sig Regt. The scenario followed a steady escalation, with the first phase being the deployment of night-time OPs, to observe the Regiment moving into locations. One OP was inadvertently stepped upon by an advancing recce party and had to escape by bounding down the centre of a staggered file of advancing silhouettes.

The second phase consisted of 2 man overt recces by the enemy masquerading as civilians with the intention of walking through the location, and noting the layout of the sites. Whilst **SSgt Speck's** ploy of 'searching for his lost dog' was fairly productive, the prize goes to the duo of **Lt Ray Simpson** and his 11 year old daughter **Laura**. A combination of the fact that **Lt Simpson** is a new arrival in the Regiment, and the fact that anyone holding the hand of an 11 year girl must be a real civilian, gave them unlimited access to all their targets.

A noisy and realistically threatening demonstration in front of the guard post of TN 035 acted as an effective decoy to allow **SSgt Steve Shepherd** to bound in through the opposite end of the location, and plant an IED. Unfortunately, he was shot on exit, but the IED remained undiscovered for many hours, making it a worthwhile sacrifice of a brother of Yosef Yarwood. The egg splattered members of SAN666 had a slightly more direct approach in dealing with the fairly innocent egg yielding mob, by threatening to execute them! The most productive success of this phase was achieved when the mob swamped the guard post of TN 035 and a nimble fingered brother of Yosef in the guise of **LCpl** 'Billy' **Connelly** made off with the guard's site plan which had both day's passwords written on the back.

Phase four was the night attack phase, which started off very easily, with 2 unopposed entries, thanks to the enemy knowing the passwords. The usual chaos in the darkness ensued as the defenders had no night sights. Brother **(Sgt Stuart) Toulson** is to be congratulated on devising the best plan and leading the attack that achieved complete surprise, by crawling along a ditch system into the very heart of TN 035. **SSgt Colin Dawson** led a very physical and overly successful defence of TN 036 that resulted in the enemy and an umpire being plasticuffed and spread-eagled on the ground. Beware Staff, the spirits of Brothers Yarwood and Shepherd will catch up with you on the next exercise.

The LAD as 'Yosef Yarwood's Terrorist Force'
(*L-R*): Sgt Stuart Toulson, Cfn Chris Mason, Cpl Bill Mansfield, Cfn Neil Keams, Laura Simpson, Lt Ray Simpson, LCpl Billy Connelly, SSgt Dave Speck, Cpl Noto Sharp

Egg splattered members of SAN666 threatened to execute the Mob

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON–AMERICAN EXCHANGE

July saw the completion of the first half of the US/UK Reserve Officers Exchange Programme 1997. Sixteen British Officers took part in the programme from all three services. The Royal Signals were represented by three officers–**Lt Jackie Blake, Lt Louise Caswell** and **2Lt Jo Howard.** I heard about the exchange programme through the Permanent Staff Instructor at my unit (49 Sig Sqn) based in Leeds, on what was obviously the final date for applications. I took at least one second to confirm that 'Yes, I really could find the time for a trip to America'. Within weeks it was confirmed by the MoD that I was lucky and had been selected to go.

I was fortunate to be attached to the 319th Signal Battalion which is based in Sacramento, California. The Battalion had already deployed for a two-week Exercise approximately 300 miles to the south of Sacramento when I arrived. It was a large exercise with about six battalions taking part, including Signal, Californian National Guard and Medical Battalions. It was my first experience of actually having 'customers' for the network that made getting comms in all the more important. Unlike the TA the US Reserves seem to have more to offer people who join. Their education, dental and medical bills are paid for and more importantly their reserve forces are entitled to a pension after completing 20 years of service. These seemed to be important motivating factors for the soldiers, who often relied upon the benefits from the reserves to achieve a decent standard of living. In addition, training is restricted to one weekend a month and one annual training of two weeks. On seeing the training programme I had for my Regiment, many of the Americans were amazed that our soldiers could find the time to complete a large portion of the weekends.

The weather in central California in July gets up to in excess of 100°F daily which could have proven to be uncomfortable exercise conditions. However, the Americans are not known for their ability to rough it if they do not have to and consequently there were lots of comfort items on site, ie: field showers and a mobile laundry unit. But the most welcome of extras was an air-conditioned command tent to work in. My main task was to shadow my host officer, **Capt Judy Haas**, as she ran the operations side of things for the exercise. However, I had ample opportunity to get out and see what other members of the Battalion were doing. This included recce-ing new sites and of course a fair amount of off-road driving. Despite the fact that the HMMWv (their landrover equivalent) is extraordinarily ugly, the automatic gearbox makes it an absolute dream for off-roading.

Lt Caswell with host officer, Capt Judy Haas

The exercise was spread over four sites–three in California and one in Arizona. I had a chance to see much of the signals equipment that the US Army has at present from SATCOM to fibre optics. In addition, I visited a National Guard Aviation Battalion and was rewarded with a flight in a Huey helicopter.

The visit was not all work as I was persuaded that I really had to see more of California than just the exercise area. I forced myself to go to San Francisco, Monterey, much of the Californian coastline and Clint Eastwood's pub in Carmel. The only low light to my visit was that Clint was not in the pub the day we visited–oh well maybe next time. On the way out to and back from our individual attachments, all the officers on the programme stayed in Washington. This is where the American side of things is coordinated. On the return journey we were treated to a tour of the Pentagon–which is absolutely vast. Unfortunately there was no time to see around Washington but most of us had our appetites whetted sufficiently to want to take a tourist visit to the city. I had an absolutely wonderful time in California and I would thoroughly recommend the exchange programme to anyone who gets the chance to go. The Americans are the most hospitable people and are sure to make you feel most welcome.

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Thoughts on The American Reserves

Apparently Minnesota features right up there after the Bronx at around number 2,697 in the favourite-places-to-live-in-America parade. At least it would according to the people–and that's just the Minnesotans–who asked me where I was heading to for my two week US Officer Exchange attachment. They either looked at me in deepest sympathy or in horror as if to say 'What did she do to get sent there?' So by the time I arrived I was just about coming to terms with the guarantees of 'mosquitoes the size of sparrows', arctic summer temperatures and monsoon rains. In actual fact it wasn't like Otterburn at all. This central northern state is a flourishing, unspoiled greenscape, teeming with wildlife and home to 10,000 lakes and to the origins of the mighty Mississippi–but the weather is lousy.

With me was **Lt Jackie Black**, 31 Sig Regt (V) and our unlucky hosts were the Ohio-based 2362d Signal Detachment whom we were joining for their Annual Training at Camp Ripley. I had been almost disappointed when I leamt that the Unit had no involvement with field comms. However, the opportunity to spend time with an independent squadron-sized unit whose war-time role is to provide the communications and information management networks in support of the large-scale mobilisation taking place at the Camp, taught us much about the business of mobilising an army. The Detachment is part of the Federal Reserves which are the nationally raised TA equivalent as opposed to the National Guard military forces raised by each of the individual states as their own security.

The folk in the Unit were in high spirits–army humour is apparently a worldwide thing–and seemed to enjoy the job. One of the arguably big successes of the US Reserves was much in evidence: retention. There is no annual Bounty but the Pentagon has the bright idea of offering pensions from age sixty for reservists of twenty year's service. The deal is that points are awarded for each training period attended say 4 points for a weekend–and personnel who accumulate fifty points within a year qualify to add the year towards their twenty-year target. By all accounts it has a more powerful magnetic force than just being a vehicle to 'get people through the door'. Also there are many more incentives including financial assistance towards college or university education and heavily subsidised air travel. This makes sense from a retention perspective as the Reserve units have a pattern of training of one weekend only each month, and invariably activities focus specifically on the unit's trade.

50 SQUADRON
NIJMEGEN MARCHES

Twelve brave, some might say foolhardy, members of 50 Sig Sqn based in Neasham Road, Darlington and Debdon Gardens, Newcastle, have just returned from Holland where they took part in the annual event of the Nijmegen Marches. To be successful we had to complete a 25 mile route every day for four days in a row: a severe challenge to our physical and mental endurance. We were not alone though. Despite the heat and discomfort up to 30,000 other walkers from around the world were there. The inhabitants of Nijmegen and the towns' surrounding villages cheered us on. The vast majority of those taking part were civilians but members of several countries armed forces make up a large minority with a thousand coming from Britain. Just to make it more difficult we had to carry packs and march as a squad. **Sig Carl Harding** was taking part for the third time while **Maj Mike Hohnan, LCpl Mel Nelson** and **LCpl Tony Hotehen** were there for the second time. None of the others had been before but they'll never forget the experience.

The team in the Beer Tent having finished the first day's march
Front Row (*L-R*): Cpl Mike Jemmett, LCpl Neil Walker, Sig Dave Davies, Cpl Alison Lewis, LCpl Mel Nelson.
Back Row (*L-R*): Maj Mike Holman, Sig Cari Harding, LCpl Tony Hotchen, Sig Ashley Williams, Sig Iain Paterson, Sig Craig Horsley
Holding the flag is LCpl Brummie Baker

XXXV

35 Sig Regt (V)
Sutton Coldfield

IF IT'S RAINING IT MUST BE ADVENTURE TRAINING

With Annual Camp now tucked firmly under the belt most of August was devoted to adventure training pursuits, routine training or recruiting activities. 48 and 89 Sqn mounted a joint exercise at Brawdy in South Wales at the 14 Sig Regt Adventure Training Centre over the weekend 7th-9th August. This exciting and productive weekend, superbly organised jointly by **SSgt Mark Giles** and **Sgt Kevin Parkinson,** saw many members of both Squadrons engage in a number of challenge pursuits including rock climbing, abseilling, canoeing, trekking, coasteering, mountain biking, horse riding and bowling! As a character, confidence building and leadership development exercise, the exercise certainly achieved its aim and many returned with a confidence and vitality not present before. Although **Sig Chris** 'Lurch' **Reeves** reckons his revitalisation was caused by the amount of times he fell out of his canoe into ice cold water and **SSgt Charlie Walker's** ruddy complexion was the result of him been unable to get out of his! **Sig Hilary Baxter** suffered from overexposure and **Sig Ginny Tunvor** had a lip smacking, teeth crunching, face aching, heart breaking, fool making encounter with the invisible man (HG) to his friends. Meanwhile the Annapurna Dragon team led by **Lt Ian Cassell** and **Sgt Mickv Mann** continued their intensive training for their planned expedition to Nepal. The team took a trip to Ynysymaengwn (if you can say it you win a free Annapurna T-Shirt) North Wales the previous weekend for some real serious rock-climbing, freefall abseiling and other aggressive training. Including a 150ft Death Slide into a disused slate quarry in weather that can only be described as very unpleasant. At the time of writing these notes the Regiment expedition to Nepal has now been successfully concluded, the team has returned intact, and their remarkable venture will be the subject of what promises to be a very inspiring, exciting and compelling, special report for the next edition of *The Wire*.

LCpl Steve Bell giving words of encouragement to Sig Chris 'Lurch' Reeves

Welcome back pack. The triumphant Annapurna Team–glad to be back?

WENT THE DAY WELL
THE BIRMINGHAM CHIILDREN'S HOSPITAL APPEAL

The Birmingham Children's Hospital Appeal is perhaps the highest profile event the Regiment has been involved in recent years and has proved to be the cornerstone of the Regiment's high profile relationship with the local community. The Regiment's association with the hospital in particular goes back a couple of years when the Regiment adopted Ward 1 in 1995. Since then our involvement with the hospital has widened significantly and under the guidance and direction of the CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston,** we became a major supporter and contributor to the National Appeal Launch. The Launch of the National Appeal took place on Sunday 14th September at Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. It is widely acknowledged that the Regiment underpinned the launch with the massive assistance it provided to the Appeal Team. On the day soldiers from the Regiment could be seen controlling car parking and crowds, selling programmes, escorting VIP guests, entertaining VIP'S, fund-raising, providing catering and extensive admin support mounting displays as well as offering general assistance to members of the public. This was a day when members of the Regiment were doing their job to the highest professional standard and proved to be the best ambassadors the Corps could ever wish for–the goodwill and understanding generated was immeasurable. VIP guests, who have personally thanked the Regiment for its support, included the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Cllr Sybil Spence, Frank Bruno**–who was knocked out and highly impressed by his personal escort, **Falcon the Gladiator** (real name **Bernadette)** and **Mr Blobby,** who made mincemeat of his escorts (the **Hussain** brothers).

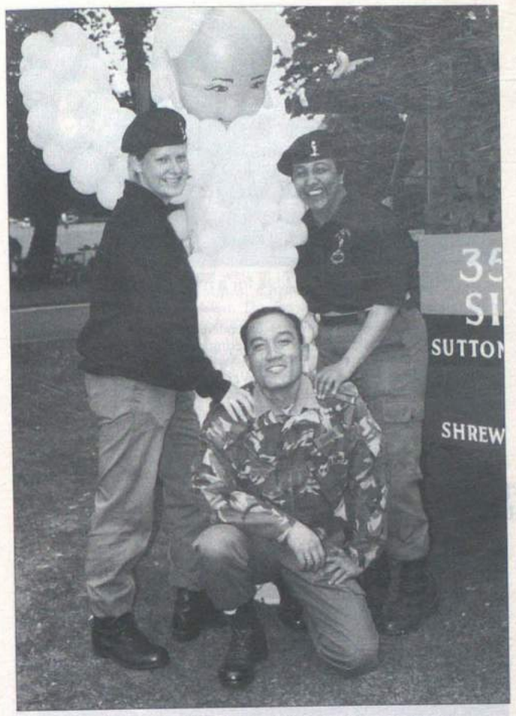
All those involved at this mammoth fund-raising event can he justifiably proud of their contribution and can look back with tremendous personal satisfaction on a hugely successful day. On the day a remarkable £44,000 was raised and a huge slice of this is thanks to the personal efforts of the Regiment. All involved in making this day such a magical success are to be congratulated for their dedication, determination, commitment and unfailing sense of humour. The Regiment is now committed to providing long term support for the hospital. Since the event, soldiers from the Regiment have been seen lending their support to many other fund-raising activities throughout the West Midlands including the Heart FM 'Run for Home' which raised a further £50,000 towards the appeal, and the Beneficial Bank fund raising fete.

Cpl Tracey Haggan and Sig Karen Jeskins

Sgt Kevin Parkinson in the Regimental Float!

A real Grudge Match – Frank Bruno v 35 Sig Regt Bear!

Frank Bruno with his Minder?



Sig Liz Judie, Sig Ginnis Trevor and Cpl Shesaun

FREEDOM OF THE CITY

The Regiment's high profile momentum carried on unabated when the Regiment once again exercised its right to the freedom of the City of Birmingham. On Saturday 24th September with drums beating, band playing and bayonets fixed the Regiment marched proudly through the City of Birmingham. The Parade which coincided with the Regiment's 30th Anniversary celebrations drew large crowds of spectators, some of whom had already met members of the Regiment early in the month at Cannon Hill Park and were now displaying their own personal respect, affection and admiration. Many families and former members of the Regiment were also present to view the parade and join the celebrations. Welcomed by the CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston** and the Honorary Colonel, **Brig Ian Sim,** prominent guests included the SOinC, **Brig N. F. Wood** who was accompanied by his wife, Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig D. J. Wills,** our former Honorary Colonel, **Maj Gen P. D. Alexander CB, OBE** and the Col TA 5 Div, **Col B. N. T. Foxon, OBE.**

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Cllr Sybil Spence,** accompanied by her consort, reviewed the parade, taking time to chat to many soldiers present, and took the salute. Following the parade members of the Regiment attended a civic reception in the splendour of the Birmingham Council House and all ranks and their guests were then treated to a curry lunch at Cateswell House. It was during the reception at the Council House that a live Satellite Link was established with the Annapurna team in Nepal and a photograph of the team transmitted over the Internet. Much to her astonishment and delight this was framed and presented to the Lord Mayor. The 30th Anniversary celebrations continued until the early hours of Sunday morning with a combined Officers and Sergeants' Mess function taking place at the Staffordshire show-ground. Here there were many moments of reflection, looking back on a momentous and historical month in the life of the Regiment!

ANOTHER RECRUIT PHASE THAT LEFT THE RRTT IN A DAZE

Over the last few months two proud courses have completed their rugged Phase 1 training and are now well on their way to becoming trained TA soldiers. On Course B/97 the CO, **Lt Col Richard Thurston** took the salute and presented the award of the Best Recruit to an ecstatic **Sig Lisa White** of 58 Sqn. On Sunday 31st August Course C/97 also completed their Phase 1, but because of the torrential rain completed their pass-off parade in the Training Hall at Cateswell House. This did not however diminish the satisfaction they felt at successfully completing Phase 1 and the parade was viewed by many proud parents and friends. The Deputy Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Col Douglas McLay** took the salute and presented the award of the Best Recruit to **Sig Brian Rudge** of 48 Sqn. The weekend before this pass-off parade the Regiment Recruiting Team were busy doing their duty to attract new recruits at the Town & Country Show at Stoneleigh. Regretfully the two potential recruits pictured have not joined!

The March Past–Course C/7

Glad it's all over–a happy Course C/8

A scene from the Town & Country Show

COMMAND AND BE DAMNED

On Friday 10th October, following weeks of planning and preparation, teams from throughout the Regiment descended on Swynnerton Training Area for the CO's Command Exercise. The Exercise was stage-managed by the Trg Maj, **Maj Paul Ford** and the Tech Adjt, **Capt Jason Kennedy** also acted as a grand rehearsal for Ex Executive Stretch planned for the end of October. The somewhat realistic scenario for this exercise was to see all teams deployed in a hostile environment somewhere in the Balkans to carry out vital UN peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. Here each team was required to confront and solve many problems. These ranged from recovering casualties from minefields, negotiating with paramilitaries, treating injuries to carrying out complex command tasks. All these demanding tasks were designed to stretch and test individual stamina, initiative, endurance and ability and to mould individual groups together into strong willed and determined teams. The exercise certainly proved its value as all teams regardless of final position showed tremendous guts, determination and team spirit and maintained their good humour even when covered from head to foot in mud! Acting honours must go to the DS (formed from members of the PS) some of whom are front runners for a 'Granny' award especially the unnamed casualty from HQ Sqn who proved that being legless was no mean feet. The champion team honour goes to 95 Sig Sqn for a tremendous performance, sustained throughout the weekend, that proved impossible to beat. They were presented with the Champion Team award by the CO and are to be congratulated on their achievement.

Hardly the tunnel of love for a member of 58 Sqn!

CONGRATULATIONS

Our sincere congratulations are extended to **OCdt's Caroline Daley** and **Peter Ayre** on successfully completing their RMAS Commissioning course. Also to **Maj Steve Pell** and his wife **Sarah** on the birth of their baby son **James,** to **LCpl David Wright** on his recent marriage to **Caroline** and finally to **LCpl Nick Harvey** for passing his HGV at long last–proving perseverance does pay in the end!

37 Sig Regt (V)
Redditch

CO — **Lt Col Alan Whittle TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) Paul Edwards**

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We welcome **Maj Steven Potter** from 39 Sig Regt as 2IC. He replaces **Maj Andrew Cornish,** who has sadly decided to hang up his boots. Belated congratulations go to **Capt Marcus Cosgrove** of 93 Sig Sqn on his commissioning. There have also been several changes of regular personnel. Long-serving CO's driver **LCpl** 'Clem' **Clement** goes to 7 Sig Regt at Krefeld with **Veisha.** We haven't found another TA clerk yet. We will miss them both. We welcome in his stead **LCpl** 'Kerry' **Greenham** from 1 Mech Bde at Tidworth. He hopes to keep up his golf between trips up the M6 to collect the CO. It's been all change in the Tech Workshop as well. **Sgt Bob Low** and family have left on his promotion for 19 Mech Bde at Catterick, we understand he's now in Bosnia but goes with our congratulations and best wishes. **Cpl** 'Ski' **Skears** joins us fresh from his T1 course to take on **Sgt Low's** responsibilities at 53 and 93 Sqns. Finally **Sgt Steve Oliver** has hung up his boots after 22 years. We wish him and his family every success in civvy street and welcome **Sgt Mark Pounsett** and family from JCUNI in his place.

A FEAST OF EXERCISES

These notes are being written in the midst of a series of three weekend exercises in four weeks, a rare event in today's financial climate. The first, Ex Golden Link, took the form of a Regiment concentration at Long Marston, planned by **Trg Maj Stewart McConnell** and **Yeoman WO2 Steve Townsend.** All present took the chance to find out what the rest of the Regiment do before some solid trade training. A fortnight later, Ex Silver Link saw the Squadrons deployed in their home areas. As well as NCRS, it was good to practice some of the communications for the Regional Brigades. The Exercise frenzy concludes with 2 (NC) Sig Bde's Ex Apollo Shield, that will see all of the mobile NCRS detachments deployed for the first time.

96 Sqn's SSM WO2 Ray Campbell, 2Lt Liz Hodges and PSI SSgt Steve Clark were snapped on Ex Silver Link with SSgt Jill Summers

2IC Maj Steve Potter and Yeoman WO2 Steve Townsend reflect on Ex Silver Link as the packing-up starts

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON–REDDITCH

Sqn Comd — **Maj Les Porter TD**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian**

The Squadron each year provides a static display at Wythall Carnival, between Redditch and Birmingham. This event attracts a good crowd, mostly children who descend en masse on the stand. With careful supervision the children were shown a wide range of military equipment and introduced to face painting the Army way. Although this proved to be popular with the children, our charm was needed to reassure the odd concerned parent. The aim of the stand is to introduce the TA to potential recruits, one particular recruit who heard of the recent cut-backs in the unit's military fleet arrived with his own Landrover.

Sgt Mat Bellamy, Cfn Glen Draper, Cfn Stew Baker and Capt John Riley tell us that this young man bore a remarkable resemblance to the RSM

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON–BLACKBURN

Sqn Comd — **Maj Ross Parsell**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Jim Walshe**

August is usually the quiet month of our training year but this year proved to be an exception. On one weekend the Squadron was involved in a recruiting display, a mobile radio exercise and a troop weekend. The recruiting display was held at Witton Park, Blackburn where the youth of the area were invited to see the range of Squadron comms equipment and have a chance to speak to members of our recruiting team. Unfortunately the Saturday proved to be one of the wettest days of the year, resulting in a poor attendance. The Sunday was a better day and several interested persons are now being invited to visit us at our barracks. Ex Guardian Angel saw several mobile dets deploying to the west and to the north of our region. To add an interest value and to give the Exercise a 'real' feeling, the dets gave radio safety-cover to the Northern Section of the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain Rally. All of the vehicles were pre 1910 and the majority of them were in pristine condition. The dets were commanded by **Sgt Jim Holmes, Cpl Mick Clarke, LCpl Andrew Hodson** and **Sig John Knighton.** The emphasis was on HF comms with a VHF backup. The organisers of the vehicle rally were most impressed and donated £200 to a charity of the Squadron's choice. Finally SHQ Tp and MST Tp A went to RAF Cosford for a Troop weekend organised by **Sgt** 'Buzz' **Small.** Thanks to the assistance of **Flt Lt** 'Dougie' **Bye,** a former Squadron member, everyone was given the chance to go gliding; in addition to other military activities. So impressed was **Cpl** 'Cindy' **Meller** that her feet have only just come back onto the ground.

The following Sunday the Squadron supported a charity fund raising walk. This was in aid of the East Lancashire Scanner Appeal, which is raising funds for a whole body scanner for the use of the population of East Lancashire. The Squadron also entered a sponsored team for the march that was along the length of a newly constructed stretch of motorway. Despite evil weather and the tragic news of the death of the **Princess of Wales,** the event was a great success and is hoped to have raised ever £100,000 for the appeal. The CO, **Lt Col Alan Whittle** and the Sqn Comd, **Maj Ross Parsell** led by example and marched the full distance in a very respectable time, especially when you consider the Squadron social had been held the night before and had gone on and on and on! All credit to everyone who participated. 93 Sqn say they were too busy to take photos in August but their officers were caught on Ex Golden Link.

Capt Jeff Dolan, OCdt Simon McDowell, Capt Marcus Cosgrove, Maj Ross Parsell, Capt Alan Unwin and 2Lt Julie Lodge

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)–COVENTRY

Sqn Comd — **Maj Dick Hall**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Ray Camphell**

After the elation of annual camp in Gibraltar the Squadron has thrown itself back into its recruiting and training weekends. **Capt Richard** 'Badger' **Bowden**'s first task after camp was to organise the annual recruiting stand at the Town and Country Festival at Stoneleigh. Ably assisted by **SSgt John Convery** and eight others, the Squadron produced another spectacular display over the three days. Due to the day of mourning for the **Princess of Wales,** Ex Battle Shot, the Squadron's range weekend at Tyddesley Wood near Pershore, was limited to one day. Despite the limited time available, **Capt Bowden** was able to introduce many new recruits to the finer arts of shooting skills including the application of fire. So by the end of the day everyone had managed to pass their APWR, even if it was on **Sig Brown's** second attempt. Finally, congratulations go to **Sgt Julie Brookes** on completion of the two-week Advanced Radio course at Blandford.

EXERCISE ORIENT EXPRESS 2

Cpl Mick Donovan, Cpl Ewan Lake, Sig Kevin Hall and **Sig Jo Kenard** CL volunteered for a strenuous two-week camp with 71 Sig Regt in Belgium. Having sampled the hospitality of Bexley Heath the night before the prospect of two coach journeys and a ferry trip to Camp Bastin near Arlon in the Ardennes seemed a distinctly better option. The other being to drag an NCRS trailer all the way, that unfortunate task that fell to some poor members of 71 Sigs. **Sig Kellard** spent the first week with 70 Sqn, participating in the Regiment training package of ranges, battle run, FIBUA and patrolling. The others joined up with **Sigs** 'Lurch' **Knowles,** 'DJ' **Hamilton,** 'Jimmy' **Frew,** 'Dougie' **Douglas, Adele Peyton** and **Amanda Quigley** from 11 Sigs lazing around in the glorious sunshine and shot at anyone who dared to attack the FIBUA village. The day off was spent in Luxembourg where the regulars from 11 Sigs did not quite grasp the concept of a day off on TA camp and a relatively sober party returned to camp that evening!

The second week was Ex Mercury Express where **Cpl Donovan** and **Sig Kellard** deployed with dets from 265 Sqn and **Cpl Lake** and **Sig Hall** deployed with HQ Sqn. **Sig Hall** managed to achieve a ride in a Gazelle by having to be casevaced.

EXERCISE MARBLE TOR

It was only after a daring and surprisingly successful bid by **Maj Dick Hall,** 96 Sig Sqn Comd, that elements of all five of the Regiment's sub-units eventually made it out to Gibraltar. It was also a first for a Regiment, whose role, that of National Communications, necessarily keeps it within more local environs. The mission was a simple one: to conduct military and adventurous training in an overseas environment. In reality of course, it was far more complex, requiring a considerable amount of effort on the part of permanent and irregular soldiers alike to make the plan an actuality, especially on the part of the SQMS, **SSgt Mick Stone** and **Cpls John Mack** and **Ian Ross**. Reminiscent of the resultant confusion regarding geographical location immediately following the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands, 'Are they off the coast of Scotland?' the generally agreed position of Gibraltar turned out to be 'an island somewhere in the Med'. Close enough perhaps, but in fact for those who have not had the pleasure of a visit, it is more accurately a small peninsular lying off the southern-most tip of Spain, comprising a mountain, a city, a fortress and a resort. These provide not only for the seekers of sun and history, but also for those in search of a unique scenario in which to conduct military training. Needless to say, sufficient volunteers were available to fulfil the manning requirement.

For the purposes of Ex Marble Tor members of 53, 67, 93, 96 and HQ Sqns were divided variously between three platoons. 1Plt led by **Lt Tony Lysak** and **SSgt Chris Taylor,** 2 Plt by **2Lt Liz Hodges** and **SSgt Convery** and 3 Pl, by **2Lt Julie Lodge** and **Sgt Small,** with each platoon comprising three sections of seven or eight men and women. The Exercise centred around military training, in particular an OBUA package, with additional packages encompassing range work; adventurous training; fitness training and sport, including the traditional and obligatory Rock Run, and perhaps none too surprisingly an R & R period.

The Squadrons enplaned at RAF Lyneham after a brief and somewhat restless night at the Air Movements Centre. The flight out, in two chalks on short Hercs, ably crewed by 47 Sqn RAF, was on time and largely uneventful. Uneventful for most that is, as the chalks included a wide range of experience in military air travel. This ranged from **Cpl Julian Ingram,** a former military free-faller, together with four or five para-trained NCOs, to **LCpl Linda McDonald** (the PTI) and **Sig King** who had not flown before and looked as though they might not want to. In the event neither the ex-sky god nor the uninitiated left the aircraft prior to its arrival in Gibraltar, where the advance party eagerly awaited them. The main problem with being a member of an advance party is that one has had the chance to relax from the earlier trip. Regardless of the post-movement work involved in setting up a location prior to the arrival of the main party, there will always be a marked contrast between members of the two parties. The addition of rather impressive suntans made the difference even more apparent. It was immediately obvious that the advance party had been shifting stores out-of-doors at all hours. After a day of briefings and admin tasks, training proper began with each platoon undertaking a three-day package, either OBUA, Range or Adventure Training. The OBUA package began with a phase peculiar to Gibraltar tunnel operations. The Rock itself has more road within than it has without. Some 36 miles hewn out of solid rock at various levels, connecting in a complex network of underground roads, passages, accommodation and storage areas, and ending up, on occasion, in gun emplacements high up in the Rock and overlooking its northern flank. Fighting through and clearing such an environment required a high degree of skill, both in fire and manoeuvre tactics and command and control techniques, the onus of responsibility being both on individuals and at section level. Employing formulas, demonstrated by members of The Gibraltar Regiment's Training Wing, the platoons accomplished their tasks with varying levels of competency, but all to a high standard. Although there were no personnel lost during the tunnel clearing exercises, at times the total darkness afforded the occasional moment of drama or high-farce. The commander of No.3 Platoon was given the opportunity to test the acoustic nature of the tunnels when subjected to a personal assault by a member of the Gibraltar Regiment 'enemy'. 'Friendly forces' in the immediate vicinity later complained of high frequency deafness. In a separate incident, **SSgt Taylor** managed to help **LCpl Julia Maidment** overcome her fear of the dark–without revealing just how he did it.

The second phase of the OBUA training was more conventional but nonetheless demanding. Standard FIBUA techniques, such as effecting entry (top floor) and house clearing, while perhaps more familiar to infantry soldiers, were quickly learned and used to good effect during that day and the next. No. 1 Platoon had a 'ringer' in the form of **Sig Bradfield.** In her civil occupation she delivers ladders and **Lt Lysak** noted her excellent ladder handling technique as one of the high points of his exercise.

Sgt Herbert, The Gibraltar Regiment, looks on while Pte Rowberry RAMC steadies 2Lt Lodge's magic ladder

The afternoon's activities, during the OBUA phase were broken by a deliberately tiring ammunition-resupply run. Downhill for the first leg, across an assault course, through a building complex then back up the hill for the final leg, carrying ammo boxes containing desperately needed gravel, gave the platoons a chance for some internal competition. **2Lt Lodge** drew the short straw when she was teamed up with **LCpl McDonald** for the ammoresup run. Not only is the latter soldier a young, fit PTI, she is also fast–a fact proved most convincingly when she became the fastest woman to complete the Rock Run since records began.

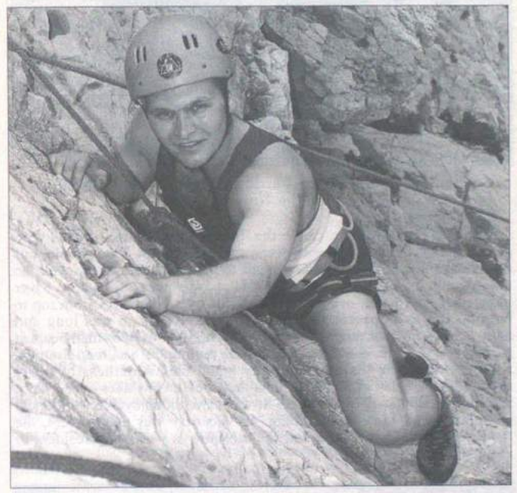
LCpl Linda McDonald celebrating her achievement at SSAFA/Forces Help's Big Brew Day

2Lt Julie Lodge and LCpl Linda McDonald competing, complete with box

The OBUA package continued with a withdrawal phase, followed by patrolling, a night-reconnaissance with an active enemy presence, which in turn led to a dawn attack. During the withdrawal **Sgt** 'Taff' **Jones** briefly distinguished himself by leading his section on a bearing 180 degrees away from the emergency RV following a 'bug-out'. This effective yet unplanned counter-attack temporarily turned the tide against the enemy. The first light assault on the 'enemy-occupied hamlet' was seen within the platoons as the high-point of the OBUA package. These were invariably accompanied by a well orchestrated and illuminating pyrotechnic creeping 'mortar barrage' laid on by the creative **Sgt** 'Herbie' **Herbert** of The Gibraltar Regiment.

Sig Pont and Pte Rowberry provide each other with cover

The other packages undertaken were no less useful but were less demanding. For a National Communications Regt with an emphasis on a high standard of trade skills, shooting skills have to be practised when and where the opportunity arises. The ranges available: 30m and 125m may have been restrictive in terms of distance, but they afforded the opportunity to zero the weapons and brush-up on weapons handling procedures. Run by **Lt Kevin Barker** and **SSgt Nigel Rees,** assisted by **Cpls Ingram** and **Meller,** the range staff raised many less experienced individuals' confidence and standards. Nine days on the range allowed for range staff suntans that rivalled if not exceeded those acquired by the advance party. The exception to the rule regarding bronzed range staff was **Sgt Tim Mansell.** Chosen to be chief console operator, the red headed **Mansell** had, according to the Range Conducting Officer, 'resembled a Swan Vesta's most prominent feature' Within 15 minutes of parading at the TAC in Stourbridge. Despite the fact that firing out to sea was limited, as the danger area 'appeared', according to **Lt Barker,** to be an international parking bay for half the world's merchant navies waiting to exit the Gibraltar Straits', the range package was conducted without incident. Well almost, according to No. 1 Platoon commander, **Lt Tony Lysak,** a naked man appeared to be parading on the high ground overlooking the ranges, disturbing some of the less-focused firers. There was some disappointment when subsequent investigation revealed that rather than nude, the man in question was wearing an off-white shirt and chinos, and a well-endowed black leather 'bum-bag'.



Sig Baz Davies reaches new heights on the rock face

EXERCISE EBOR THUNDER

On the 16th June **Maj Steve May** and **Capt Maria Hawksworth** flew out from Gatwick to Seattle via St Louis courtesy of TWA. 38 Sig Regt's expedition to the coastal mountains in British Columbia had started. The advance party had a number of administrative tasks to accomplish including the hire of 2 Plymouth Voyager seven-seat people carriers, purchase of some minor equipment items, and sampling the Vancouver nightlife! After 4 days and a rather innovative build of two roof-racks ('people carriers' the vehicles might have been, but kit carriers they certainly were not!), they arrived at Seattle Seatac Airport to meet the main body led by **Lt Andrew Whalen,** the Exercise Leader.

No time was wasted and within 20mins of the arrival of the main body, the whole group were on their way to Williams Lake in British Columbia–a further 18hr drive through the night. A couple of days were spent at Williams Lake purchasing and preparing rations, sorting out equipment, studying maps and preparing to deploy to the Tweedsmuir National Park some 400kms to the west and in the heart of the Coastal Range. They had time, however, to enjoy the Williams Lake Stampede, a Fiesta of Rodeo, music, barbecue and drunken cowboys and Indians. On the 29th June the Exercise drove west, firstly to Nimpo Lake to arrange delivery of supplies by helicopter and float plane, and then to the Park Camp ground at Stui to spend their first night under canvas with the dreaded mosquitoes. At 0430 hours the next morning they silently, (joke!) moved out of the camp site and drove to the start point at the top of the Heckman Pass. With **Cpl Andrea Bilton** navigating, they stepped into a land of snow covered mountains, wet valleys and a trillion mosquitoes per man. Day one was hard and they arrived at the Park's Rainbow Cabin late into the evening. Most of the team were wet, bitten and completely exhausted but morale was high. Next day, after signing 33 Sig Regt's Visitors Book and admiring the Corps Anniversary Plaque, they took on the first of the four peaks, Mt McKenzie (2146metres) which proved to be the easiest of climbs and one which the majority of the group ascended. The views from the top were magnificent. Due to the good weather, the whole of the Coastal Range stretched out as far as the eye could see.

In addition to out-of-door's firing **Capt Tim Bamber's** SAT/.22 indoor range allowed for section in defence training not normally available closer to home. A problem with gas, or rather a lack of it, limited its value to the last platoon though but did little to adversely effect the OIC SAT's otherwise enjoyable holiday. The adventure training package was an added bonus. Top roping and abseiling, instructed by **Sgt** (nee Corporal) **Brookes,** allowed both novice and more experienced climbers alike to make good use of the Rock. It also allowed the opportunity to strengthen the bonds with the Gibraltar Regiment. Special mention should be made of **Sig Julia Maidment**'s sterling efforts in overcoming additional obstacles in her ascent of a particularly sheer rock-face. Meanwhile the opportunity to improve swimming and boatmanship skills was available at the Joint Services water-sport centre down by the harbour.

Lastly, it should be remembered that whilst military and adventure training are still important, they no longer comprise (as **von Clauswitz** said) the only meats in the soldier's sandwich of skills. More is required to make him operationally effective. As recent British Army deployments have demonstrated, there is an increased demand for soldiers to act in aid of the civil community. It was towards this end that Ex Marble Tor 3/97 included a MACC task. In this case the task centred around reclamation work on a site of special historic interest. The section that follows was penned anonymously by a member of 93 Sig Sqn. Although written in the form of a play, entitled 'Plantation Work' this piece nonetheless includes an insight into the complexities generated by civil-military co-operation:

Civilian 'What I would like you to do is to try and establish some of the paths that existed. Create a mulch area over there *(miles off through impenetrable forest);* and clear away the overhead canopy. The only tools available are over there' *(indicating rusty sickle, various forks, shovels, hoes and a strange cutting device - the sickle lasts twenty seconds).*

TA Soldier 'Whoops'

Civilian 'Never mind, I'll bring some more suitable tools back later, together with those machetes you asked for – anything else?'

TA Soldier 'You bring the beers, we'll do the rest' *(some six hours pass.)*

Civilian 'Wonderful. Haven't you done well? Isn't it so much more spacious without the canopy? It still looks like it is missing something; I can't quite figure it out' *(a long silence follows, eventually broken by)*

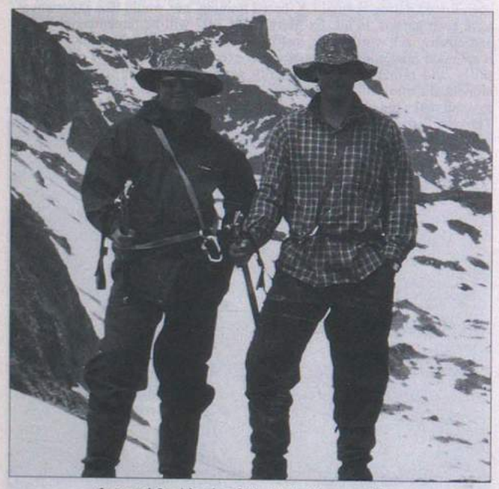
TA Soldier 'Oh, that'll be the tree we chopped down. Never mind! There are some more just like it over there. Here, have a beer.'

Civil/Military co-operation aside, it was generally agreed that the OBUA package was the high-point of the deployment. As well as providing a steep learning curve for many, and an interesting refresher for a few this package, together with the tunnel warfare, fostered a team spirit between members of the various participating Squadrons divided as they were within the three platoons. It is unlikely that such relationships, especially important in such a widely dispersed Regiment, would have been forged during normal UK-based training, nor would like experiences have been gained. In all, Ex Marble Tor 3/97 will be remembered by all participants as a worthwhile, instructive and often enjoyable annual camp. It afforded numerous opportunities to exercise a wide variety of military skills, and rather less occasionally perhaps, a chance to discover an individual's true ability to consume an excessive amount of alcohol. It also gave all ranks the chance to say farewell to **Lt Col Stamford Cartwright TD** who visited briefly, and was shortly to relinquish what had been a most successful period in command of the Regiment.

38 Sig Regt (V)
Sheffield

Pose for our civilian sponsors on the top of Mt McKenzie
(*L-R*): Maj Steve May, Cpl Andrea Bilton, Cpl Steve Roberts, Capt Maria Hawksworth, SSgt Melanie Widdows, LCpl Jackie Spong

The next task was to climb Thunder Mountain, At 2681metres, it was to be the hardest challenge. The approach consisted of a 'bushwhack' through dense forest, followed by a long approach to two frozen lakes at the head of the valley where the group were to receive their heli supplies. The amount of snow made progress painfully slow and the fitter members pressed ahead with **Cpl Dougie Pepper**, the instructor, and **Lt Andrew Whalen** leading, accompanied by **Lt Simon Jenner** and **Sgt Frank Reid.** They missed the helicopter by 30 minutes, but the supplies were there as planned and in the correct place. Unfortunately the heli-recce they had planned could not take place. The second group arrived at the base camp and plans were made for the climb. **Maj Steve May** and **Sgt Frank Reid** left early next day to recce the approach, whilst the remainder of the group, after carrying out instructions in snow and ice work, took on a peak which towered above the base camp Mt Andrew (2020metres). The climb was excellent training for the approach to Thunder Mountain.

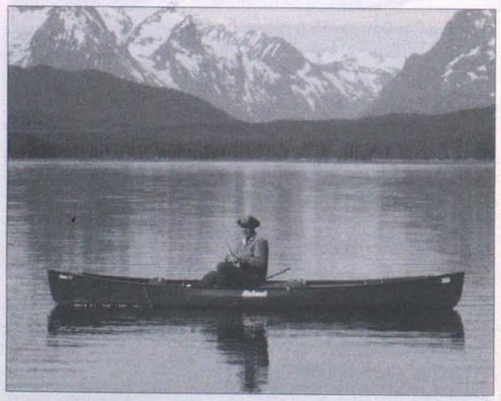


1st and 2nd in the Silly Hats Competition
Lts Andrew Whalen and Simon Jenner pose in front of Thunder Mountain

At 0500 hours the complete group set off on the pre-recced route to the base of Thunder Mountain. It took 4 hours over three ridgelines, each ridge being over 1800metres. It was mostly snow and ice work, but the weather was clear blue sky and bright sunshine; sunglasses were compulsory. The summit party had been selected the night before and consisted of **Maj Steve May, Lt Simon Jenner, Sgt Frank Reid** and **LCpl Jackie Spong.** It was a tough climb and the rope was used. However, they hit the summit at 1230 hours feeling very elated. The descent was by a much easier route on the southern side and involved traversing round a huge snow bowl to get back on the route they had ascended by. They made it back to the main group at 1600 hours, with the weather worsening. The complete group trekked back to the base camp, chased by billowing clouds and freshening winds. They made excellent time, arriving back to base at 1800 hours. An early night was welcome. The group had completed the first phase of the Expedition and had achieved all the aims. The walk out was completed without mishap except for **SSgt Melanie Widdows** who had some severe blisters on her legs, which were later found to be caused not by insects as had been assumed, but by poisonous foliage. The two-day trek out was completed by 7th July. There was a day of rest and preparation before embarking on Phase 2.

Capt Dave Poole, Cpl Jan Barrington and Cpl Andrea Bilton canoe the Turner Lakes

The next phase was to canoe the Turner Lake chain, 6 lakes with porterages up to a kilometre between the lakes. **Capt Dave Poole,** our Canoe Instructor, had to fly in by plane to get the canoes ready–well, he didn't come to walk! The lakes situated at the source of Antarko River plunged at their outlet over the Turner Falls over 800metres from top to bottom. It was a spectacular sight. The 27km walk in was long and tedious, with the mosquitoes in fine form. The sight of two small bears at the top of a large fir, and the native Indians pulling 601b salmon from the river broke up the journey, and they made the Wilderness by early evening. After a day of canoe training, they took on the lakes over 3 days, 35km of paddling and 5 porterages–it was hard but enjoyable work and a complete break from the climbing. The scenery was magnificent, the fishing poor, the water cold and the mosquitoes were only resident at each porterage!



Maj Steve May enjoys some early morning fishing and the spectacular views

The final phase was to climb Glacier Mountain, a mountain of 2610metres that protruded from glaciers on each of its sides. The mountain had been climbed by **Maj Steve May** in 1993, so the route was known. The trek in was long and through dense forest to high mountain tundra and finally to a base camp near Echo Lake. On route, the party encountered a large Grizzly complete with cub. The bear charged the two leading members–**Cpl Dougie Pepper** and **Sgt Frank Reid.** Fortunately, on seeing the remainder of the group, the bear pulled up and disappeared into the undergrowth. It caused quite a fright, with **Lt Andrew Whalen** imitating a mole, and **Sgt Frank Reid** doing a 'Linford Christie'! The bear, which towered above **Sgt Reid**'s 6'2", was within 6 feet of the

group before it turned tail. The base camp safely reached, the group planned the climb. It was to be in two parties. The summit party of **Cpl Dougie Pepper, Lt Simon Jenner, Lt Andrew Whalen, Sgt Frank Reid** and **LCpl Jackie Spong** would leave an hour before the other party, who would climb to Panorama Ridge and view the summit attempt from the ridge. The ridge, at 2020 metres, was a challenge in itself and would give the less experienced plenty to aim for. The morning broke with clear blue skies and the summit party left on time, an hour later, the second party, led by **Maj Steve May,** deployed.

LCpl Jackie Spong climbing Panorama Ridge

The route was spectacular, a steep rocky climb to the left of a hanging glacier which fell into a blue alpine pool, followed by a crossing of a large but flat glacier, and finally a steep climb to the ridge, from where the mountain could be approached. The first climb of the ridge was futile, the summit party aiming for a small window in the ridgeline, found they were too far left and had to traverse the ridge to the next opening. The second party went left to higher ground, and when it became apparent both parties had gone too far left, the second group dropped off the high ground, crossed the glacier and went even further to the right of the summit group. A view point was achieved where the second group could see Glacier Mountain in all its splendor and had time permitted, could even have made a summit attempt as well. The weather was deteriorating and snow began to fall, visibility became extremely poor. The first group under **Cpl Dougie Pepper** had already decided a summit attempt was out of the question and started to descend the ridge. The back-up group waited for just over an hour before the weather became so bad that safety would have been compromised if they did not return to base. Both groups returned safely to base camp. The climbing of Panorama Ridge twice was in itself an achievement but all were disappointed that the complete Expedition's aims were not achieved. The next morning was a bright and sunny one, the temperature had dropped well below freezing in the night and ice, was both inside and outside the tents. The group headed back to civilisation via a spectacular float plane flight over the Monarch glacier field and taking in both the Turner Falls and Glacier Mountain. The pilot pointed out a lake in the centre of the coastal mountains that was accessible by plane, and told us there were over a thousand peaks between the Monarch Lake field and Mt Waddington 300km to the south. Only 300 had names! It seems despite the team's efforts, they had only scratched the surface of this remote and spectacular region. They returned to Vancouver using the excellent ferry service from Bella Coola to Port Hardy, drove to Victoria, then Vancouver, and eventually arrived in Seattle in time for the flight to Gatwick. All members felt the expedition was a spectacular success in terms of achievement, training and teamwork.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

The Sqn Comd, **Maj T. R. McCappin** departed on a six-month tour in Bosnia, we wish him well on his little jaunt. Meanwhile we welcome back **Cpl** 'Orrible' **Orme** from Bosnia and **Cpl Helen Mountney** from the Falklands. The Squadron has recently been granted the honour, by the City of Nottingham, to use their name in our Squadron title. This great honour further cements our relationship with the City, particularly in 1997 its centenary year

EXERCISE EASTERN HARRIER

Ex Eastern Harrier saw Squadron personnel head off to Wales tasked with providing communications in support of one of the largest exercises for many a year, involving both 15 Bde and 49 Bde. It was anticipated there would be in the region of 4,000 troops on the ground, covering the whole of Sennybridge Training Area. Our task was to set up three communications sites in support of the Exercise and to provide radio communications for the staff and umpires. Our PSI (T), **Sgt George Pendrich,** was our Exercise Coordinator and put in some sterling work both before and during the Exercise to ensure everything ran smoothly. He also has a claim to fame in that he was actually the first reported real casualty of the exercise after being stung by a 'killer' bee. We definitely did not think it suspicious that he was hospitalised for the four days of monsoon rain we encountered.

As Ex Eastern Harrier progressed the three sites settled into their tasks. It should be said that Site Alfa, situated on the trig point near Dixie's Corner, were a little worried when they heard the artillery were to fire over their site during one particular part of the exercise. However, **SSgt Chrissy Bull, Cpl Alison Dinsdale, LCpl de la Billiere** and **Sig Andy Doran** are pleased to say they are here to tell of the tale and did not hear any shots land. Site One also became the area known as 'Chinook Corner' because it appeared to be the main navigation point on and off the area for all Chinooks. **LCpl Alison Dinsdale** (the Squadron's answer to David Bailey) was kept busy in getting good pictures of these and the Gazelles as they passed closer and closer (often a little too close for comfort) to our antenna field.

The site in the middle of things, literally, was Site Bravo. Here **Sgt Craig Toft**, ably assisted by **Cpl's Clive Doda, Gary** 'Orrible' **Orme** and **LCpl Willmer,** enjoyed the delights of being shook out of bed by either grenades, as the range was next door or by artillery fire (again next door). This was the site, next to Flag 35, to see things as it happened. They did manage to render assistance to two snipers, dropped off at the wrong location by 5km, with hot sweet tea and a kind word (plus a bit of a lift down the road). Site Charlie, situated next door to the Drover's Arms (not a real pub we are sorry to say), appeared to be the quieter site. However, even they had their moments. Their Det Commander, **SSgt Phil Jones,** organised the protection of their area by surrounding it with white mine tape after nearly being over run by Scimitars. But the two **Jims, LCpls Jim Gillham** and **James Horton** did not put much faith in this plan, especially after **Sgt Andy Paton** was chased by a Scimitar during his return from the bright yellow 'Tardis' (better known as 'the portaloo') one evening.

We did manage to get involved in the exercise on one or two occasions, some planned, some not. One mini exercise was organised to assess the feasibility of re-supply to hill top sites, similar to ours, of personnel, equipment and food should road transport not be available. Thus helicopter transportation was brought into play. This involved transporting personnel from one site to the other via helicopter. We would like to say at this stage it was not a 'jolly' in a helicopter and that the people involved did not enjoy it one bit, honest! Our thanks go to 49 Bde for organising the 'feasibility Study'.

Look at me Mum!
Sgt Paton and LCpl de la Billiere

Another memorable moment was when we were given the opportunity to watch the battle run and the fire demo of a Milan. Somehow our group of **SSgt Chrissy Bull, Cpl's Clive Doda, Alison Dinsdale, LCpl Keith Willner** and **Sig Andy Doran** arrived at the wrong location and set off with the safety coach in tow, at the rear of the Battalion on its live fire run. It was then decided to air lift the troops in by Chinook and we were included in the airlift. (Talk about being in the wrong place at the right time.) The journey, although short, was an experience. We watched the artillery rounds smash into the hill top bunker, an area just ahead of the Battalion. As they won the firefight the Scimitars joined in and then the mortar's fired as the battle took place. Quite an experience with the noise of the live firing of rifles, mortars and artillery shells. Then the little band of Signallers was discovered, just behind the Battalion HQ. After a great discussion of how we got there it was decided to send us up to the top of the hill over looking the battle, and put us with the other observers, where we should have been in the first place. (But I bet they did not get as good a view as we did.)

There were a few 'stories' to tell such as the time when **LCpl** 'BP' **Paton** was driving between Site Alfa and Site Bravo and encountered a Chinook travelling in a hover along the road towards him, obviously Landrovers give way to helicopters he told himself, quickly. **Cpl de la Billiere** and **SSgt Bun** discovered a small graveyard on their travels.

They found it to have been the site of a small Methodist chapel dating back to the 1800s which was demolished when the area became Sennybridge Training Area, or rather an artillery range prior to World War 2.

It must be said our two weeks exercise was not all work and we did manage to get together for a barbecue on the middle Saturday, one of the hottest days. A great time was had by all, even though we were still wearing the green stuff. We would like to say hello to our comrades in 249 Sig Sqn who were co-sited at each of our locations. We hope your social event went well on Saturday but we are a little concerned because although you all went away for a little R & R, some did not come back! All in all the Comms went well and the Squadron seemed to achieve its task well. All involved had a thoroughly enjoyable experience, so much so–when is the next one?

64 SIGNAL SQUADRON (N)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Stan Fitzgerald**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jimmy Mees**

EXERCISE CHANNEL VENTURE

The sailing element of 64 Sqn, as in previous years, booked the Corps yacht *Petasus* for this years' sailing exercise to the Channel Islands. The crew consisting of **Cpl Martin Kendall** (Skipper), **Maj Colin Slaughter** (Day Skipper) and **Maj Dennis Travon, Capt Jayne Hindle, Lt Bev Swift, Sgt Trevor Croxton** and **LCpl Claire Furness** set sail from Gosport for Jersey. Having sailed an uneventful crossing to the island, upon arrival we celebrated **Cpl Martin Kendall's** 34th birthday. The next day we pressed on to the beautiful island of Yesteryear–Sark (only cart horses and tractors here–no cars) and then on to Guernsey. Here **Sgt Trever Croxton** joined us. As the mainsail was hoisted again we headed for Alderney. The weather changed from glorious sunshine to a more overcast sky. It was during this Stage that **Cpl Kendall** demonstrated how to swing on a rope around the yacht. Unfortunately he ended up with his nose pressed firmly into the side of the hull apparently, according to **Maj Travon**, 'He hadn't worked out the physics!' Moored out on a buoy in Alderney harbour meant dinghy-handling skills were paramount and the force 6 winds we encountered made the night sail back to Gosport a little hair raising. Once on land again however, the colour soon came back to our faces. An excellent week's sailing and an experience not to be missed.

(*L-R*): Capt Jayne Hindle, Lt Bev Swift, Sgt Trevor Croxton

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The end of Camp 1997 also saw the end of an era. Sadly we said farewell to our OC of 4 years **Maj Stan Fitzgerald**. **Stan** transferred to 64 from 93 (Blackburn) Sqn prior to their reformation with 37 Sig Regt (V). He leaves us now on transfer to 33 Sig Regt (V) in Liverpool and our loss is their gain. **Capt Dave Poole** (PSAO) and **SSgt Stan Kelly** (SPSI) have briefed him fully on 'scouse *speak*'. Be warned! 80 Sqn, he now knows to panic on being informed that everything is boxed off. Welcome to **Maj David Tomlinson** who joins us from 49 (EM) Bde to assume command of the Squadron. We hope you enjoy your tour with 64 in Sheffield.

39th (Skinners) Sig Regt

The Regiment has completed another hectic period culminating in Annual Camp based around Stanford Training Area (STANTA). Camp was extremely busy and included a comms exercise, range package, combat survival training and a sports competition. In amongst all of this was the Regiment's Visitors Day. Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Gordon Hughes** visited the Regiment for the first time whilst deployed. **The Dep Comd, TA Col, Master of the Skinners Company, Clerk of the Skinners Company, Hon Col 57 Sqn, Hon Col 5 Sqn, Sec London TAVRA, Sec Eastern Wessex TAVRA** and **A/Sec EW TAVRA** also found time in their busy schedules to be there. All ranks appear to have thoroughly enjoyed this years Camp and benefited from some worthwhile training. Some only found out they had enjoyed it on completion of the survival exercise!

Brig Marchant-Smith (EW TAVRA) and Sgt Gordon Sheilds

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. P. Nash**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) J. G. Bloomer**

Yes folks, HQ Sqn has shown yet again, through outstanding performances in the Regimental Sporting Competition on Annual Camp at Thetford, that being the smallest element of the Regiment does not mean that we cannot compete with the big boys. The events in the competition were Hockey, Football, Rugby and Tug O Truck.

HOCKEY

'With the clash of sticks on shin bones and the glint of tears in the eyes, the OLD boys led by **WO2 (MTWO) Dennis** 'The Menace' **Griffiths** and supported by **Capt Rich** 'Basher' **Belbin**, **Capt Gus** 'Laddy' **Loveridge** and **SSgt (SQMS) Phil** 'Bully Off' **Smith**, plus a supporting cast with less silly nicknames, really pressed home the advantage of experience by beating the best of the Regiment, including the girls, at their own game. In a heated and tense game of nerves the competition was stiff and all the teams put up a good fight. HQ Sqn won all three games convincingly. However, the moment of the competition was **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Okey Dokey' **Oakley**'s unprovoked attack on **LCpl** 'Ruth' **Ellis** (47 Sqn). She later claimed that the elder statesman (**Oakley**) was only resting.

FOOTBALL

The Team **SSgt** (ART VEH) **Marco** 'Zola' **Bartolini**, **Cfn Andy** 'Knuckles' **Whitchurch**, **Sgt Phil** 'Nobby' **Clarke**, **Sgt Gary** 'Scotty' **Doyle**, **Maj Tony Shaw**, **SSgt (FofS) Andy Dawson**, **Capt Bill Ruthven**, **Cpl Paul** 'Racing Snake' **Phear** and **Cfn Darren** '30 Secs' **Skingsley.** HQ Sqns first game was against 47 Sqn. 47 Sqn took the lead from the penalty spot but HQ Sqn quickly equalised with a goal from **Sgt Clarke,** an ex-REME Corps player. HQ Sqn snatched victory with a goal from **SSgt Bartolini**. A tense game against 5 Sqn followed, and again HQ Sqn came from behind to make the final score 1-1 with a goal from **SSgt (FofS) Dawson**. The final game against 57 Sqn was a resounding 3-1 victory to HQ Sqn. Goals came from **SSgt Bartolini**, **Cfn Whitchurch** and another net-buster from **SSgt Dawson**. HQ Sqn came second to 5 Sqn in the overall competition due to only a one-goal difference.

RUGBY

The Team **SSgt** (ART VEH) **Marco** 'Zola' **Bartolini**, **Sgt Mick** 'Crusher' **Jervis**, **Cfn Andy** 'Knuckles' **Whitchurch**, **Cpl Paul** 'Racing Snake' **Phear**, **Capt John** 'Can't catch me, I'm the Adjt' **Norris**, **Sgt Paul** 'Throw away' **Hanley**, **Sig Matte** 'Have ago' **Bradford**, **LCpl Mark** 'Let me play' **Scaum**, **Sig James** 'I've played before' **Dawes**, **Sgt Gary** 'Scotty' **Doyle**, **LCpl Tony** 'KneeCap' **Cole**. Tensions were running high as we moved into the 7's. HQ was leading the field in overall first position in the competition but the other Squadron's were all still in the running for the Cup.

The first two teams to line up on the pitch for the 7's rugby were 47 Sqn (Dressed to Kill) against HQ Sqn (The Ankle Biters). 47 Sqn ventured onto the pitch in full combat kit (a natty team strip), gum shields, shin pads and topped off with the full monty rugby boots, ready

to demolish the Ankle Biters who dressed in the more demur T-shirts, trainers, designer shorts and of course a Christians to the lion smile fixed on their faces. 47's captain **Sgt Ian** 'Hopperty' **Wheeler** was reported to be winding up the team captain **Sgt Paul** 'Throw away' **Hanley**, by suggesting that 'All you will see of me is the bottom of my boots and my rear end as I pass you'. To which the innocent reply was made, 'More likely that you'll be sitting on it'.

As the game started refereed by **Capt Mick Campbell** it soon became obvious that it was a grudge match. As the tackles went in hard and fast it became apparent that HQ Sqn had teeth and were prepared to make a fight of it. The shirts and boots intimidation tactic backfired. A close offside decision given in favour of HQ saw the crowd jump to their feet as **Sgt Hanley** converted his first ever drop kick to give the underdogs the lead. HQ Sqn then raised their game and easily won through (thanks to the Adjt–Adjt's note). As the whistle went, the crowd showed its appreciation with thunderous applause to the two teams who had given their all.

The subsequent match against 5 Sqn turned into a try frenzy for HQ Sqn with some serious scoring from **Capt John Norris** (Probably player of the match–Adjt's note), and **Sgt Mick Jervis**. By the third and final match the battered and bruised team were in tatters, but went out with a convincing start putting two tries in over 57 Sqn. Some simple handling mistakes in the second half gave 57 Sqn the chance to get back into the game and in the closing minutes **Sgt Hanley** earned his name as a mistimed pass allowed 57 Sqn's 'Mr Swifty' to take up the ball and score to win the game.

TUG O TRUCK

Here HQ did not fare well, by being the first team out a lack of prior knowledge caused the rear party to fall, as the pace exceeded all expectations. In this endeavour we came last but you do have to give the others a chance to win something. The competition was fierce. There were no holds barred and no quarter given, but it was fair. I would like to thank all who were involved in setting up the competition, refereeing etc...and a special thanks to all the competitors. Well done to you all. Also thanks to **Maj Nash** for the Team Beers.

REGIMENTAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE–ANNUAL CAMP

The Regiments recent implementation of the RAO concept at Annual Camp proved to be a success. Part One Orders were regularly and professionally produced both in the field and at B Ech under the supervision of the newly appointed Chief Clerk TA, **Sgt Nick** 'I'll sign anything' **Marsh.** In addition a full Orderly Room function was carried out despite a severe lack of personnel. He was ably supported on the financial side by **Sgt Steve** 'I'm only here for a week' **Wilson** and with the help of **Cpl Bob Young** and **Pte Elizabeth Mathews**. The TA could not of course survive without the cooperation and assistance provided by the permanent staff–**Capt John Norris** (Adjt), **Capt Tom** 'I'm not in the AGC, but I am in charge' **Pengelley**, **WO2 (RAOWO) Alan** 'Wiggy' **Monk**, and **SSgt** 'Bald' **Rick Lock.** A good start to the AGC team on which to build.

5 (QOOH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj P. Wenlock**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Simpson**

OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

Congratulations to the following members of the Squadron:
Sgt Paul Johnson–First place on RSSC
Sgt Judith Phillips–Second place on RSSC
LCpl Paddy Ferguson–'A' grading on Map Reading Instructors Course.

ANNUAL CAMP

Annual camp this year was held over the period 30th August-13th September 1997 at Wretham 'A' Nr Thetford. The Squadron had the pleasure of hosting a Danish Officer, a German Officer, 2 German SNCOs and their conscript JNCO driver, with less than 3 months service remaining, who thought he would get two weeks off and ended up doing the survival training! To his credit his enthusiasm never wavered and neither did his grin.

Having all arrived safely at Wretham A Camp on the Saturday, the Sunday morning was taken up with Regt Orders before 5 Sqn deployed, with the rest of the Regiment, on Ex Gold Lynx. With a training scenario reflecting our increased awareness of the need for the Regiment to provide multifarious communications at short notice we set off into the Norfolk countryside. 5 Sqn providing the NMC, and in Control of the network, were out early and the masts up just as Echelon rolled up. We then had the challenge of getting 6 box bodies back to back as per SOPs! Comms were good despite an NBC attack with subsequent dehydration quickly remedied by the arrival of the PSAO, **Capt Bob** 'Agent Black' **Sheldon** with stacks of fizzy drinks! Our move came as planned just after the NBC attack, **SSgt (YofS) Debbie Frankham** was of course on her recce for the next site–how convenient. Our Danish officer was 'found' as we knocked down the bivvies. Without further ado he was promptly awarded the Golden Blanket Award with Bar, following our initial discovery of him napping on shift! With the usual combination of efficiency, team work and plenty of humour 5 Sqn moved the NMC in good time and successfully re-established comms before nightfall. As usual much was learnt by all. A great deal of credit for 5 Sqns success goes to the hard work of our junior NCO 'dream team' under the careful guidance of **SSgt (YofS) Debbie Frankham**, **LCpls Kevin Durno, Tina Strachan, Sam Morgan, Paul Docherty** and last but by no means least **LCpl Steven** 'Voice Over' **Oliver.**

RECRUIT TRAINING

The RRTT ran a successful recruiting training course during the first week and the following successfully completed the course and are now full members of the Squadron. We congratulate and welcome them: **Sigs** 'Ski' **Ceilesski,** 'Sharpe' **Barnes, Rashid,** 'Rebecca' **Drennan, Andrews** and 'Lord Jeremy' **Fordham**.

COMBAT SWIMMING

Very early on a damp Saturday morning the whole Regiment took part in a combat swim over a distance of 75m and 10m deep. After a short instruction on how to make up a floatation bundle with a poncho by **Capt (PSAO) David** 'Lord Lucan' **Gibson**, the swim started with the CO closely followed by the Trg Maj, Adjt and his Field Officers. The wettest standard set, the troops followed on.

Capt Alan O'Coy thinks swimming is great.
Sgt Don Boscoe (looking on) thinks watching is better

VISITORS DAY

The Squadron had the pleasure of hosting our Hon Col, **John Bridgeman, Brig Bob Long** Secretary TAVRA and **Col Rob Lucas,** Assistant Secretary TAVRA.

EXERCISE COMBAT LYNX–SURVIVAL PHASE

If ever the lack of information and the spreading of rumour could be classed as a success then the results achieved on Ex Combat Lynx organised by the Trg Maj, **Maj Tony Shaw** and Adjt, **Capt John Norris** has got to come top in everybody's estimation. 'Just parade at 0700hrs in full kit, with rifle and a survival pack no larger than a cigarette packet' was the order of the day. Everyone was issued with a standard black plastic bag and a label and told to put their kit into it, seal, label the bag and leave it on the square in the sun for all the chocolate bars to melt and congeal.

After a full day of training in survival techniques which included cooking chickens & fish (but not getting to eat them), night navigation, fungi, making shelters and a night under the stars the groups were woken early. As confusion reigned and the grumbles crept in the groups were taken in blacked out minibuses to the start of the survival phase. After a river crossing, by boat this time, a number of checkpoints were located, some with useful information, some with food, if you can call dry bread, cheese and corned beef food. Throughout the next 48 hours the groups moved via these RVs including having to advance through enemy lines avoiding capture by the TA Infantry to the final destination at a disused airfield. Here they were detained, given less information and generally messed about and treated to their first meal under prisoner of war conditions. A number of further training sessions brought the exercise to conclusion. However, strangely a great feeling of achievement was felt by all those who took part. Our thanks go to the organisers for the extremely hard and detailed planning that must have been put in to achieve the aim.

SOCIAL EVENTS–LINE DANCING

The Squadron Social Committee organised a Line Dancing Night and Hog Roast on Saturday 16th August 1997. A successful night for all.

SSM Simpson shows that he can really move! (Centre Stage)

47 (MX YEO) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj P. N. Willmott TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S. Prance**

The 200th Anniversary celebrations culminated in July with a splendidly organised all ranks dinner and dance organised by **SSgt Brent Copsey** and his committee. Held in the TA Centre, it was attended by nearly 200 members and former members of the Squadron. Guest of Honour was the **Hon Col, Corps Commander A. Whitehead.**

Sgts Dave Lambert and **Andy Hutchins** returned from their exchange visit with the United States National Guard in America. They spent an excellent 2 weeks in Nebraska on exercise with the USNG and were extremely well looked after by their American hosts. Both enjoyed this rare opportunity to train with another Army but were heard to report that beating the Americans at all the individual field skills competitions did become rather boring after a while. 60 Plus members of the Squadron attended Annual Camp at the beginning of September. This year it was held at Thetford in Norfolk which, by comparison with Otterburn last year, is at least populated by humans rather than sheep. Training Wing at last got something right! The weather throughout was excellent. This aroused everyone's suspicions. It is meant to pour with rain during Annual Camp, everyone knows that!

Once the well orchestrated plethora of mandatory briefings, consisting of lots of don'ts and not many do's, were dispensed with, life quickly returned to normal with a Regt Comms Ex that saw most of the Squadron's dets spread far and wide throughout East Anglia. Despite the seemingly endless stream of visitors, most det commanders found the time to organise det routine and drills. This was particularly important for the newly traded Squadron members, for whom this was the first real opportunity to put into practice their new found skills. The stars of the field-firing package were undoubtedly the 'Foreign Legion'. These were TA soldiers from other NATO countries on attachment to the Regiment for the duration of camp, and included two USNG SNCO's, a Danish Officer and a German Officer and 2 SNCO's. Having watched the Squadron live firing Fire Team attack, they became convinced that the British were mad. Worse was to follow. They were then told that they were to do the same. Once they had been convinced by **Sgt Ian** 'I Did Not Expect That' **Wheeler** and Trg SSgt, **SSgt Richie Arundel** that they were indeed going to use live ammunition, life took on a whole new meaning for them. They apparently do nothing comparable in their respective Armies and found it difficult to understand why the British carry out, what they see as, very dangerous exercises.

The middle Saturday of Camp saw the Regiment up at the crack of dawn to carry out the Battle Swim at the River Crossing site. Under the expert guidance of **Capt (PSAO) John Cullen,** 57 Sqn every member of the Squadron did their 'John the Baptist thing'. **LCpl** (now Cpl) 'Baldrick' **Geoff Howe** was reputedly mortified, when told later that the purpose behind the exercise was really to ensure that he had his once a year bath! The Combat Survival phase was much enjoyed by the Squadron and although it was mentally and physically demanding, was very rewarding particularly for those who completed the exercise.

Our Foreign visitors were escorted around the sights of London by **Sgts Dave Lambert** and **Andy Hutchins** culminating in them watching the 'Changing of the Guard' from within the grounds of Buckingham Palace. The Squadron congratulates the following on their well deserved promotions whilst at camp: **Cpls Jo Francis, Geoff Howe, Dave Strevens** and **Richard Sharpe, LCpls Tina Gross, Craig** 'Scrote' **Langley, Chris Nicholls** and **Yvonne Vallence.** Preparations are now under way for LaFone Day in October and for the Festival of Remembrance in November at which the Squadron has been asked to provide a small marching contingent for the muster.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj H. Aston**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Packer**

Since our last contribution the Squadron's efforts have been directed towards Annual Camp, held at STANTA, Norfolk. While most of the Squadron spent week one on the Regtl comms exercise, Ex Gold Lynx and field firing, Ex Fighting Lynx, there was also a recruit training week being held. For those new recruits who were able to take a week away from work/home the usual 3 weekends plus numerous drill nights were amalgamated into a single week. The week culminated in a pass off parade. A good deal of hard work was put in by both the students and instructors, four of whom were provided by the Squadron. The CO took the pass off parade and presented Best Recruit to **Sig Sterling**–57 Sqn! During the second week, while the remainder of the Regiment took part in Ex Combat Lynx, a combat survival ex, a composite Troop from the Squadron took part in Ex Wyvern Claw. Ex Wyvern Claw was the 43 (Wx) Bde concentration involving the staff and infantry battalions. The Troop, led by **Capt Mark Carter**, was providing comms for the Bde staff at Main HQ and Support HQ. In addition Mould Insertion Vehicles (MIVs) were manned to extend the net as were several forward detachments during the exercise.

EXERCISE WYVERN CLAW

After his promotion on camp **Capt Mark Carter** donned his respirator and moved his underpants to his head. He then disappeared in order to provide comms support for HQ 43 (Wx) Bde on their Bde concentration. The composite Troop formed from 57 Sqn was assisted by **Sgt Graham Richards** and **Cpl** 'V-E' **Vincent-Edwards** from 47 Sqn. The Troop's task was to provide a tactical Bde HQ and Bde Spt HQ for the duration of the 6-day Ex. **Cpl Cath Addison-Scott** was given the unenviable task of being the only Radio Op at BSG. **Cpl Sean Betteridge** arrived on exercise with a hand like an egyptian mummy, apparently new Leathermans and alcohol do not mix. **Cpl Dave Gresswel** was fooled into spending the whole of his reduced camp on exercise! Ex Wyvern Claw kicked off with a deployment to Sheringham on the Northeast Suffolk coast where 6Ll, 4 D and D and the Wx Yeo made a beach landing and assaulted enemy outposts. Our powermen breathed a collective sigh of relief when it was decided that it was not a good idea to take the 16/24s and 4 tonnes to sea and back. **Sig** 'Davey' **Jones** was tasked with being the COs driver/operator. He returned later in the ex with tales of hot showers (not with the CO) and meals in the Offrs Mess back in camp. He will have to wait several years for that to happen again!

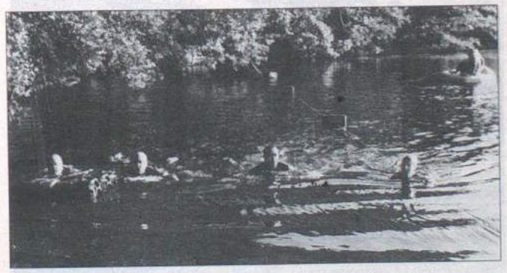
The Bde then advanced through Swanton Morley before moving into enemy territory on STANTA. The first field location was a tight squeeze amongst the trees and **Sig Roger Theyer** wore away a years supply of clutch plates getting in. After an excellent team effort the HQ was set up quicker than expected. Later that evening we were visited by **Padre David Sutch**, bearing doughnuts, which worked wonders for Troop morale. The final stage of the Ex a move to a dismounted location deeper into enemy territory. The night move was going well until we ran into a 4D and D OP who challenged us. When we said we were from 39 Sig Regt he became very agitated. We later discovered that they were deployed to capture the remainder of the Regiment who were escaping and evading through their patch that night. No wonder the OP was puzzled–where would we have acquired so many vehicles without outside help!

Ex Wyvern Claw

Rct Saunders tends to Cpl Sue Palfry (57 Sqn) and inflicts real injury!

2Lt Rupert Cranston and 2Lt Sarah Hunter
Post survival exercise–'Gosh, that was fun!'

First Lieutenant Anders Galsgaard, Danish Army says 'Thank you for your British hospitality!!' post the survival ex

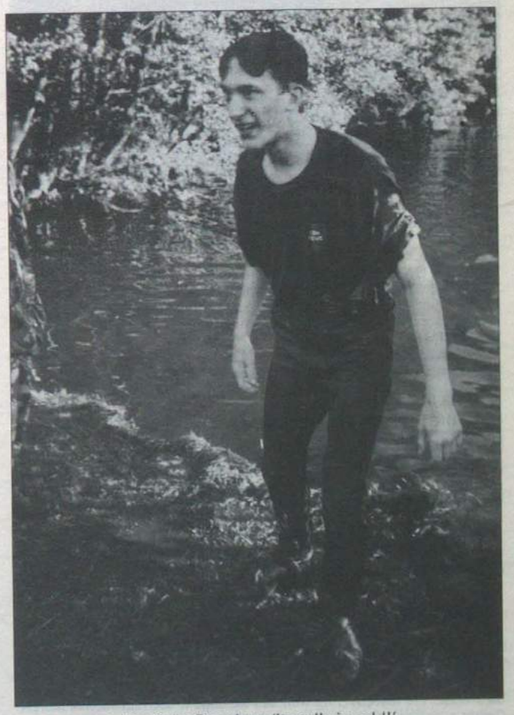


The four Sqn Comds on their swim
(*L-R*): Maj Paul Willmott (47 Sqn Comd), Maj Paul Wenlock (5 Sqn Comd), Maj Glyn Nash (HQ Sqn Comd) and Maj Heather Aston (57 Sqn Comd)

2Lt Sarah Hunter presents First Lieutenant Michael Conze (German Army Signal Corps) with some 5 Sqn memorabilia

The recruits that made it with Maj Steve Potter OC RRTT (Back Left) and WO2 (SSM) Martin (Front Right)

Sgt Ian Agg says 'This Is Your Life' to one of the mesmerized throng, (For those in black and white the book under his arm is red!)



Sig Colin Bowdery–'It really is cold!'

71 Sig Regt (V)
Bexleyheath

CO — **Lt Col R.K. Wilkinson TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) A. S. Dos Martyres**

The Regiment has just returned from Belgium where this years Annual Camp took place. It was a busy and extremely well organised camp that all the soldiers much enjoyed. The excellent weather over the two-week period while patrolling, OBUA, Ranges and Helicopter Training took place probably helped.

Annual Camp 1997 The CO, Lt Col Ray Wilkinson, briefs the Belgian Minister of Defence on the Regiment's training during Ex Orient Express

Annual Camp 1997 FIBUA Training
The Molotov Cocktail Range, or what happens if you park illegally on Belgian Army Training Areas

70 (EY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Maj Simon Palmer**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

WELCOME

The Squadron welcomes the following on transfer from 31 Sig Regt **Sgts Diana** and **Stephen Bland**, **Sig Charlotte Foakes.** We hope that they will enjoy their service with the Essex Yeomanry Sig Sqn.

SQUADRON MILITARY TRAINING
PIRBRIGHT RANGES

The Squadron held a very successful Military Training Weekend based at the Regt Bisley Hut using the Pirbright Ranges and Training Area. The training included firing the APWT for Bounty Qualifications plus further training to prepare the Squadron for Annual Camp 1997.

ANNUAL CAMP 1997–EXERCISE ORIENT EXPRESS

The Annual Camp (Ex Orient Express) was based in Arlon, in Belgium. This was the first time in the history of the Essex Yeomanry Signal Squadron that it had deployed outside the UK on duty. The deployment to Arlon will become Squadron TA 'Folklore'. All thanks to **WO1 (MTWO) Terry Curtis** it was well planned and provided a worry free journey. The first week of camp was the Military Training Phase that included helicopters, ranges, OBUA and patrolling. The OBUA phase was really popular with the Squadron, apart from **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys** who, unfortunately, broke his ankle and had to be flown back home. He is recovering well and we hope to see him soon at the TA Centre.

Patrolling, Sgt Jim Swain and Cpl Nick Farn

The second week's training was an NCRS/HF Radio Comms Ex with sites dotted about Belgium. It was a very successful exercise and proved the value of the NCRS outside its traditional UK environment. A piece of history was made by the establishment of the first international NCRS network (we don't count Scotland as a foreign country yet) with a link between Corsham and the rest of the network deployed in Belgium. It was agreed by all ranks of the Squadron that this was a splendid camp. The weather was brilliant throughout the two weeks and the training was first class. The R & R day in Arlon and Luxembourg provided pleasant memories for many of the Squadron.

Are they really going to shorten Sig Steve Cross?

OFFICER RECRUITMENT

The Regiment has the unusual and noteworthy achievement of having a former member in each term at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. A pen picture of their careers to date is shown below by the three OCdts:

OCdt Jeremy Toze: (Senior Term Mons Coy)–formerly Cpl of 70 (EY) Sig Sqn and commissioned into R Signals 8th August 1997. In October 1992 I was attested and joined 882 Tp, 70 (EY) Sig Sqn, as a recruit of eighteen. In my first year I completed basic training at Helles Barracks, Catterick with 11 Sig Regt. This was a time of bulling, ironing and cleaning, learning to both act and look like a soldier. As a recruit of Helles Barracks, I had barely begun to learn the intricacies of the PRC 320 radio before I was off to University and a new unit. Whilst at Birmingham University I combined my studies with the TA. I served with A Coy, 5th Bn The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, first in the mortar platoon and then in the rifle platoons. Whilst here I sharpened up my infantry skills, competing in the Cambrian Patrol and earning a bronze medal, and I completed the Section Commanders Battle Course at ITC Wales. Three years on and with a degree in sports studies and a set of Cpls tapes to my credit I moved back to Essex and rejoined my old unit. Back in 882 Tp I quickly became the unofficial tactics instructor helping the Troop to improve its skills and drills and ensuring people were up to date. By now I had decided to join the regular army, having been firmly bitten by the soldiering bug whilst serving in the TA. In September 1996 Commissioning Course 963 assembled at RMA Sandhurst and I with it. One year on and a whole mountain of ironing and bulling later I have just received my commission. Whilst at RMAS I have represented the Academy at Tug-of-War and gained my UEL qualification. As to my future I have an attachment with 21 (AS) Sig Regt at Colerne before I attend the Tp Comd Course. Looking even further ahead I am keen to serve with 24 Airmob Bde, a spearhead unit where the tempo of life should suit me. Add also if possible to train in the jungles of Brunei or Belize, an environment which fascinates me (although one which I grant I am unlikely to train in). This then is me, **2Lt Toze**, and hopefully a little bit wiser I look forward to the challenges of commanding a Troop in the Royal Signals. From recruit, to signaller, to mortarman, to section commander and now to Tp Comd, whatever next!

OCdt Michele Hanlon: Intermediate Term Alamein Coy formerly LCpl of 68 (IC&CY) Sig Sqn expected to be commissioned into RLC 13th December 1997. Up to the age of eighteen I lived in Redcar, in the North-East where I was a member of Cleveland Army Cadet Force. Having gained three 'A' Levels, I moved south to London and began reading for a degree in Geography at Greenwich University. By this time I was already sure that I wanted to be an Army Officer and had attended many familiarisation visits. After London UOTC failed to offer me a place I heard about The Devils Own and decided to go along and visit them. I soon became a member of 68 Sqn Inns of Court and City Yeomanry and spent my time whilst at University away on many weekends. Many of which were held at Longmoor Camp in Surrey that I have subsequently revisited during my time on the commissioning course. I attended annual camps at Fremington, Devon and Proteus camp in Nottinghamshire and also competitions and adventure weekends. I became both data and radio trained during my time and was promoted to LCpl. After leaving university and consequently the TA, I attended the Regular Commissions Board at Westbury and passed in June 1995. I began the commissioning course in January 1996 and am due to pass out on December 12, when I will join Royal Signals, and I am sure my time in the TA will stand me in good stead.

OCdt Jill Hamlin: Junior Term Blenheim or Waterloo Coy TBC formerly 2Lt from 57 Sig Sqn (whilst with Regt) expected to be commissioned into AGC (ETS) 10th April 1998. Having attended school and the sixth form college in Colchester, I studied for a music degree at the University of Birmingham from 1990-1993. During this time, I was an active member of the Birmingham UOTC–a solely infantry unit, and took part in many adventurous training courses. I was commissioned into the TA in August 1992 and held the position of Platoon Commander throughout my final year. My service with the OTC and the experience I gained from visiting various units for weekends or on attachment had served to strengthen my desire to join the Regular Army, however, on graduation I took a year out to travel around the world for eight months visiting 12 different countries.

On return, I moved to Cheltenham for a 1 year Post Graduate Certificate of Education and transferred to 57 Sig Sqn, part of 71 (Y) Sig Regt at the time. As 2IC of a Troop in Cheltenham, I took part in various exercises, organised a Troop weekend and attended the NCRS trials which gave me an excellent preview of the equipment prior to its official introduction. During my time with 57 Sig Sqn, it became part of 39 Sig Regt but shortly afterwards, the offer of a peripatetic teaching job in Leicester took me to that part of the country. 38 Sig Regt based in Sheffield became my next unit during which time I was 2IC of the Leicester Tp before moving to Derby (46 Sqn) to take on the role of Tp Comd. By this time however, my application for the regular army had been sent and I attended the RCB in November 1996 by which time I had left my job in Leicester to return to my home town of Colchester. I taught in a primary school for a term, had four months to prepare myself for Sandhurst and entered the military academy in May 1997, sponsored by AGC (ETS) (At 24, I was told that I was too old for the Royal Signals!) I am currently in my first term and looking forward to what I hope will be a long and successful career in the army.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200)
BFPO 16

Sqn Comd — **Maj J. E. Richardson**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) K. Jones**

SHQ

SHQ only has one departure this quarter and that is our ever reliable Pay Sgt. **Sgt Mark Davidson** who leaves us on promotion and is heading towards the Rock. Fortunately for him it is not Alcatraz as he has provided a sterling service throughout his time in the unit. We wish him all the very best for the future.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Capt D. R. Seymour**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Ware**

The exercise season is upon us (did it ever go away), Poland looms large and the Division continues to steal our weekends. In addition, the Troop continues to shrink and this shows no sign of abating, with at least three people looking likely to join 1RTR on operations in Cyprus over the New Year. We can, however, welcome **Cpl Jim Pearsall** and wife **Christiane** who have made the short journey down from Herford. Not only has **Cpl Pearsall** been dropped in at the deep end as Complex Corporal, he has also been called upon to pen a section of these *Wire* Notes. In addition, he has been required to price up the cost of cork for the map boards so that the Staff do not hurt themselves pushing pins into hard wood.

EXERCISE THIRD LINK 27 AUGUST-5 SEPTEMBER 1997
by Cpl Jim Pearsall

It was exactly midday when we rolled out of Barker Barracks, towards our first exercise location. This was to be my first exercise with an Armd Bde and, although I had taken part in many divisional exercises, I was aware that this was to be an entirely new experience. The OC had told me I had a lot to learn.....he wasn't joking.

The first set-up was in the sweltering heat, typical of a late August afternoon. Everyone worked frantically, not only to establish the HQ, but also to fight off the post-leave blues and lethargy. I had been in the unit for exactly 3 days and I was already out on exercise, walking directly into the job of Complex Corporal. Under the expert and watchful eyes of **SSgt Rick Ware, Sgt Steve Mayell** and **LCpl Don** "I'm off to Blandford" **Garner**, I managed to get to grips with the set up of the HQ, including that rather large tent. As the Exercise progressed, the set up drills became slicker and the tear down times became less and less. This was due in no small part to the pure blood, sweat and tears that was put in by the members of Alpha Tp.

After the first few moves, we all managed to settle into a kind of routine, everybody went about their business as normal on exercise; the operators operated. The RSM caught people without helmets.....or webbing, which helped the guard situation no end. The HQ remained static over the weekend. This gave the operators a much needed opportunity to sort out the numerous technical and mechanical faults on the vehicles, as well as fit in any essential personal admin, like sleep. **LCpl McMullan** and **Sig Matt Coverley** laboured tirelessly to change all their track pads and **Sig Kelly MacGregor** did just about every piece of work she could find. Meanwhile **Sig Oz Osmond** did lots of pan bash and **Sig Sarah Booker** toiled hard to develop her reputed collection of bedsores.

When the Staff arrived, we had been in the field for six days and had reached the standard required to work alongside the Staff with minimum hiccups. This is not to say that Murphy's Law did not strike, or that mistakes, both large and small, did not occur. They did, and normally on change of control. However, as the Sqn Comd pointed out, the time and place to make these mistakes was now, on a training exercise. Upon return to camp, everybody felt that they had, at least, learnt something and could look forward to two weeks in barracks to prepare for our forthcoming deployment to Poland on Ex Ulan Eagle.

Finally, congratulations are in order for **Chris Rowland** who was promoted to Lance Corporal during the exercise and to **Sig Bruce Morrison** who celebrated his 21st birthday in the field. Last, but by no means least, congratulations are due to **Lt** (now Capt) **Seymour** on finally tying the knot on summer leave. We wish him and his wife, **Ely**, all the very best for the future.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Bill Holbrook**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Jim Crabb**

Notes written by Sig Andy Moss with a little help from Sig Phil Gray.

Since our return from Bosnia, life within the Troop has been hectic to say the least, so what a culture shock for new arrivals. Welcome to the

troop **LCpl** 'Mo' **Morrison, Sigs Stevie Bowring**, Smudge **Smith**, and **Phil** 'I'm not interested' **Stillie**. Our farewells go to **LCpl McGlinchey**, off to 280 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Stu** 'Gold Dust' **Farmer** who attends his class one upgrading in Blandford. The Bde's training year, a seemingly never ending string of exercises, has been carried out since our return from Bosnia, all in preparation for our deployment to Poland. Ex Ulan Eagle will be the Squadron's crescendo to an extremely hard year. Brilliant Bravo Tp are looking forward to deploying and spending another three weeks out of barracks–NOT!, but are quietly confident that we will meet the challenge, excel ourselves and show the Division what a punch the Mailed fist can pack.

It's not all work and no play. During the Divisional Exercise 'Rhino Spear' a 24hr morale period was called, giving us the chance to attend the Squadron's Families Day, at the Mohnesee sailing club. Events such as bouncy castles, teddy bears picnic and a coconut shy (which **Sig Phil** 'OC's favourite' **Gray** and **Sig Richie** 'MFI' **Murtough** kindly volunteered to organise) were run to keep the kids happy, whilst the so called adults could play in the water. The funniest moments were when **LCpl Dave** 'Tommo' **Thompson** attempted to show off and got stranded on the far bank in a topper because the wind was blowing the wrong way! When **Cpl Jay** 'What you doing now' **Shuttleworth** displayed 'actions on getting stuck' and ended up getting himself incapacitated–again on the far bank. Thanks goes to **SSgt Steve** 'Stallone' **Bovan** and his team for organising a very enjoyable and successful day.

With only a few days to go until deployment, last minute preparations are being carried out and as much socialising and morale building is being fitted in. Hopefully the rail move to Poland will be less eventful than the one from Bosnia/Croatia/Slovenia/Croatia/Slovenia/Austria/Germany–so **Lt Bill Holbrook** and **SSgt** 'Mad jock' **Crabb** hope, come on lads this is the British Army !

QM'S DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt P. Whitehouse**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Drew**

As with the rest of the Squadron, we've been very busy in the stores department since our return from Bosnia. The post tour leave was enjoyed and needed by us all, however, we've now moved into the exercise phase of the year and I'm told we've been busier as a unit, but no-one seems to be able to remember when. With all the exercises ahead, including Poland and Rhino this and Rhino that, it seems we'll be able to slow down about Christmas (we hope). With all that has been going on in the department, it would seem to be an ideal time to get posted, which is exactly what **RQMS Schofield** has done. Having seen the bright lights of the Division, he went and got himself promoted and posted. All our best wishes to him, **Sally** and the kids. It would appear that **Sig Thorpe** has a Guardian Angel up there as well, not everyone gets a posting to Cyprus.

We hope he enjoys the sun and sand and wish him luck. Now we've said our goodbyes, it is time to say our helloes and extend a warm welcome to the new **RQMS Chris Drew**, his wife **Corrinne** and kids. Also, a hello to **Sig Mooney** who will be joining us from sunny Cyprus.

20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn Morrison Cup team celebrating 2nd Place, in the rain.

20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn Morrison Cup Tug-o-War team celebrating 2nd Place

4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204)
BFPO 538

SHQ TROOP

Tp Comd	**Maj E. A. Davis**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Waters**

Once again the past few months have been a hectic time for the Squadron. Not only has the Squadron deployed once again in support of 1ADSR, this time as Div Main itself (Not a problem!), but it has also managed to get away for a well-deserved summer camp in Bavaria and still participate in the Freedom of Osnabruck Parade. As usual each task was successfully accomplished, with different lessons learnt from each tasking. Not least to make sure the No 2's are in the tailors next year. In addition the Squadron welcomes the new YofS, **WO2 (YofS) Ferris** and prepares to bid farewell to the Chief Clerk **SSgt** 'When I was in the Cheshires' **Smith** and the FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Guy Lewendon**. Thank you for all your hard work and goodluck in your new posting, (Where is it again chief?).

Spot the odd one out

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Andy Hopcraft**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Mr Dead' **Finnigan**

ARRIVALS/FAREWELLS

The Troop would like to welcome the following posted into Papa Tp **Sig Mark Lowes** and **Sig Tim Stanton**. In addition the Troop would like to say Cheerio to **LCpl** 'Taff' 'Morocco Mole' **Evans** posted to 3 ADSR and **Sig Carl** 'Son of Douglas' **Turner** posted to JCUNI. Good luck lads.

PROMOTIONS

All members of the Troop would like to congratulate the following on promotion from Signaller to LCpl. **LCpl** 'Vinny' **Walsh, LCpl Kev** 'Geordie Maggot' **Liddle** and **LCpl Dawn** 'Double D' **Dernie.**

EXERCISE RHINO REPLEN

This was a 4 day exercise in the picturesque countryside of Hohne training area with a scaled down Armoured HQ. A relatively uneventful exercise with Papa Tp proving again that even with half the man-power required we can still erect the HQ and break it! **Cpl** 'Dinger' **Bell** finding out that trying to lift the FBT with only himself and the wildlife can cause a few problems.

However, before you set up the FBT you have to get there. **Lt Hopcraft** found that trying to find the rolling replen before the location is not that simple. Armed with map, compass and star chart, it still took a little help from the recce officer to point him in the right direction.

BBGT

What can be said that hasn't already been said about this fun packed week in Sennelager. See you next year!

THE FUTURE

Now that Rhino Charge has been cancelled the Troop is looking forward to an outing to the Dummersee with sailing, windsurfing and lager-lager in large amounts. We can also look forward to some fun shoots at the range, some excellent night navigation rambles and a fabulous Inter-Troop sports competition! Can't wait.

After the Troop returned from Summer Camp in Bavaria, most of us had gained an extra few pounds. It is still obvious however, that **Cpl** 'Dinger' **Bell** is having trouble losing his. It was an excellent time away from the garages providing plenty of stories and images. One in particular that is worthy of note is that of **2Lt** 'I did rock climbing for one day and thought I was Sylvester Stallone' **Hopcraft,** who was declared the undisputed king of the three man lift! The following few weeks have been taken up with courses and normal work routine. The Troop would like to congratulate **Cpl** 'Dinger' **Bell** and **Cpl** 'Mino' **Minorczyk** on passing their EFP. **Cpl Mino** also ran a 432 driving course and suffered his first two failures, **Sigs Paul Henderson** and **Vinny** (now LCpl) **Walsh**.

Best wishes for the future go **to LCpl** 'Woz' **Wright** and **Denise** and also **Sig Andy Parkinson** and **Marie** on their recent marriages. Congratulations also go to **LCpl's Cowie** and **Walsh** on their recent promotions. On a sad note, farewells go out to **Cpl Craig Elsdon** and **LCpl** 'Si' **Launder.** Best of luck in your new postings. On a final note, it is worth mentioning **Sig** 'GWA' **Chapman**, because he has never been mentioned in *The Wire* before and he's posted soon.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Capt G. Douglas**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) McNaught**

The last month has been yet another busy one for Support Tp, including as it did Ex Rhino Replen. It was a demanding exercise that stretched everyone to the limits. Once **WO2 RQMS Vince McNaught** had been killed off by the **QM Capt Douglas** it was up to **Sgt Tony King** (RLC) to take over. Don't panic but the RLC in charge! Much of the exercise went without sleep except for **Sgt Taff** 'I never feel that I have a lot of work to do' **Doughty**. Other elements of the Troop exercised with the rest of the Squadron and special awards have to go to **WO2 (FofS) Guy Lewendon** (Sp Tp) for the silver blanket cos the Ops Officer gets his usual golden blanket. Others include **Cpl Sean** 'Barry the Jock' **Middleton** for his eternal wit, even after having completed the worlds longest guard shift. Lastly the Ginger Award for the most orange hair whilst on exercise goes to **Cpl Paul** 'GWA' **Bapty**.

There have also been plenty of comings and goings, and we say goodbye to **Sgt Mark Newns** and wife **Alison, Cpl Stu McDonald** and **Cpl Taff Phillips.** We say hello, good evening and welcome to **Sgt Hughes, Sigs Keepin, Bryden, Morgan** and **Francis**. Also to 'Jabba the Lineman' **Sig Jocky Thornton**, who amply takes over from **Sig Andy Carvin** who although isn't posted, does feel somewhat thinner. As a footnote we have to say a special goodbye to our Foreman, **WO2 (FofS) Lewendon** and his wife **Jo** on their departure to 220 Sig Sqn. And of course hello to **SSgt (FofS) Phil Johnson** who is going to provide a lot of competition for the most ginger hair on exercise award. Watch out 'GWA Bap Mong'. Thanks also have to go to **Sgt Jules Thorne, Sgt Dave Covey** and **Cpl Sean** 'Barry the Jock' **Middleton** for them putting pen to paper and Barry for constantly butting in all the time . . .

ADVENTURE TRAINING

Whilst the Comms Tps enjoyed the delights of the Englehoff Lodge for their adventure training down in sunny Bavaria; Support Tp opted for somewhere closer to home, the Mohnesee Sailing Club near Soest. The former home of 3 Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt. Eight days of watersport, including wind surfing, canoeing and sailing were enjoyed by most of the Troop, with the rest concentrating their strengths on mountain biking, walking and crazy-golf!!!!!

With the weather being a bit of a mixture, suntans of the week go to **Cpl Andy McMullan**, who gave a good impression of two faces from the Batman movie and **LCpl Creeley** who, god knows how, managed to get just his knees sunburnt. Although the days were long, entertainment at night was very much self-help and with the arrival of the karaoke machine things started to go down hill fast. A heated singing competition soon followed, with **Cpl Andy McMullan** just beating **Sgt Tony King** of the RLC, to the post. The QM, **Capt Douglas**, was left to find solitude in a bottle of wine and a book on WW1 Battlefield's whilst sporadic renditions of, "Are you affiliated," were boomed around the bar? A brewery trip was to follow later in the week to the Hoenfelder brewery, near Lipstatte. Much to the displeasure of **Cpl** "Quark" **Phillips** who opted for a snooze in the car rather than face the music again. Once more we were hosted well by the brewery and the aim was achieved.

New members to the Troop are **LCpl Paul Creeley, LCpl Forster** REME, **Cpl Graham** REME , **LCpl Dugmore** REME and **Sig Steptoe** who has adopted the unfortunate name of Harold, I wonder why!! Our goodbyes go to **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Duncan, Sig** 'Olly' **Alcock, Sig Damion Parrish** and **Sig** 'Brads' **Bradbury**. We wish you all well in the future. Our thanks must go to **SSgt Dave Hizzet** for doing most of the ground work in organising the trip, and the staff at the Mohnesee Sailing Club for making our stay a success see you next year!!!

EXERCISE RHINO SPEAR
OSCAR TROOP

Ex Rhino Spear was a Divisional Headquarters CPX conducted by the Squadron during the month of July, prior to the block leave period. The Squadron provided Div Main HQ for the duration of the exercise, with Papa Tp providing the Diamond One complex under **Cpl** 'I wish those two queens would stop arguing over the Ptarmigan directory' **Bell** and Oscar Tp under **Cpl** 'Its great here, I'm glad I'm not still in 5 Bde anymore' **Christie** providing the Diamond Two Complex. This all came under the charge of **Lt** 'If you think I'm micro managing too much just tell me to wind my neck in' **Hopcraft,** who was later presented with a golden corn beef tin key!

With bayonets fixed, flags flying and swords drawn, (have you seen that somewhere before YoS)? The two hundred and fourth Sig Sqn stormed onto its first location on Guttersloh Camp, and proceeded to erect more tentage than Billy Smarts Circus and the Oktober Fest in Munich combined. This set the tone for the rest of the exercise that also saw us set up in Augsdorf and the chicken factory. Although this was not our normal role in life the Squadron applied its unique brand of zest and exuberance that it applies to everything that it does and did a more than satisfactory job and received commendation from all around. This despite the rumour going around about the reason Ex Rhino Charge has been cancelled and the fact that the Squadron has been relegated to the role of Div Support Group (DSG) for Ex Arcade Fusion. This exercise also marked the end of **Cpl** now **Sgt Dave Thomas** time in the Squadron and welcomed **2Lt** 'Odthing' **Odling** to the Troop. True to form he carried out the Troops tradition of head butting the back door of an AFV436, but fortunately he came away with only 6 stitches to the cranium (lightweight). Also of note was the presence of **Sgt Stu Leadbeater** who was seen in combats for the first time since his tour in Bosnia 18 months ago. That Post Traumatic Stress is a terrible thing eh! His job, along with **Sgt Steve Gallagher** and **SSgt Norm Finnegan** was to control the entrance to the complex. The combined age of these three old timers was reckoned to total up higher than the number of men deployed on the exercise.

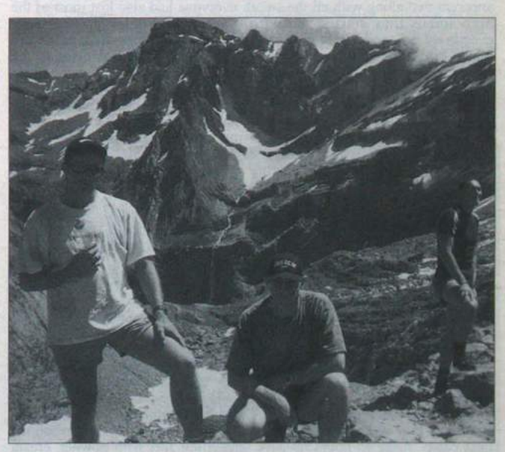
New arrivals to the Troop include **Sig** 'Ben' **Battey, LCpl Nath Slater** and **Sig Moxon**. Recent departures include **Capt** 'P1954 to follow' **McCole** and **LCpl Akkalugadu** whose replacement–**Sig Bahadar Gurung** from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn is not due to arrive until December and will be sorely missed.

EXERCISE CITRUS DIAMOND

Over the summer block leave period 10 members of 204 Sig Sqn spent two weeks adventure training in Northern Spain. The aim of the expedition, led by **2Lt Kate Leamon** was to trek through the Araganese Pyrenees following the high level GR11. After an eventful start to the expedition with a roll mat deciding to fly off the roof rack, causing **LCpl Bob** 'Forest Gump' **Strachan** to sprint back down the autobahn to fetch it; two separate punctures and an unscheduled night spent in a French garage; the expedition ran more smoothly.

The first three days of the trek saw some 'Bravo Two Zero' heroism from **SSgt Norm Finnegan** in an attempt to find water and resulted in three members of the expedition being accused of acting like tramps whilst waiting for the minibus. After a well earned rest day, the group went on to complete a series of one day walks, covering the National Park of Ordesa. Although exhausting, everybody enjoyed the trekking phase of the expedition with three members now being recommended for UEL Training–**LCpl Jase** 'I can run down a mountain' **Hawksworth, LCpl Bob** 'Forest Gump' **Strachen** and **LCpl Woz** 'I can tab up a mountain' **Wright**. The entire group improved their navigational abilities and **Sig Paddy** 'chocolate gives me spots' **Grills** dramatically improved his confidence in covering rough terrain.

Two days R & R were spent in Biarritz. A five hour thunderstorm interrupted our training programme rather drastically, but all was forgiven when the local village threw a huge street party two nights in a row. It provided **Sig Paul** 'Chappy' **Chapman** with the ideal opportunity to 'socialise' with the locals, even if the one in question did turn out to be English. Bar a slight misunderstanding in Lourdes over the meeting place, there were no mishaps on the way back and everybody had a chance to use that unspent currency in the PX before returning to Osnabruck for block leave.



Sig Chapman, Sig Turner, LCpl Hawksworth

Sig Calderwood, Sig Smale-Saunders

EXERCISE TAMNEG DIAMOND
MALAYSIAN EXPEDITION 13TH JUNE-8TH JULY 1997
by Sigs Evans and Slater

Ex Tamneg Diamond was an expedition into the dense jungles of the Malaysian Taman Negara National Park. It all began when the 8 members of the team, all from units within 4 Armd Bde, met up outside Bde HQ on the morning of the 13th June. From here we were transported to Frankfurt airport. The team comprised of **Lt Col** 'The Boss' **Ingram** RLC, **Cpl Pete Shearer** RLC, **Cpls** Tex **Larramy** and **Andy Stevens** 21 Engrs, **Spr Simon** 'Mumbles' **Cross** 21 Engrs, **Pte Claire MacArron** AGC, and last but not least **Sigs Sean** (Taff) **Evans** and **Lee Slater** 204 Sig Sqn.

The amount of personal baggage taken along caused a few problems, firstly we had to send for a bigger minibus to get us all to the airport, with all our 'essentials'! Then the weight caused a problem at the check-in desk. **Pte Claire Macarron** was some what shocked, when asked to produce DM200 for excess baggage. But when converged upon by all eight members of the team, the nice lady behind the desk changed her mind and allowed the baggage on for free! Finally, 21 and a half-hours later we reached Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city. After finding lodgings in KL's International Youth Hostel, the group was eager to get out and see the city's sights. Much haggling followed in China Town's markets and we sampled some of the local culture(!) before returning to recover from the jet lag.

The two nights we spent in KL passed quickly before it was time to set off into the sticks of the National Park. It took a 6hr train journey, a rough night sleeping on a train station platform, a 40 minute bus journey and a 3hr river boat ride to reach the Taman Negara Park HQ. The HQ setting was a modern village in a clearing on the edge of the river, with plenty of accommodation, restaurants, a shop, laundry service and a riverboat taxi service. It is an excellent place to go and relax. However, there was none of that for us. The next morning we paraded with all our re-packed kit and seven days rations for our first task–to climb Mount Gunung Tahan which is the highest peak in West Malaysia. With our guide leading the way we set off on our journey in high spirits.

Sig Lee Slater suffered the first disaster after only 500 metres into the trip. While crossing one of the many bogs, both his feet became stuck in the thick mud. However, he did manage to pull himself free with a loud squelch only to find the soles of both his boots had remained exactly where they were. A short break followed while he changed into his only remaining footwear.....a pair of 'Jesus sandals'.

We trogged on and covered the first 12km stretch of the 110 km round trip in 4 hrs. At the first campsite we pitched up and it quickly became apparent that along with all the sweat, everyone had also lost most of the high spirits they started out with. Somehow this wasn't the swan everybody believed it was going to be. Already suffering from leech and insect bites, some of the group had developed 'strange' rashes. The extreme heat and humidity was also getting to us. Even at night when trying to sleep the heat remained constant and the noises of the jungle kept many of us awake. An early start followed the next day, again our guide 'Mizzy' led the way. Even though it was only our second day the problems of not properly acclimatising and the various fitness levels within the team began to show. Everyone also carried far too much kit with the average bergen weighting 70lbs. The ground was very hard going and the deeper into the jungle we went, the more it seemed to close in around us. After an arduous six-hour hike, we reached our second campsite by a river, 25km from the Park HQ. After pitching our tents we tucked into some of our 'just' edible de-hydrated meals, which were washed down with a couple of sachets of dioralyte. An early night followed before day 3 in which we had to complete 6 river crossings as part of our journey. **Sig Lee Slater** actually managed to get some sleep this time, much to the annoyance of everyone else, who had to endure his snoring crescendos.

We cleared up the campsite before setting off at 8 am to attempt our first river crossing. Our guide crossed first followed by **Cpl Pete Shearer** stating, "Make sure you all place one foot firmly on the bottom before you move the other". On his second step he slipped and fell in much to the amusement of the rest of the group. **Sig** Taff **Evans** also found it hard to swim with a bergen on his back. So he too disappeared into the water. It took us four and a half-hours to clear the river crossings and reach the next camp. After an hours rest, we tended our feet with powder, cream and fresh socks before setting off to the next camp (Wrays Camp), against the advice of our guide! It was only 5km to the next camp but it proved to be "the straw that broke the camels back". The journey was all up hill with plenty of emphasis on the 'up'. This ever inclining hill was to be nicknamed "heart break ridge" by the group. Along the way the group split, the fitter ones racing ahead after collecting all the tents in order to set up the next camp before dark. Some of the remainder of the team didn't make it in until after dark and were totally exhausted. **Cpl Andy Stevens** was especially troubled with extreme cramps and had to be helped along by **Cpl Pete Shearer**. **Sig Lee Slater's** med pack was put to good use that night. After an 'all-in' meal the team got together and decided it would be in everyone's interests if we set off a bit later the next day in order to give everyone time to recover. Some of us also left stashes of kit to lighten our bergen's, things like extra clothes, rock climbing equipment, extra rations which we could collect on our return journey. The 'Boss' only left behind a couple of pairs of underwear and a wet pair of socks which he later regretted. As did others who never left anything behind.

A 9am start saw the beginning of the new day. A tough but breath-taking journey took us across the ridges above the jungle. Often submersed in cloud cover we carefully negotiated our way across the tricky ground. Again the group split with the three Engrs leading closely followed by **Sigs Lee Slater** and 'Taff' **Evans**. About 45 minutes behind them came **Pte Claire Macarron** who ploughed on, determined to get the job done and then came The 'Boss' who was accompanied by **Cpl Pete Shearer**.

At the top of a couple of steep rock faces that we had to climb, the team stopped to take in the excellent panoramic views and to allow the others in the group to catch up. **Sigs** Taff **Evans** and **Lee Slater** then took the lead to the next camp, not realising they'd taken the wrong path. After walking for 2 hrs in the wrong direction they eventually realised their mistake, when distant shouts from a far off campsite told them they were going the wrong way. After much shinfing and a further 2hrs walking, they retraced their steps and arrived at the campsite just before dark, to the cheers and applause of the rest of the group. This was the final campsite before the summit that we could see in the distance. Because this campsite was going to be used again the next day, we decided to leave all our kit behind and take one bergen between two to the summit. Carrying waterproofs, water and warm kit. Another 'all-in' seemed to perk everyone up at the end of this, the fourth day. Two very tired signallers went to sleep that night despite the squealing and running around of all the rats that had appeared just after dark.

Next morning everyone woke feeling refreshed and eager to conquer the summit. It was a 14km round trip which took us just under 4 hours. **Sig Lee Slater** looked a bit pale as he nursed his hornet stings that he acquired after gate crashing their nest. 'The Boss' accompanied by **Cpl Pete Shearer** came in about a half an hour later with the look of relief as he reached the peak. A 30min photo shoot then followed as we all got photographic evidence that we'd made it to the top. Rested and bored of the tranquil scenery we headed back down to the campsite, everyone eager to take a bath in the nearby mountain stream.

The 'relieved team' at the summit . . .
all except the Boss (who was still on his way up)

We all sat round a campfire and chatted about the trip so far and how much we were looking forward to R+R. It now seemed very unlikely that we would complete the second phase of the exercise. This was another jungle trek lasting 8 days retracing the path of a river until we reached the East Coast. Already a day and half behind our schedule we realised we were going to be out an extra 2 days longer than we expected bringing the trip to a total of 9 days. The problem being we'd all only brought seven days rations each, so we had to miss the odd meal to conserve our food. We retraced ground already covered on our return journey of the 6th day. Passing through Wrays Camp and thankfully going down 'heartbreak ridge' instead of up, 'The Boss' was beginning to worry the group as he was extremely exhausted but was determined to keep going. **Cpl** Tex **Larramy** who proved to be the fittest member of the team left the group and raced to the next camp. Leaving his bergen there he came back up the ridge and helped 'The Boss' along with his kit.

The whole team was into the next camp and set up by 6pm and had the luxury of being able to bathe in the river once again. Just as darkness fell we gathered together and discussed our situation. Extremely exhausted 'The Boss' felt he wouldn't be able to complete the trip back on foot. Everyone had their own opinion on what should happen but the overall decision was that whatever happened we'd finish as a team. With that we all turned in before awakening on the seventh day. With 'The Boss' feeling a little better we crossed the six rivers into the next camp after 4 and half-hours. Instead of continuing onto the next camp it was obvious 'The Boss' had pretty much burned himself out and we had to call a halt at 2pm to pitch up to allow him to recuperate. Again we all sat down and assessed the situation, each person expressing how they felt. It was decided that if 'The Boss' felt he couldn't continue the next morning **Pte Claire Macarron** would stay behind with him while the remainder finished the last 26km to get some outside help.

Now the second phase of the exercise was completely out of the question. However, 'The Boss' did wake the next morning feeling much better after the long rest. The next day continued on with **Sig Slater** remaining alongside 'The Boss', being the team medic. Taking it as easily as we could we made it to the final camp at 5pm again we all rested. We all had to scrape together what food we had left to provide us with some sort of meal. Its amazing how far a couple of packets of semolina and a blob of jam can go. The 9th and final day took 4hrs to complete but as decided we waited for each other and finished as a team. Although everyone was exhausted we all beamed with satisfaction of completing the exercise knowing there was only R+R to come. After a couple of days in the Park HQ recovering we all headed back down to Kuala Lumpur where we stayed for one night after which we all went our separate ways for R+R.

Looking back it was definitely an Exercise we wouldn't have missed for the world. The satisfaction of completing the mountain phase was well worth the experience and effort but we'll think twice before going on an Exercise back into the jungle. All in all it was a fantastic opportunity and one which we would certainly recommend to anyone should the chance arise again.

19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
Catterick

EXERCISE DRAGON EBOR
by Sig Taylor

Alpha Tp departed on Ex Dragon Ebor from the 6th to the 14th of July for the annual adventure training camp at Penhale Camp, Rhyl, North Wales. The instructors laid on numerous activities including rock climbing, canoeing, windsurfing, hill walking and conservation work. **Cpl Colin Hoare** decided that the rock climbing was a bit extreme because, as he put it, 'Why climb when you can walk round!' Whilst wind surfing most people found they did more swimming than surfing as turning the board proved beyond most abilities. This meant a slow, cold and very wet trip back across the lake. Those not exhausted from the activities went out at night on a Anglo/Welsh public relation exercise. **LCpls Steve Birchall** and **Steve Heywood** decided to Bungee jump off the sea wall–**Steve Heywood** decided he would be daring but forgot he didn't have a rope attached to him. The experience was a painful one!

Whilst in Rhyl **Lt Paul Griffiths** had his leaving party, where he was found guilty by Kangaroo Court for falling asleep in his curry and being a boy racer (to name a few of his many serious offences). His sentence was to be covered in baked beans, rice and then attacked by water pistols. Although keenly competed for these tasks were carried out enthusiastically by **LCpl Nick Ions** and **Sigs John Atkinson** and 'Johno' **Johnson.** We wish **Lt Griffiths** all the very best in his new capacity as a student whose specialist subject is colouring in and not going over the lines! As we compile these notes the Troop is preparing for a tour of Bosnia. Look out for more instalments from Comms Tp out in theatre.

OP LODESTAR PRE DEPLOYMENT TRAINING

As time starts to run out before the Squadron deploys en mass to Banja Luka and other delightful places in Bosnia the level of training intensifies. In late August and early September the Squadron squeezed in military training at UNTAT, Warminster followed by a comms package in Catterick.

The Bde HQ deployed with us to complete the UNTAT package which was run by 2 Para. Two days of ranges culminated in a live fire casevac in teams of four. The first team to go through was led by the Tiffy, **SSgt Tom Cambridge.** As the team crossed open ground it came under effective enemy fire, simulated by a para off to one side. Being a well trained soldier the Tiffy, without pause, identified the direction the shots were fired from and returned fire. Needless to say the para took cover! Having somehow completed the range package without serious injury the training concentrated on subjects related to the forthcoming tour. Two days of stands ranging from learning Serbo-Croat to mine awareness proved very hectic but informative. The culmination of this was a day of confirmation exercises and the opportunity for the Squadron to put in to practice all that had been taught.

The Bosnian Scarecrow Stand

The favourite incident involved an AFV that had crashed into a house with numerous dangers, casualties to deal with, reporters to keep informed and a large angry crowd to control. This last task brought the best out of the Squadron. Dressed as Bosnians the soldiers of 2 Para revelled at the opportunity of 'roughing up hats'. Not so quickly thought **LCpl** 'Alex' **Alexander** as he laid out the largest Para he could find with a short right hook. **Sgt Rob Enderby** resorted to shooting the civilians he took a dislike to–we know who won't be allowed out of the Metal Factory!

Technicians at work or play–Is there a difference?

The training finished, the Squadron moved back to Catterick to hone comms skills. With so many systems in theatre it was essential that a thorough briefing was given to forewarn of what to expect. Thanks to **YofS Andy Drummond** and **FofS Andy Williams** for clearing that up–everything's as clear as mud. By the time of the next *Wire* issue the Squadron will be in theatre; so we take the opportunity of wishing those going and those staying a safe and successful tour.

IMPORTANT!!

Would ALL Units please note the following:

ALL PHOTOS accompanying Articles for *The Wire*, **MUST** have CAPTIONS and an indication where they are to be placed in the text, otherwise they **MAY NOT BE USED**

24 Airmob Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (210) Colchester

Sqn Comd **Maj T. J. P. Watts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) G. C. Pocock**

EXERCISE ACTIVE IMPROVEMENT

After a busy period with PRE and RSIT inspections, the Squadron was preparing to deploy on Ex Active Improvement, our first MND (C) exercise in Belgium. As well as being our first exercise with MND (C), it was also our first time for a while with the Staff occupying the HQ, so the pressure was on to ensure that everything was up to speed. Coupled with this we also had attached to us the 1st Platoon of the Dutch 135 Signal Battalion. They were providing the trunk communications with their Zodiac and VSAT satellite system, and a few teething troubles had to be ironed out to ensure that our procedures and theirs could come together in a workable fashion! There was plenty of movement during the exercise that gave the Squadron a lot of practice in the tear down, movement, and set up procedures. Early on they became very slick indeed, and the fact that the staff had to tab in the last 2 kilometres into location and, as usual, basha up in the woods, provided a morale boost to all

SSgt Shelmerdine 'changes command' to SSgt Alger, and swings the ladle

LCpl Robinson is briefed on the way into location Dutch Satellite detachment in the background

Not all went to plan however, as **Sig Fletcher** discovered that putting diesel in petrol generators can be very bad for your health, although it did give him the opportunity to practice his pan–bashing technique! The new Bravo Tp Comd, **2Lt Bowdler** learnt a useful lesson that 'pick up Tac signs' on a route card means 'follow', and not collect! **2Lt Ashton** decided that Radio wasn't good enough and opted to use CILOP (Cellnet in lieu of Ptarmigan) and BATCO to get his point across. When the dust had cleared (pun intended, Alpha Tp!) everyone had learned a lot, both with our own drills, and from the Dutch, who were a pleasure to work with. More importantly, the Staff, including **Brig Elcomb**, said that the service from the Squadron, both moving and static had been the best they'd seen, which is a sign of a job well done. Endex was, as usual, gratefully received and some duty free shopping and a Squadron smoker (Paderborner–probably the worst lager in the world!) was all that remained before a welcome redeployment back to Blighty.

UNDERWATER HELICOPTER ESCAPE TRAINER RNAS YEOVILTON

Whilst Alpha Tp were away at Nijmegen, Bravo Tp, and some of the remainder of Alpha Tp were away at RNAS Yeovilton at the Fleet Air Arm's dreaded Underwater Helicopter Escape Trainer, nicknamed the 'Dunker'. A pleasant evening doing the music quiz and a few drinks in the NAAFI preceded the days training, before setting off first thing in the morning to get 'dunked'. For those who haven't seen the film 'an Officer and a gentleman', the dunker consists of what can only be described as a giant coke can with windows suspended over a large four metre pool. Having watched harrowing videos of helicopter crashes and being taught the requisite drills, a nervous tension descended over the group. The training consisted of four runs, each getting progressively more difficult. The first run was a straight drop in to the pool, and on the second the module flipped upside down on impact. The third run was in semi darkness, and the fourth, and most frightening was in total darkness, with divers on the outside of the module shaking us about to complete the disorientation.

All the group completed the training well, except for one minor problem when **LCpl Russell** released his harness too early and floated up inside the over turned module . . . and away from the exit! **Sig Chapman** showed his considerable agility by managing to escape through the pilots' exit before the pilots had even been released, earning him the gratitude of all when they were forced to repeat that particular practice! The sense of achievement having gone through such an experience was felt by all, but no-one felt the desire to ever repeat the experience!

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Maj B. Britton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G. Robinson**

It's been a good month for promotions in Support Tp, with congratulations going to the QM on his Majority, and to **SSgt Ged Robinson**, promoted to WO2 SSM on posting. Also, to **Cpl Ben** 'Rick' **O' Shea**, and **LCpl Clive Oars**. We say our farewells to **SSgt Robinson, Sgt Kev Price, Cpl Dav Benson, LCpl** 'Paddy' **Partridge**, and **Sig Campbell**. Warm welcomes go to **SSgt Latimer, Sgt Willoughby, LCpl Faylton, LCpl Chambers, Sig Abbott**, and **Cfn Holt**.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt D. Ashton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Alger**

The Alpha Army needs to say goodbye to a few of its troopers this month. **Lt Andy Parfitt** has left Colchester to go and read a degree at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham. The bets have been made as to whether he turns into another 'Shrivenham Groom' and ends up getting a crate of champagne in! Good luck for the future. **Sig Brunskill** is now engaged in a life of luxury with his family in Civvy Street. The Troop will definitely miss him and wish him all the best. **Sig Foster** is also leaving the Army to go and join a Data Communications Installation Company. We will all miss the infamous shout of, 'FOZZY.' We all hope he enjoys himself and wish him all the best. New to the Troop is **2Lt Ashton** whose learning curve is so steep it's overhanging. He's arrived here from his Tp Comd course that finished in July. We wait and see what the future has in store! Also new to the Troop is **Sig Chapman** who has arrived from 4 Armd Bde. The Troop is looking strong going into Ex Gryphons Eye and the exercises in 1998. ALPHA ARMY!!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Bowdler**
Tp SSgt **SSgt K. Shelmerdine**

The Troop would like to welcome the new Tp Comd, **2Lt Bowdler, Cpl Steve** 'Bish' **Bishop** from 30 Sigs, **Cpl Mark Tench** and his wife from 1 (UK) Div, **LCpl** 'Zut alors!' **Russell** and **Sig Doran** from 4 Bde. Sad farewells go to **Sig Sean McKay**, and **LCpl Squires**, who are off to make their way in Civ Div, **Sig** 'Baz' **Hopgood**, off to 8 Bde in Northern Ireland and finally, **Sig Scott Chapman** off jetsetting with 30 Sigs. Congratulations go to **LCpl Cooley** on a well deserved promotion, and to **Sig Sedgewick** for his new addition to the Troop, 'Sedge Junior' (hope he got his mothers good looks!)

1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) Tidworth

HANDOVER/TAKEOVER OF RSM

WO1 (RSM) Bray left the Squadron to go on to Blandford. We breathed a large sigh of relief–'No more Germany stories' only to find that the new RSM, **WO1 Skimmings** stepped straight into **WO1 Bray's** shoes with 24 Air Mobile Bde stories. We wish **WO1 Bray** and his wife **Joanne** all the best in the future and welcome **WO1 Skimming, Samantha** and their children to the Squadron.

The drowning out of WO1 (RSM) Bray

The Squadron has had a busy but productive summer period including the Bde FTX, Ex Lion Sun and numerous small scale exercises abroad. Both Troops have soldiers detached to BATUS and have provided assistance to various Battlegroup and Bde exercise all over the UK. Personnel have been involved in some good military and adventurous training, some excerpts of their adventures can be found below.

EXERCISE PRIMARY SIGNET–THE KIWI TROPHY COURSE
by Sig Janine 'Boiler 1' **Teague**

The date was 22nd July the time was 0730 and I was about to attempt the Kiwi Trophy Course, a 22km tab to raise money for Bulford Primary School. This was what our Tp Comd, **Capt Lloyd Golley** and Staffy, **SSgt** 'Dwarf' **Rutland** had been working us towards. For the last 2 months nobody had been looking forward to Friday dinnertime knock-off, for we knew that we would be paying a visit to Salisbury Plain and saying hello to Sidbury Hill for another training session. The specific reason we were doing the event was for new gym equipment for Bulford CofE Primary School, not just for the sadistic enjoyment of Sabre Tp Seniors. There were 16 participants with trophies going to the first three males and the first female. People soon forgot the attitude of, 'I can do it in whatever time I like,' as our pride was at stake.

For the first 6 miles I was really going for it, then the sun started beating down so I calmed my pace down a bit. Blisters and boredom set in at about 9 miles, but I soon stopped daydreaming after sliding down a chalk hill on my bum which brought me down with a bump. **Sgt** 'Sy' **Jenner** also took a tumble and hurt his wrist after ogling at 22 Eng Regt out on a run. The last stint was on the Bulford Range road that seemed to drag a little. I was told **Sig Fiona** 'Boiler 2' **Appleyard** was hot on my heels so I knew I had to pick up the pace as I wanted the female trophy. I got to the finishing line with just one problem, Kiwi Hill stood in my way. As I crawled, heaved and dragged myself up it, the finish seemed to get further and further away, but I eventually got there.

Sig 'Randy Nutter' **Rutter** was the winner followed by **Cpl Dave** 'Granddad' **Skingley** in second place and third went to **Cpl Paul** 'Victor Meldrew' **Young**. I was the first female to finish. **Sig Lee** 'If it's not nailed down, I'll have it' **Copeland** finally came in after missing the mine tape at the foot of the hill. He then went on to tell us that he could do it again, (forgetting to mention that he had got a lift in the jack wagon). **Sig Emma** 'I've actually finished a tab' **Opie** completed the course with **Sig Stu** 'Fat as whales' **Bailes** who is rumoured to have being tapping it after being on two sick chits.

EXERCISE IRON HADDOW–SWITZERLAND
by Sig Fiona Appleyard

We had all been looking forward to this expedition for months. It was the nice thought of being away from exercise and Salisbury Plain. Sabre Tp's adventurous training exercise was called Iron Haddow named after the climber **Douglas Haddow** who was killed in the region in 1856. This filled us with confidence! After the long, bumpy drive to Switzerland going through every border stop just so we could get our passports stamped, we arrived in Zermatt. We started the exercise with a few gentle walks, as described by **SSgt** 'Dad' **Rutland**, we soon came to realise not to believe a word he said as these gentle slopes were more like mountains. Thanks to **SSgt** 'Dad' for playing Dr Kildare, my blisters were treated many times over. Still it was his fault that I got them in the first place. Switzerland is such a beautiful country, so untouched by pollution and hassle free. That was until Sabre Tp arrived, the pubs and nightclubs had to contend with **Sgt** 'Uncle Eric' **Head** and **SSgt** 'Dad' **Rutland's** version of the Prodigy's dance routines, (including tongue action). **Cpl** 'Paul' **Young** decided to get his skiing instructors head on and take **LCpl** 'Fred West' **Deas** and **Sig** 'Danny' **O'Shea** skiing. Thinking they would come back like bronze Adonis with their bronzing oil, reality, both came back like sheets of bubble wrap, owing to the many blisters they got in the sun.

The expedition aim was successfully achieved by all the group who ascended the Klein Matterhorn. The climb was hard work but the views were breathtaking. It was a good opportunity for photos. Well apart from **Sgt Head's** atomic flash camera, £9.99 from Argos, which kept our Japanese counterparts amused for hours. After the 2 weeks of fantastic views it was back to reality of Exercise on the slightly less scenic Salisbury Plain.

On top of the Klein Matterhorn

EXERCISE LION SUN–CYPRUS AUGUST SEPTEMBER 1997

The highlight of our summer was the Squadrons' deployment to Cyprus on Ex Lion Sun. The Exercise concentrated on military training culminating in a final exercise involving an E&E phase followed by CRW Ops ending in a successful assault on Paramali Village. We had a superb adventurous training package consisting of just about every water-sport. To round it all off most were able to take 3 days R&R, with a large number taking a whistle stop tour of Egypt. Various phases of the exercise are outlined below, by the soldiers at the receiving end. In the beginning . . .

DEPLOYMENT–OUR DAY OUT AT RAF LYNEHAM
by SSgt Gosney

Ex Lion Sun 1997 began with a Squadron Parade on Sunday 17th August 1997, Chalk comd **SSgt** 'Baldy' **Dave Gosney** calling the nominal roll, only to discover **Sgt Reg** 'I'm not a Space Cadet–honest' **Ebanks** was absent, as per true to form! On arrival at South Cerney at 0230, Chalk 1 were greeted by the unit emplanement officer **Lt Nick Shenow**, and were then subjected to a truly enthralling video on 'how to secure one's seat harness'. On completion of this we were put through the first of many security checks prior to our departure for RAF Lyneham. On our arrival at the very famous RAF Graveyard an invitation was received to participate in yet another security check, followed by a 'chill-out' session in the departure lounge for an hour or three, before finally called forward for boarding. We jostled for the most comfortable seats ready for a long ride. At this point it had become obvious that **Sig Kate Griffith** had not previously had the pleasure of travelling by C130, this became apparent by her comment 'is this a very OLD plane Staff'? at which point this question proved to be entirely justified as it was followed by an announcement from the Captain, 'Due to an electrical

fault we ain't goin' nowhere today'. 'SHOCKED' came the overwhelming reply. After a truly sombre evening spent winding away the hours in the all ranks bar and of course yet another security check, Chalk 1 finally managed to get airborne AM Tuesday 19th August 1997, destination Cyprus. Chalk 1 arrived 24hrs later. The bemused Chalk 2 did not realise they had boarded the fast Herc.

The true story of this most ill fated call sign–Lion Sun final Ex 3 day E&E phase.

B20 AND THE DEAD DOG–THEIR GREATEST ADVENTURE YET
by 2Lt Rob 'Floppy' Francis

Well the exercise didn't start quite as the troops had expected. Instead of a 0400 hrs Reveille for deployment orders, followed by an assault on Paramali village, it was a midnight bug out, capture and questioning! The Troop were then turfed out the back of a 4 tonner in their sections in the middle of nowhere armed with only a chargoul of water, (a primitive canvas water carrier) a few NAAFI biscuits and a handful of boiled sweets. Three nights on the run followed under the direction of a friendly 'agent', from an enemy armed with tracker dogs and vehicles.

One patrol to fall foul of the enemy on their final night of evasion, was the aptly titled B20 led by **Cpl** 'Mitch' **Mitchell** and guided by **2Lt Francis**. Upon seeing vehicle lights they decided to take cover under a large bush. The vehicle then stopped almost on top of them and out jumped the dog handler with loveable 'Satan' positively drooling in anticipation. They then proceeded to set up an ambush right on top of B20's position! Well, there was little the patrol could do but lie still and wait for another call sign to walk into the ambush then take advantage of the confusion to escape cunning. Unfortunately the next call sign was 25 minutes behind so they settled in for a long wait. After a few minutes a foul smell was noticed by the stealthily hidden patrol. After checking his armpits, a member of the patrol noticed that it was not him that smelled but the soft, furry object he was lying against. Upon closer inspection it was revealed the object had 4 legs each ending in a paw, and was in the latter stages of decay. They had taken cover on top of a dead dog! Unable to move, they were forced to lie still for a further 20 minutes until **Cpl Wilson** and his section stumbled upon the ambush and gave B20 their chance to get away to write another bestseller.

GIRL POWER RECCE PATROL
by Sig Fiona Appleyard

This was an opportunity to prove women were no longer relegated to the kitchen. We'd been let loose with rifles, thunderflashes etc. Myself, **Sig Appleyard** had been tasked to lead a section of men through the wilderness of Cyprus to patrol and observe the enemy, I say again to patrol and observe the enemy. Forget the Spice Girls this was real Girl Power. After a set of orders and a bit of help through sign language by **Cpl** 'Mitch' **Mitchell**, I informed the lads of the task in front of them. I knew my map reading wasn't up to scratch but what the hell, I was going for it. After the first bearing I was sure I was on the correct track. By **Lt Shenow's** face I knew I'd gone wrong somewhere. My answer was 'Well if we follow this track and we end up at the coast I know we're on the wrong track'. Sure enough we were on the wrong track. Start again I thought. This spice girl was a bit of a bluff spice.

After many wrong turns, we finally spotted the enemy. I dropped my men off taking the Sqn Cook, **Pte** 'Olive' **Schmid** with me. Can you imagine me armed with my hairbrush and mirror and **Pte Schmid** with his ladle, nor could I! After observing them it became apparent they were getting a bit too close for comfort, so we made a quick retreat and I got the boys home for tea and medals. Luckily I escaped with all my nails intact and not a hair out of place. A Chef battles with priorities on various 'Recce' Patrols–('EGG OPS' is the in house name for our Chefs).

THE FINAL ATTACK–EGG OPS FORWARD
by Pte Schmid

Being a Chef attached to 215 Sig Sqn I didn't expect to find myself grunting it in the Bondoo in Southern Cyprus. Normally I would be dragging a dodgy cook's trailer across Salisbury Plain. However, I realised being a rifleman out in the field I did not possess the normal Chef comforts such as egg banjos at 0500 hrs. Also sleeping on an assortment of thorns and the occasional dead dog was different to a comfortable warm cooks' tent.

On the first night we went out on a recce and set up an observation post. I think I was confused with what we were receeing as I kept stating that, 'This would be a good location for a field cookhouse.' No one told me what an observation post was. I thought it was a spot I chose to observe soldiers across my hotplate. A couple of days later and having tabbed a few hundred miles I was still intent on finding a suitable location for my cooks trailer. I was now getting distressed, frustrated and tired even a building would have been perfect. Lo and behold when we arrived at our final assault position my eyes lit up and I found myself getting quite aroused by the fact that we were about to clear an entire village of buildings. Perfect for several field kitchens. The only problem there was the buildings were inhabited by a large amount of enemy ragheads. So I loaded up my rifle, made sure I had plenty of rations, I mean rounds, and went in looking like Rambo. At last we had cleared the village and I was happy I had survived and found the perfect spot for my cooks trailer, only to realise that someone had called Endex and the OC wasn't in the slightest bit interested in where I was going to site my utensils. Maybe one day they'll listen to me, after all an Army marches on its feet or something like that. One report on adventure training during the Ex. Windsurfing, canoeing, water skiing and of course Banana Boating were also enjoyed.

215 SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSISTANCE TO EXERCISE COOKS CHALLENGE

On Sunday 24th August 1997 whilst on Ex Lion Sun 1, **Cpl Mick Robinson** was asked by the Sqn Comd, **Maj Phil Davies** if he was interested in running a stage of Ex Cooks Challenge for charity. I was told that I would be joined by **Capt** 'Mad' **McKenzie**, **Lt Nick Shenow**, **RQMS** 'Hey Hey' **Carr** and last but not least **SSgt Paul Adams**. Then came the hidden blow, 'Reveille, **Cpl R** is at 0330,', my reply was 'doh'. The run was in aid of funding research for Motor Neurone Disease. The former SOinC, **Maj Gen Bob Cook** had died from the disease back in February.

Tim, his son decided to run across Cyprus from Cape Akamis to Cape Greco in 7 days (which is a feat of some 180 miles) to raise money for the charity and as a gesture to his father's life. The RV for our 15 mile stage was on a small track on the slopes of Mount Olympus. This stage was again broken down into two further stages. The first stage ended after 5 miles of steady climbing with a one and a half hour stop and it was good to see the sunrise, also **Tim** could have breakfast and morale remained very high. Then the 10 mile stage, this was a slow and steady climb up to the top, but we did have a little breather in the middle to take in fluid. We arrived in Troodos at around midday, all that was left was to run from Olympus down to Troodos station the end of the stage.

Three days later we then met back up with **Tim** for his final leg from Ayia Napa to Cape Greco, which went via Nissi Beach. We shook the charity buckets and it was hard trying to keep our minds on the job, thank God for one's sunglasses. We still managed to raise around C£200 and the odd Scandinavian coin from the tourists. Then it was off to Cape Greco where **Tim** put in a sprint finish, we were left standing which was not bad considering he had just run 180 miles in considerable heat. All that was left was to raise money from our own Squadron for the charity, **Maj Phil Davies** tackled the Officers and SNCOs and **Cpl Mick Robinson** collared the rest with a combined effort of C£110 and with a big thank you from **Tim Cook**.

DIVING–THE UNDERSEA WORLD OF CPLS WOLF AND MITCHELL

Several members of the Squadron decided to sacrifice some of their well earned summer leave to participate in a Novice Diving Course at Bulford pool. Unfortunately some of the First Aid theory lectures proved to be too strong for a certain member alias **Sig Kev Bickford**, who had to leave the room when bodily fluids were mentioned. The course put us in good stead for Ex Lion Sun. After the initial issue of equipment including a pink mask and purple wet suit for **Cpl** 'Spence' **Wolf**, we made our way down to Dhekelia jetty for our first open water dive. **Sig Fiona Appleyard's** initial apprehension of the marine life was soon overcome as we practised the skills and drills learned in the swimming pool back in England. The water temperature was very pleasant and the sights under the sea even better.

The following day we bimbelled down to the beautiful Green Bay at the eastern end of the island to practice our recovery drills. **Cpl** 'Mitch' **Mitchell** drew the short straw and got the female instructor for the mouth to nose drills much to the envy of the rest of the group. At Green Bay we had a good look around the sea bed going down to our first 10 metre in the morning and then again later that afternoon. The next two days proved to be the best of the whole course as we went out by boat to some deeper water to dive. The sunken wreck 'ZENOBIA' which sank 13 years ago in Larnaca Bay, was our first real diving adventure. The views of the wreck at 20 metres were fascinating, unfortunately the air cylinders don't last forever and the time down there seemed all too short. The human haddock, **Sig Fiona Appleyard** seemed to conserve her air forever and we had to drag her to the surface. Overall the week was very enjoyable and a great experience for us all never to be forgotten.

Diving on Ex Lion Sun

5 AB Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216 Para) Aldershot

Sqn Comd **Maj D.G. Halstead**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Catchpole**

Once again another very busy period for the Squadron. Firstly, farewell and congratulations to **WO1 (RSM) Neil Turnbull** who is posted on gaining his commission to 40 (V) Sig Regt and hello to **WO1 (RSM) Dave Catchpole** who makes a welcome return to the Squadron. Also congratulations to **SSgts Nick** 'the Viking' **Organ** for being awarded the Accumulated Campaign and Service Medal and to **SSgt Al Dummer** and **Sgt** 'Olly' **Oliver** on being awarded their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

Comd 5 Airborne Bde and Medal Recipients

ALPHA TROOP

Following three weeks hard earned leave the Troop began working on fitting out the new Wolf vehicles. Under strict instructions not to drill, paint or modify unless told to so by the Foreman. The Troop now proudly possesses fourteen wolves and awaits the nod from the techs to fit out the vehicles designated for the RATT dets. Despite there being no major exercise between summer leave and Christmas the Troop has been decimated in numbers as personnel load themselves onto courses. **Sig Chris Dowd** has taken part in the Spanish Patrol Competition, **LCpl** 'Loddy' **Jones** has deployed to the Antarctic with the British Antarctic Survey team, **LCpls** 'Rob' **Dawson** and **Jimmy Shaw** have completed a Pathfinder 'which morgue shall we visit today?' medical cadre. **LCpl Sid Cleworth** and **Sig** 'Thommo' **Thompson** parachuted into Arnhem and **2Lt** 'If I can't drink it I'll break it' **Lowther** is currently leading a Troop adventure training package into deepest Bavaria.

A large proportion of the Troop completed the hideous helicopter underwater escape trainer, otherwise known as the dunker, at HMS *Heron* with one member showing a slight aversion to water before he goes off to do 'the obvious'. Both the Tp Comd, **2Lt Chambers** and the attached **2Lt Lowther** were dunked, **2Lt Chambers** making the mistake of attempting to exit the hull through a small window at the same time as **Sig** 'Fat Boy' **Finn**, before turning around and escaping through the opposite window. A whaling ship was spotted in the pool although **Sig Finn** escaped unharmed. **SSgt Kev Read** can rarely be seen as he organises the squadron football 'swan' or should that be team?

Sgt 'Olly' **Oliver** and seven other Troop members deployed to Denmark on Ex Runnel Stone.

Alpha Tp deployed the Main HQ for the Staff College Demo over three days on Salisbury Plain. **Cpl** 'Elvis' **Flounders** answered any of the students questions following an in depth brief by the 5 AB Bde **SO3 CIS Capt Pete** 'Can I put more cam cream on please?' **Cubbin** and several current staff officers. The spotter of the week award went to **Capt Pete Cubbin** who answered the following question without even thinking: 'How big is your biggest generator?' Most bone question from the students was: 'Are you actually planning anything?' Well the COS did say he wanted the HQ to look used! Congratulations to the new attached officer **2Lt Griffiths, LCpl** 'Fish' **Salmon** and **LCpl Clancy** who successfully finished P Coy and now await their jumps course. We have a few new additions to the Troop: **Sgt Sid James** comes over from 7 Sig Regt, **Sig Thorpe** and **Sig** 'Percy' **Thrower** both arrive straight from 11 Sig Regt. Welcome to 216 and in particular Alpha Tp. Next on the agenda is providing communications for the Cambrian Patrol and hopefully participating in a TALO exercise with 1 RGR.

MIKE TROOP

Mike Tp has been fairly busy since summer leave due to repairs from Ex Pegasus Strike. We have had a few new arrivals. **Sgt Ian Dickinson** from Edinburgh, congratulations on your promotion, **Cpl Stan** 'The Man' **Stanbury** and **Cpl Paul Walker.** Also a farewell goes to **Cpl Rob** 'Grenade' **Macadam, LCpl Andy Fish, Cpl** 'Bradd' **Braddock** and **Cpl** 'Polly' **Poulson**. Good luck to you all. Congratulations to **LCpl Glen Ruscoe, Cpl Stan Stanbury** and a belated well done to **Sgt Ian Dickinson** on earning their wings. Welcome to the brotherhood. Finally 'Polly' **Poulson** on his recent marriage to **Fran.**

EXERCISE TUSCAN TRAIL

This year's military training took the para trained element of Mike and Q Tps on an exchange trip with the 1st 508th Airborne Combat Team in Vecenza, Northern Italy. The trip had been organised by 4 (V) PARA and fortunately **WO2 (Fofs) Steve** 'limited budget' **Bason** managed to acquire 15 slots for the Troop. After the initial trip up to Pudsey we then drove all the way down to Lyneham where we emplaned and flew to Verona on the usual Airborne transportation.

Mike Tp and their transport on Ex Tuscan Trail

The first day took the form of Sustained Airborne Training (better known as synthetics) for exiting a U1H1 Huey helicopter. For all but one of us, **Sgt Taff** 'the Master' **Jones,** this was our first descent from a Huey. After being told there was a six second delay before the 'chute opens there was a little apprehension but this was soon overcome by the somewhat roller coaster flying the pilots were doing. Everyone from the Squadron managed to get at least four jumps from the Huey which was an added bonus but unfortunately the final lob from a C130 was cancelled due to bad visibility, if that was bad, the Americans would love to jump with the RAF!! All in all we had an excellent 10 days and many thanks to the FofS who went for arranging it.

SPANISH PATROLS 1997

This event occurs once a year and is run by 'Escuela Millitar de Montana y operaciones especiales'–the Spanish SF, who invite patrols from several countries to partake in a week long exercise culminating with that years SF course passing off. Participating this year were 10 Spanish patrols and a patrol each from France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Holland and ourselves from the UK who were **Lt** 'Grenade' **Short**, **Sgt** 'Jim Bean' **Paul**, **LCpl Peace**, **LCpl Oliver**, **Sig Dowd** and **Sig** 'Kitbag' **Charlton**. After an uneventful 24hr ferry journey from Plymouth to St Andere with nothing to occupy us but the bars and **Sig Charlton's** table etiquette, we embarked on a long drive to the camp in the Pyrennees arriving late that night.

The Spanish Patrol Team en route to Spain

Early next morning the first event began, a neat vertical climb up a mountain followed by a long tab. Unknown to ourselves and the other foreign patrols there was a set route some distance away which the Spanish did not inform us of. This resulted in some patrols unable to make it and the Dutch spending the night on the mountain.

Day 2 was another tab testing navigation to the full on yet more hard terrain that made us realise how small the Brecons were. After tabbing for some hours in temperatures of 32ºC, dehydration became a problem with heat exhaustion starting to effect the patrol.

Day 3 was a 'wet' abseil in wetsuits down a canyon into what the Spanish referred to as a river with chaotic rocks to entertain thoughts of an easy ride.

Day 4 involved a 28km paddle with an inflated zodiac down two reservoirs and having to carry it 1 Km cross-country between the two. To say the paddling was hard would be an understatement and the only break was whoever got lucky to act as rudder. On finishing the paddle we immediately went into a 2.5km swim to the finish. Being that we were of Airborne warrior and not the Sailor type we even surprised ourselves coming 4th out of 16 ptls in this event, even if we did have ancient wooden paddles compared with everyone elses Gucci high-tec ones. That night was the celebratory dinner and drinks in Jaca where the Spanish were based before hitting the town with **Sig Dowd** leading at the front on the dance-floor with a cross between John Travolta and Prince Naseem.

Saturday was spent doing loads of drill rehearsing for the pass off, which involved all the patrols participating, receiving their certificates and the Spanish course passing off. The RSM would have been proud of the drill!

The final two days were spent eating olives and drinking San Miguel and seeing the sights around town with the Papillon pub proving popular with some patrol members before an uneventful journey back.

EXERCISE RUNNEL STONE 1997

The Exercise took place on the 3rd-5th October 1997, centred around the town of Odense in Denmark. The object of the exercise was to test the Danish Home Defence Force against patrols from 216 (Para) Sig Sqn, 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn and 63 (SAS) Sig Sqn (V) playing the part as an attacking force. The aim was to conduct a parachute insertion into Denmark, sadly this had to be changed to Airland due to high winds.

The first night and early morning was spent conducting CTR's on our allocated targets one to each patrol. During this phase of the exercise **Cpl Dave Maxwell** was captured by the Danish defence forces. Though he was subsequently released back into the exercise. The following night our patrols attacked the positions but only one patrol managed to lay its demolition charge on the target successfully. This was accomplished by borrowing two push bikes and ridding around the target whilst the other members of the patrol engaged the target from the front. The two on the bikes then strolled in and placed the charge throwing in a few thunderflashes and smoke grenades for good measure before casually walking back out. That morning we were extracted by C130 and back to RAF Brize Norton.

CAYTHORPE WEEKEND 6-7 SEPTEMBER

This is an annual event for the Squadron to commemorate the anniversary of the 1st Airborne Division Signals being housed in Caythorpe Village before deploying on Operation Market Garden. The Squadron had intended a parachute jump in a three aircraft fly-past that hopefully would have been led by a DC3 Dakota. We were then meant to play a football match against the village team and then contribute to their annual fete. Unfortunately the tragic events of the previous weekend meant that we had to cancel these plans as they would have coincided with the funeral of **Diana, Princess of Wales**. The rest of the weekend though went ahead as planned.

A tented camp had already been set up by a small team who had deployed a week earlier under the command of the QM, **Capt George Burrows**. Their job was to carry out a number of tasks in aid of the community. These included painting and repairing St Vincents (the local church), repair and repaint the Sunday School and clean the memorial to the fallen and fixing in place a new church notice board which has been donated by the Squadron. These gallant efforts were led by **Sig** 'Bobby' **Charlton** and **LCpl Peace** who are now qualified Painters and Decorators.

The reunion dinner held at Caythorpe Hall went extremely well and the Squadron took responsibility for the running of the Old Comrades Association (OCA) that was the wish of the former members of the 1st Airborne Division. The food was excellent and the drink flowed all evening with **Cpl** 'Mad' **Jackson** and **LCpl** 'Olive' **Oliver** engaging in a tall tasks competition with the old boys. The march to the church went well with the salute taken by **Maj Gen A. J. Dean-Drummond CB, DSO, MC** who led the 'Old Comrades' into the church through an honour guard of serving Squadron members. The names of those who fell at Arnhem were read out followed by the last post, the silence and reveille. After the service it was time for a few final drinks with Villagers and 'Old Comrades' before boarding the Coaches and heading for home ready to return and do it all again next year.

223 Sig Sqn (399 SU RAF) RAF Digby

Sqn Comd — **Maj Alan McComb**
CCO — **Capt (Tfc Offr (R))**

ALPHA FLIGHT

A Flt Comd — **2Lt Scott Roberts**
Snr Supvr — **WO2 (Supvr R) Eddy Fisher**

Our fond farewells to **Lt Elle Goldsworthy** who is off to Chicksands and **LCpl** ' Snarla' **Gilligan** who is off to rainier shores. Hello to **2Lt Scott Roberts** who on his arrival began his clearance as he is now posted to sunny Cyprus! Did we really leave such an impression that he decided he'd had enough and wanted to get away from it all so quickly? Also hello to **WO2 Eddie Fisher, SSgt Nigel** 'have you seen my bike' **Humphries, Sgt Simpson** and **Sgt** 'Jock' **Munro,** who would no doubt be lost without their clipboards.

Now onto the sporting side of things. Firstly the Flight has done rather well in all Inter Flight Sport Competitions so far this year. Softball was the first big obstacle on our otherwise full sporting calendar, this job was left to **LCpl** 'Matty' **Duckering** and **Cpl** ' Miffy' **Smith** to get the Flight under way in what was to become a 'rather large' competition. We came runners up in the league, but that was no surprise as the winners were the US Navy who thought they were the New York Yankees (this included the uniforms and spikey boots!). There was also a Knock out Competition in which we were knocked out of the semi-finals to a well turned out C Flight team.

Football. With the new football season about to begin with the 'Wilkinson Cup'. They kicked off the season, with a hand full of Station players and the rest of the team made up of solely armchair football fanatics. Besides that minor handicap we endeavoured to take on the rest of the station. After three hard fought games we successfully reached the finals and came up against 2 Sqn, the fancied team, the station favourites. This was neither a problem nor a worry as it turned out because after a hard fought 90 minutes we were crowned victors beating the favourites by 2 goals to nil. An outstanding effort from all players involved, the goals being popped in by **LCpl John Myers** and **Sgt** 'Simmo' **Simpson.** This years Birgelen Trophy was held at RAF Digby to which some of the watch were selected to represent the Station. These being **SSgt (Supvr R) Pete Stockell** and **Cpl** ' Miffy' **Smith.** Needless to say that after 2 very hard days of socialising and . . . Er hockey, RAF Digby came out overall winners on both hockey pitch and Sports and Social club. Played 5 Won 5!

The Flight has also been really busy on the charity side of things with some of the Flight members doing a sponsored Hadrians Wall Walk with the Corps being represented by **LCpl John Myers.** We have also become part-time builders, the things we do for charity. We have been asked if we can build a patio for Queens Park school, a school for children with learning difficulties. The big problem wasn't getting the volunteers but getting materials. **Sgt** ' Simmo' **Simpson** has done a great job in *'blagging'* as much material as possible and work has commenced. Not bad when you think about it really, because we are neither the team from 'Challenge Anneka' nor are we Jim McDonald or Bill Webster! That's all for now 'Miffy' over and out!

BRAVO FLIGHT

B Flt Comd — **Capt Adam Hillary**
DSO — **WO John Jackson**

Firstly, Bravo Flight would like to say a warm welcome to **Capt Adam Hillary,** recently returned from detachment. Also hello again to, **LCpl Carolyn Thomson, JTs McManus** and **Levaul-Grimwood** fresh from the factory. **WO2 (Supvr R) Steve Shannon** has finally completed his 22 years, it has been rumoured that Ruskington will have a village Skiing Advice Bureau set up within the next few weeks. We also say farewell to **Sgt Lee Brewer** who is bound for civilian life. Also a farewell goes to **Sgt Brian Hands** who goes to Corps Rugby or is NI just an occupational hazard. Then there is **Cpl Craig Wood,** who is currently travelling the length and breadth of Britain in search of the ultimate resettlement course, **LCpl Richie Canale** off to the sunny climes of Catterick, and finally **LCpl Richie Adamson** who has now reached the dizzy heights of BT. The Flight would like to pass on their best wishes to **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** who recently married **Caroline**. Congratulations also to **Cpls Rob Jones** and **Mike Surtees** on becoming fathers on the recent birth of their baby daughters–Your sleepless nights have just begun!

In readiness for the Rugby season those hookers are back **Sgt Brian Hands** and **LCpl Neil Chrispin. LCpl** Gaz **Farrar** recently finished first in his class in the unlikely sport of Land Rover Rallying. This storming performance took place at Ironbridge but has unfortunately left Gaz with a slightly less reliable and less shapely Land Rover. Well done to **LCpl Lee Graham** who recently won the Flight Orienteering Championships, upstaging both of the senior Cpls on the Flight. Finally **JTs Ruth Whitehead** and **Kerry Fagg** have managed to get more time off by being selected for the RAF Alpine Ski Team and yet another trip to France.

Cpl Richie Brennan recently completed the arduous Nijmegen March, the only representative from RAF Digby. Also boosting the coffers of the Flight Charity fund was **JT Danny Richards** with Fun running activities. This years Station fete was a great success and B Flights contribution was the Bouncy Castle and the refreshment stall. Our thanks to **Cpl Steve Aldersey** for overseeing the Flight administrative stand.

CHARLIE FLIGHT

C Flt Comd — **Flt Lt Dave Houghton**
Snr Supvr — **WO2 (Supvr R) Jim McGhee**

The summer has been a very busy period for the members of C Flight with personnel taking part in the Softball Championship, Station Fete, sponsored events and adventure training in the lake district. **Cpl Dave McDonald** took part in The Great North Run for charity that consisted of an arduous slog through the valleys and streets of Tyneside and raised a large amount of money! Whilst **Cpl Phil Berry** and **LCpl** 'Sparky' **Collins** played cowboys at the Station Fete ending in a final shootout which resulted in the demise of them both. What some people will do to dress up. The Flight softball team has also been destroying the other flights (including the Americans) with their softball after crushing all other opponents along the way. The adventurous training, led by the OC, arrived in the Lake District to find the campsite had flooded and turned into a large pond (well it is the Lake District). So having acquired new accommodation in a local hostelry they went on the march over many hills stopping only to admire the view and sup of the local brew! There was also training in boat/submarine building, abseiling and local area social liaison! On the sporting front with many of our sporting personalities away the torch has been carried valiantly by our resident 'fish' **LCpl Sarah Lee** who has now swum at almost every level of competition, Squadron, Unit, Corps etc etc. Well done!

Finally, only last week a charity fun run took place for Save The Children. The event, arranged by **Cpl Bush** was well attended by all of the Flight and, although much sweat was generated, a lot of money was raised for several local and national charities.

DELTA FLIGHT

D Flt Comd — **Flt Lt Andrew Calder**
Snr Supvr — **WO2 (Suvpr R) Paul Trethewey**

The Flight has seen a few comings and goings in the last couple of month's. **Flt Lt Calder** has joined us from RAF Cranwell, **LCpl Michelle Kendell** has joined us from 11 EOD Regt and **LCpl Tony Green** has returned from o'er the sea! The Flight has also said farewell to **Flt Lt Jason** 'EggFoo' **Young, Sgt John Morris** and **LCpl's Sam Kirton** and **Mark Booth** all away on detachment. Well done to **LCpl Kenny Cross** on passing his T1 course and getting posted to 11 EOD Regt.

A quiet note on the sports front with only the Wilkinson Cup Football Competition of real note. D Flight had a tricky draw against 2 Sqn, but ended up romping home 6-1, however the good performance couldn't be repeated in the 'semis' against A Flight with us being beaten 3-2, with **Cpl's Carl Hoyle** and **Garry Pearcey** netting for D Flight.

We recently held a Family Fun Day/Pyjama Party in the Families Bar, in aid of three worthy charities, The Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust, Imperial Cancer Research Fund and The Foundation of Study into Infant Deaths. The day started off for the kids with numerous activities including a clown, bouncy castle and Lad's v Dad's football match, with the Lad's coming out comfortable winners. The Pyjama Party kicked off in the evening with excellent entertainment from local band. It was a great night all round with the three Charities, each benefiting to a tune of £166.66. September saw the running of the annual D Flight Pool Competition. The evening was looking promising, with 30 named entrants and some local brew on tap. The quarter-finalists, **LCpl Steve Rimmer, JT's Stevie Campbell** and **Matt Scarratt** and **Cpl Dale** 'Popeye' **Clark** fighting it out! The Semi-Finals saw **LCpl John O'Hara** and **JT Phil** 'Grandad' **Davies** being eliminated. The Final, that was hardly nallbiting, was won by **Cpl Carl Hoyle** who convincingly beat **Cpl Kenny Hallard.** All in all it was a good night, thanks to **JT Stevie Cambell** for organising it.

3 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd — **Sqn Ldr Dominic Scott**

TRAINING FLIGHT

Trg Flt Comd — **WO1 (Supvr R) Eric Clee**
SSgt Trg Flt — **SSgt (Supvr R) Frank Dakon**

Well done to **WO1 (Supvr R) Eric Clee** on completing a marathon 24 BFT for various local charities. They managed to clock up 234 miles in 24 hours (roughly 6 minute miles for 24 hours–not bad for the old guys eh?) Also **Eric** indulged his passion for running induced pain by breaking out the long distance spikes and completing the 'Great North Road Run' in aid of several very worthy charities. Also well done to **SSgt (Supvr R)** 'Dink' **Frank Dalton** for completing two gruelling courses back to back and yet still managing to come back to a full work tray! **Cpl Tim** ' What course' **Chapman** on managing to do more resettlement than work in the shortest space of time. (Eh?) Congratulations to **Sgt Ted** 'Pimpernel' **Whichelo** who finally tied the knot with the lovely **Allison.** Thanks to **Cpl Pete** 'Offender' **Best** for organising a fantastic Greek style–plate smashing–line dancing–ouzo drinking, sheftalia eating spectacular! Who remembers the journey home in the mini bus?

STOP PRESS

The lone Royal Signals representative in RAF Digby Station Supply Flt **Cpl Pat Mullen** is posted! Bon voyage to the man who has been here from the start. Goodbye and good luck to you!

243 Sig Sqn Bulford

SHQ TROOP

HELLO'S AND GOODBYE'S

In the past five months we have seen a few of the Squadron stalwarts leave the fold, and the army, after 22 years service, namely **WO2 (SSM) Colin Alexander** and **WO2 (YofS) Bob Smith**. We wish **Colin, Andrea** and **Craig** future success and the same **to 'Robert', Caroline** and **Martin**. The ADA have also lost their good looking asset **Cpl Fran Geddes** who has gone to sunny 9 Sig Regt after successfully being selected for promotion to Sgt, and getting married to 'Polly' **Poulson** from 216 Sig Sqn. To that end we say hello to **WO2 (SSM) Paddy Morrow** and wife **Ally**, welcome to Bulford, and **SSgt Andy Burdge** who has side stepped from the comfortable seat of SSgt Uniform Tp to the 'hot seat' of ADA Salisbury. Farewell to some who have moved on to better things!

SSgt 'Geordie' **Merry** - posted to 16 Sig Regt
Sgt Gavin Henderson - posted to 9 Sig Regt
Cpl Yvonne Jones - posted to Y List 2nd child
Welcome to some new members:
SSgt Bob Lawrence - from 11 Sig Regt
Sgt Almond - from 14 Sig Regt (EW)
Cpl Harding - from 242 Sig Sqn

SPORT AND SOCIAL

For a Troop of about 12 fit and able-bodied personnel, we have managed to fit in a bit of sport. The regular Wednesday calls to the SHQ are met by **Pauline** the chief clerk responding with the familiar answer of, '2IC, Oh he's on a course, Ops Officer is attending the same course and the OC is all at sea at the moment.' Meaning that the 2IC and Ops are fitting in a quick 18 holes at the local golf club and the OC's weekly 'ship to shore' broadcast has not yet arrived. The SSM has been noting this and has been seen polishing his clubs hoping to get himself on a few courses. The ADA dig themselves out from underneath the mountain of paperwork and equipment now and again to stretch their weary bones, with **SSgt Andy Burdge** representing HQ LAND at rugby and cricket and **LCpl Trev Legg** at golf. On the social front **LCpl Trev Legg** has organised a couple of 'go-kart' grand prix events at Andover which have been an enormous success, the hosts Kart World pointing out on many occasions that it's not stock car racing. The days were finished off with the OC, **Maj** 'Jonah' **Neal**, providing the after event drinks, well someone had to come last!

GENERAL'S CUP–ORIENTEERING COMPETITION
by Sig Vincenzi

On a typical British Summers' day, i.e: Cold, wet and miserable, we somehow managed to drag ourselves away from work and down to a wood near Ludgershall, to take part in the General's Cup Orienteering Competition. The Squadron had combined with G6 CIS to form an elite team, including personnel like Comd Comms himself, **Brig Griffin, WO2 (SSM) Morrow** and our very own COMMCEN Supervisor, **Mrs Kay Ezzard**, who kindly volunteered to be our civilian representative. The weather, having failed to dampen the team spirit, proved to be of little hindrance as we went on to win by a clear 200 points. **SSgt** 'greyhound' **Lawrence** came in a magnificent 4th place overall, with Comd Comms hot on his heels in 5th. **SSgt** 'Taff' **Burdge, Cpl Ben**

'Streaky' **Jefferies** and **LCpl Damien** '666' **Davies** being placed joint 21st. The team all finished within the 60 minutes required time slot. Some didn't but, no names no pack drill! It turned out not to be such a cold, wet and miserable day in the end. My thanks go to all those who took part and for making it such a successful day.

LS&GC MEDAL PRESENTATION

The Squadron Officers and SNCO's gathered together in HQ LAND Comd, WO's & Sgts' mess on Wednesday 23rd September, 1997 in order to witness the presentation of medals to **Sgts Ian Foulkes** and **Rod Kenna**. The Squadron are grateful to Comd Comms (LAND) **Brig J. H. Griffin** who accepted the invitation to perform the task of presenting the medals. After the presentation everyone retired to the bar where the traditional dunking of the medals took place. Rumour has it, that the two recipients were overheard later in the bar discussing how lucky they had been in not getting caught during their fifteen years!

Back Row (*L-R*): Maj G. Neal, WO2 (SSM) Morrow
Front Row (*L-R*): Sgt Ian Foulkes, Brig Griffin, Sgt Rod Kenna

S TROOP
by Mr Dennis Harwell CO1

S Tp 'S'ivilian Troop (someone can't spell), 243 Sig Sqn is responsible for manning the static army UK COMMCENS within the old south west district. Three of the COMMCENS, Andover, Bulford and Salisbury, operate on a 24 hour basis. The remainder, Blandford, Bovington, Larkhill, Middle Wallop, South Cerney and Warminster operate on a scheduled hours basis. The static COMMCENS, with the exception of COMMCEN Salisbury, are manned by civilian staff, most of whom are ex-service. The Salisbury COMMCEN has a mixed staff of military and civilian operators.

FOCUS ON COMMCEN SALISBURY
by Mr Barry Lister CO2

I took up the post in March this year. My first thoughts were 'what a tip'. Most of the ceiling had been removed, lights were suspended by bits of wire, in fact it looked like the proverbial bomb had hit it. Not exactly a show piece for a COMMCEN which serves HQ LAND. Since this initial shock, we have gone through a great deal of change. I can now look up at the ceiling without seeing an array of pipework, we have had the painters in and have been promised new carpets before Christmas (this year!). I wonder if we can arrange a visit to the Wilton Carpet shop! It all adds up to a better working environment, this is well overdue.

On the manning side, we are suffering as much as everyone else. I understand there is an army wide shortage in the telegraphist grade, which is resulting in postings out not being replaced by postings in. This, to some extent has been alleviated here in Wilton by the recruitment of civilian communications operators on 2 year fixed term appointments. We eagerly await their joining dates. As with most army COMMCENs, we are still running on old trends and m5000. We have been fortunate enough to have recently been given the replacement to the m4000. I am sure there will not be any tears shed when we see these ailing beasts disappear. In fact there have been plenty of volunteers willing to dispose of these machines in a more violent manner (I think I had better hide the emergency destruction kits!). Along with our ancient COMMCEN equipment we have been plagued by a dodgy lampson tube system which was installed in Wilton after it had been extracted from Noah's Ark. We are currently trialling a PC based sic distribution system as a replacement that if successful, will bring us into the 20th century, just before the 21st century arrives.

Finally, I would like to say welcome to all our new staff both civilian and military and bid farewell to those leaving. Thank you for your co-operation and above all for maintaining a sense of humour, which is essential in todays workplace.

SWS TROOP
Maj (TOT) Peter Davis

Although SWS Tp is entirely a civil service manned organisation with a Maj (TOT) in command, it does employ a number of ex-service personnel. The 2IC is **Mike McMahon** previously of the RAF!

The summer period is always a busy time for the Troop in the south west of England. Our detachment on Dartmoor completed their summer project laying 12,000 metres of cable to replace lightning damaged cable, in some horrendously bad weather and gales. Our external team on Salisbury Plain have completed a variety of projects, including cables from Larkhill to the Fargo Arms Compound, 1000 metres at Middle Wallop to their radar, and 2,500 metres at Perham Down to divert around the rough digging area. In this area we have **Kim Foy** and **John Stockley**, both previously of the Duke of Edinburgh's Regt.

We are also involved in the newer technologies of installing cat 5 structured cabling and working in fibre Cable. Some of our technicians have been involved at QMG Andover in recent weeks providing support for their telephone and structured cabling system. This has mainly been masterminded by **Geoff Graham**, previously a SSgt Tech in the Corps. Our other technicians also get involved in PA activities, installing telephone exchanges and maintaining existing systems such as intercoms and PA on ranges. We have **Bob Nelhams** or **Geoff Kaczanow** or REME. If you are a technician thinking of resettling in the Bulford area why not drop us a copy of your CV!

HQ LAND–TUG OF WAR
by Cpl Ben Jefferies

The HQ LAND Tug of War event was part of the General's Cup (which is an annual interdepartmental competition) and took place on 24th July. All the teams of eight had to have two female team members. Eight of the Squadron's finest tuggers and pullers stepped up to the challenge (in order on the rope–photograph below)

LCpl Leslie Bell-Wigmore, Sig 'Big Jake' Brennan,
SSgt Bernie Smith, Cpl Ben Jefferies, SSgt 'Taff' Burdge,
LCpl Kev Daw, Cpl Mark Woodhouse and anchor man
Sgt Gaz Hinton

The team's first pull was won in a shot and by a clear length. After this the team's performance went slightly downhill, after we sampled the isotonic energy drinks kindly donated by the Sqn PRI (unusual!). Then disaster struck when **Sgt Gaz Hinton** twisted his ankle after stepping on a discarded chilli cheeseburger whilst on his way to the burger-van, but his place was quickly filled by **LCpl Chris Germain**. After several long pulls and a couple of hard tugs the team came . . . 4th. The competition was finally won by GI/G2.

IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL
FOR 25 YEARS UNBLEMISHED SERVICE
by WO2 (SSM) 'Paddy' Morrow

On Tuesday 19th August 1997 **Mr Simon Phippen** was presented with the Imperial Service Medal as a mark of 25 years excellent service as a civil servant within the MoD. The medal was presented by **Lt Col Sinton**, CON AFTS, HE 2 (NC) Sig Bde.

Mr Phippen's service to the crown commenced back in 1951 when he joined the RAF (no taste!). There, during 12 years he saw active service in both Cyprus and Suez and also participated in atomic bomb testing in Australia. After leaving the RAF in 1964 he joined the civil service as a specialist teleprinter operator. Remaining in the MoD he later became a communications officer for 243 Sig Sqn in the COMMCEN at Andover. He retired from the civil service in December 1996.

Lt Col Sinton presenting Mr Simon Phippen with his long service certificate. In the background
WO2 (SSM) 'Paddy' Morrow looking slightly smug!

259 Sig Sqn
BFPO 53

ARMY COLOURS

Six members of 259 Sig Sqn received Army Colours on 1st August 1997. They were presented to **SSgt Kev Tunstall, Sgt Michael Macphee, Sig 'Taff' James** and **Sig Owen Trimble** for their efforts on the Rugby pitch and to **Sigs Shepherd** and **Karl Flannigan** for their notable representation at Athletics. These are all commendable achievements for both themselves and for the Squadron.

Sig James, Sgt Macphee, SSgt Tunstall, Sig Trimble,
Sig Shepherd and Sig Flannigan

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Finneran**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stenhouse**

During the month of July the Troop said goodbye to **SSgt 'Yogi' Cauldwell** and hello to **SSgt Bob Stenhouse, SSgt (FofS) Eric O'Halloran, Sgt Phil Parton** and their respective families.

LIGHTNING EVADER

Early in July an expedition led by **Capt Finneran**, OC Afd Tp, took eight members of Afd Tp and five personnel from RAF Akrotiri from the sunny shores of Cyprus to a wet and windy UK. The first leg of a long journey that would terminate at St. Girons in the French Pyrenees. The purpose of the exercise was to walk the 'Liberty Trail', one of the routes taken by wartime evaders over the Pyrenees into neutral Spain. We duly departed on the Portsmouth to Roscoff ferry although the second minibus almost didn't, due to the late arrival of a couple of our friends in blue (no names mentioned).

On arrival in Brittany we then drove to our overnight stop, an ex-resistance hideout barn in the grounds of an old châteaux, near the small village of Ploha. The following morning, after a hearty breakfast of 'du pain et confiture', our epic journey to the South of France began in earnest. Although a three and a half-hour detour around Nantes and two circumnavigations of Bordeaux, both clockwise and anticlockwise slightly increased the travelling time (due to a certain female officer's incredible map reading!). We finally arrived at our overnight accommodation some thirteen hours later quite drained and looking forward to our evening meal, which according to our trained linguist was to be chicken and chips but somehow changed into steak! The final leg of the journey to St. Girons began early the next morning and we arrived at the campsite at lunchtime with no further detours. The next three days were taken up doing training walks to loosen up for the main event.

Day One: The main event began with a wreath laying ceremony at 0700hrs at the war memorial in St. Girons. The team then set off with their bergens weighing around 70lbs, accompanied by the guide to navigate the Liberty Trail. The first day's trekking was of mixed terrain and weather, mainly uphill through forest and high pasture land. At midday the group stopped for lunch, provided by a large contingent of local people, where 'The Boss' was actively pursued by a lady shouting 'Mon Capitaine' wherever he went. Lunch finished with another wreath laying ceremony dedicated to a wartime guide who was shot for helping evaders in the area. The first day finished at around 1830hrs having walked approximately 30km, everyone looking forward to a well earned rest, a good meal and the chance to dry out our wet gear at the 'gite', our resting place for the night.

Day Two began in foul weather with a very steep climb through forest clad hills, the narrow track following the contour lines and quite often very dangerous. It was noticeably steeper than Day One, everyone now beginning to feel the weight of their bergens digging into their shoulders. Eventually, after 8 hours hard walking, we left the tree line and 2 hours later arrived at a shepherd's hut, our overnight stop. Bergens were dropped with relief and gas cookers appeared rapidly as everyone looked forward to a hot meal. A huge fire was lit as most of our kit was now soaked through.

Day Three began with the painful extraction from our sleeping bags and departure at 0700 hrs, off we went, totally unaware of what lay ahead. This was to be a day of testing physical endurance as the route now ran into the mountains, climbing higher and higher with the air becoming thinner. Definitely the most demanding day of the whole exercise. We then stopped at another 'gite' that night and prepared for the final day that would terminate on the Spanish border crossing.

Day Four saw a pleasant change of terrain when the team set off from the 'gite', taking a long 2 hours to descend to the valley floor and then another 4 hours to ascend Mount Valour, on the other side. We traversed the ice fields to the summit that was the highlight of the day, then lunch was eaten at the side of a mountain lake that proved to be ice cold when several members of the group followed **Sig Wilkinson**'s example and had a well earned swim. Late that afternoon having reached the border crossing point, and after another descent, the team were pleased to hear that the walk was now complete and transport whisked us off to a reception to be held in the local 'Marie'. The mixed team felt a great sense of achievement, having all completed the 140km trek, which was the main part of the exercise. Meeting the veterans and the local French people was also interesting and the team proved to be excellent ambassadors for both the Armed Forces and for Great Britain. Day Three at the mountain phase however, is not to be repeated for a long long time to come.

DHEKELIA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Merry**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt K. C. McGirr**

Welcomes go out to the new Tp Comd, **Capt Merry**. The new storeman **Sgt Glen Cavanagh** direct from Ireland and all the new mechs, namely **Sig** 'Lloyd' **Farrow, Sig** 'Wookie' **Baldwin, Sig** 'Studley' **Tomblin, Sig** 'Flex 'n Pose' **Barnett** and **Sig** 'Dinger' **Ling** all from the Production Line in Blandford. Goodbyes to **Sgt Mark** 'Run Forrest, Run' **Yates** off to 20 Bde . **Sgt Neil** 'The Tree Just Jumped Out' **Blenkinsop** and **LCpl Keir** 'Mein Fuhrer' **Gilchrist** who are both off to sunny Ireland, **Cpl Ian** 'Nice Bloke PTI' **Hughes** to 11 Sigs and **LCpl Col** 'Flippin' Eck' **Davies** to 14 Sigs.

ALL ISLAND RAFT RACE

Recently the RE Raft Race at CESSAC beach in Dhekelia was enjoyed by most units in Cyprus, unfortunately the female contingent of 259 Sigs ably led by **Capt** 'Was it supposed to float?' **Waudby** encountered a few problems, the main one being that the race was held on water and actually required the raft to float and stay in one piece! The mens' team, consisting of **Cpls** 'Big Ron' **Burniston** and 'Taff' **Lougher** and **LCpls Ryan** 'Nearly Married' **Sedgwick** and **Gary** 'Love Pigeon' **Little**, fared slightly better in the fact that after a tremendous amount of effort and screaming they came a very respectable mid table.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Newton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tierney**

HMS *HERALD* DETACHMENT
by Sig Simon Davies

Between the 1st and the 7th July, four junior ranks and one officer were offered the opportunity to sample naval life on HMS *Herald*. On the Monday morning we were sent to 84 Sqn at Akrotiri to be flown out by helicopter and winched on board ship. This was an interesting experience as I have never been in a helicopter let alone been dangled from one by a rope! Once on board we still didn't know what they had in store for us. The ship's doctor, who promptly supplied us with seasickness tablets, greeted us. The doctor then took us to the galley for lunch and explained that we would be basically getting an insight into all the ship's departments and the purpose of the ship.

HMS *Herald* is a geographical survey ship and its main task was to take samples of water from the Mediterranean at different depths that are sent back to England for testing. These samples are collected by the use of a probe surrounded by a metal cage, which is lowered into the sea by a winch.

Another task was to do beach surveys. Other than work there were a few social events due to their 6-month tour coming near to completion. There was an 'It's a Knockout' type of competition involving games such as human skittles, in which I was used as the ball. There was also an evening 'do' put on in the style of 'Noel's House Party' which had various forms of entertainment, a magician, a raffle and even their very own Mr Blobby. In all it was an excellent night. The visit to HMS *Herald* was a big eye opener into how the Royal Navy way of life compares to ours. It was an experience enjoyed by all and one that won't be forgotten for a while.

280 (UK) Sig Sqn
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ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt Gareth Lamb**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt Tony Barker**

The August rotation in Bosnia has changed many of the faces in Alpha Tp once more. Suffice to say welcome back to reality to all those on Tranche 3 and good luck to Tranche 4, many of whom are beginning their second free holiday to the Balkans this year.

A sad farewell from the Troop to **Cpl John** 'Concrete Head' **Gill** and hello to all the new arrivals, particularly those from Blandford. After the re-introduction period and leave, the Troop deployed to Haltern Training Area for Ex Muddy Track, a comms exercise without any comms. (That'll be battle camp then!). A (-dmin) Tp were quite comfortable in their section tents unlike B (-asha) Tp who lived rough and shaved with Rambo knives (although they did have plenty of wet wipes!).

Apart from **Cpl Dougie Icke** who saw most of the CFT from the safety rover, the Squadron managed to complete most of their ATD's for this year. In between we undertook some highly enjoyable Infantry skills training (but then I'm biased, and yes, it was the biggest hill I could find!). Artist of the month award goes to **Sig Nigel** 'Tony Hart' **Foulkes** for his masterpiece depicting nuclear holocaust on his NBC exam. Finally, we feel that **Sig** 'Accrington Stanley' **Edwards** deserves a special mention for telling us all about how she became recruited into the Army. Apparently, instead of catching the 130 bus to Liverpool Crown Court, she caught the 140 by accident and by a strange twist of fate ended up outside the Army Careers Office. Best you get on the right bus to Bosnia in December then!

SSgt Tony Barker and Cpls Dougie Icke and Al Pearson reserving their seats for the CFT

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd — **Lt J. M. Evans**
Tp SSgt — **SSgt T. W. Davies**

The last couple of months have seen a lot of personality changes within the Troop. This is mainly due to the continuing Bosnia commitments. The lads who returned in August for a few months rest got to spend a week in camp (sanity assessment week) before departing on some well earned leave. It also gave them a chance to meet many of the Troop with whom they were totally unacquainted. Luckily all of those who deployed to Bosnia in August and those of us earmarked to go in the near future got to go on a week's holiday to Warminster. Hoping for suntan, chicks and beer bellies you can imagine our disappointment when the dream holiday Green Coats produced a lampoon itinerary. Not to labour too much on the holiday from hell, we all got back to St Tonis safely. Here we found what was left of the Troop making the most of the excellent weather and showing more interest in football than in the stories of gallantry we had invented for them.

All too keen to listen though were the Troop's newest additions, **LCpl** 'Mac' **McGlinchy, Sig Tracy Holland** and **Sig Jeanette Lloyd.** A hearty welcome into the fold for all of them and a tip for the future if you want to get on in **Sig Andy King's** Troop develop a more than 30-second attention span. As always sadly many of the old team have departed in the last couple of months and as always we wish them well. So **Sgt Boris Scaife** and **Sgt** 'Fatboy' **Jenkins** good luck on your FofS course **Cpl** 'Peeps' **Medcraft** don't fall off your skis in Aspen (jammy so'n so) and **Cpl Shaun Dore** enjoy 5 Div.

EXERCISE MUDDY TRACK

Ably organised by **SSgt Tezza Murrell** in the Sqn Trg Wing the exercise was designed to practise and test us on our ATDs and a range of other mentally and physically demanding skills. A difficult task considering just how out of practice some of us had become. So with everything arranged we set out to the Haltern Training Area where once in location and after a few basic fieldcraft lessons B Tp got to basha up whilst A Tp were mothered into tented accommodation (oh how they laughed).

The dawning of the second day saw us shipped to the ranges in an attempt to qualify us in our APWT. After a fair chunk of coaching on the zeroing range by **SSgt Melotte** and **Cpl Tony Rosen** we progressed onto the ETR and all successfully passed first time. In the afternoon the crack shots, split into their sections and were taken through section battle drills and anti ambush drills. This seemed to go well until **Cpl Tony Caban** got himself extracted from the exercise and Section Two found itself being commanded by **LCpl** 'Gilly' **Gilbert** a nice lad who just kept falling over and couldn't work out the difference between C+D fire teams. After another night in bashas and Alpha in their canvas commune we arose in anticipation of the intersection patrol competition. The competition was split into 8 stands, first aid theory and practical observation, map reading, NBC and three command tasks, blind leading the blind, command and control and bridge crossing. In the view of everybody this turned out to be the best day of a very good week. It was rounded off with patrols to the Section in Defence night-shoot range (a new experience for all) and of course returning to build our bashas.

Thursday was much more relaxed with a spot of theory in the morning and the CFT along the route from hell in the afternoon. However, even though the first four miles were up and over hills on a loose shale track with the afternoon sun beating mercilessly down upon us and the second four miles along a tarmac road baked by the sun to perfection, we of the Bravo still all comfortably passed with only one injury. This was to **Sig Tracy Holland** who pulled a muscle taking her bergan off at the end. We comfortably beat Alpha on the injury score by only having one down to their amazing 9. The Tp Staffie, **SSgt Tom Davies** swears this is due to our bashering up instead of cuddling up and the Tp Comd, **Lt Evans** reckons her half time oranges were the secret of the CFT success. Thursday evening, after a well earned shower, we tucked into a top notch barbecue and of course it was Prizegiving time. Bravo Tp were outright winners of just about everything with Sect 1 (Rickie's Rangers) and Sect 2 (Gillies Gladiators), coming 1st and 2nd in the inter section competition. We also topped the individual performance charges with **LCpl Tom Atkinson** having not only had the best map reading score but sharing the top NBC score with **LCpl Danny Bailes** and some geezer from A Troop. Finally the award for best shot going to **Sig** 'Dead eye' **Turner** on loan to us from the MT.

The Exercise was rounded off on the last day with an introduction to Fire Team assessments, this is basically a two mile CFT followed immediately by a totally new shoot to all of us. Again another dubiously enjoyable experience only this time we got to return to camp and proper beds afterwards. On the whole an excellent week and lots of success for the boys and girls of Bravo. Finally though a couple of messages: thank you to the Trg Wing and all the DS for a rewarding week and thank you A Tp for making us look good.

QM DEPARTMENT

QM — **Capt B. J. Dalton**
RQMS — **WO2 W. L. Cox**

The past few months have seen much to-ing and fro-ing between Krefeld and our second home in Sarajevo. A big welcome back to the QM, **Capt Brian Dalton,** after completing his first 10 months in Bosnia. His plans to reduce his golf handicap have been shelved in favour of language training in Serbo Croat. Also returning to the peaceful tranquillity of Krefeld are, **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Brummie' **Cox, Sgt** 'Scottie' **Scott** and **Sigs Nickie Pullen** and 'Woody' **Wood,** who have all enjoyed their glorious summer off. Welcome back, but don't relax. There's still the Board of Officers to come! Replacing them in Sarajevo is our new and enthusiastic SQMS, **SSgt Rob Melotte,** plus **LCpl** 'Bax' **Botwright, LCpl Jim McPhie** (REME) and **Sig** 'Chippy' **Williams,** all there to celebrate Christmas and New Year!

Good luck and best wishes to **SSgt Al Eley, Denise** and their family who have returned to the UK for their last six months. Also to **Cpl Billy Fowler, Vickey** and their family who are off to civvy street and finally **Sig Geordie Rees** who is posted to 11 Sig Regt and YES, they are all fighting for your old corner of the bar. By the time this reaches print **Sig Nickey Pullen** will be en route for the Emerald Isle along with her husband **Daz.** Thanks for all your hard work support and friendship over these past few months. Hello's to **LCpl Powell** and **LCpl Carlin** and his family. Don't believe all you hear. 280 (UK) Sig Sqn is not always busy, you do sometimes get the weekends off as we do aim to please.

Combined Arms COMSEC Team (Germany)

OC — **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle.**
YofS — **SSgt (YofS)** 'Pete' **Van den Broek.**

On the first of September, all of the team managed to return from their (well deserved!) month off from the green kit. Being part of an organisation such as CAFTG(G), we don't get much in the way of leave between Summer and Christmas. With a strange lump in our tummies, in the singlies case the lump was probably what the cookhouse claimed to be breakfast, we assembled in the Tp offices. The mood was sombre. Luckily, the singlies soon changed all that turning up ready to go, in . . . wait for it . . . jumper order (not till October lads). One quick debrief later and the usual questions of the 'Did you get in trouble with the police, get married or mugged?' variety, and we were off down the garages. We had two weeks to prep the wagons for everything that CAFTG(G) could throw at them, which is a considerable everything, in the coming months. Each of the team's vehicles had to be brought up to pinnacle of maintenance perfection, in the case of our battling four-tonners, this mammoth task began by getting their engines running. Soon the garages were back to the way they were before leave. With BFBS blaring, members of the team soon started moving about the garages in the good hands of various coloured paint pots. A new life form was discovered, having spent the last month in the teapot. It instantly claimed squatters rights, but we soon had it evicted, it was last seen heading towards the artillery garages, muttering to itself. To give us a respite from all this cleaning, **LCpls** (and we kid you not) 'Taff' and 'Ed' **Edwards** put together a presentation on the Inner German Border (these pair even share the same birthday!). Despite the complete lack of information on this subject anywhere, except on the Berlin Wall, they put together a presentation complete with pictures of how it was, provided by **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle**, and snazzy title's and diagrams using PowerPoint. The presentation was backed up by a trip to the border itself. The trip proved to be an interesting diversion from the norm as well. On the long drive to old East Germany, we stopped off in a village for a leg stretch, where the team took to feeding the ducks in a local pond with their packed lunches. The ducks ate every bit, proving that death packs aren't as bad as we think, they are, at least, fit for animal consumption.

First stop on the great COMSEC tour was a museum in Helmstedt catering for the old inner German border. The museum was full of memorabilia from the wall including, amongst other things, old signs, motorcycles, uniforms and landmines. There were also a large number of notes explaining various bits and bobs, unfortunately all in German. But we managed at least to grasp a small insight in to the history of the wall. The uniforms caused a few chuckles from **Sig** 'Scott' **Yuill**. There was a display showing an American uniform, complete with a few miles of lanyards, braid and more badges than a 22 year boy scout! Next to this was a uniform of a border guard from what was the NVA, or 'National Volks Army. With a distinct lack of anything other than strange dash camouflage, we believe it was a recruit's uniform. Despite offers of large sums of money the museum declined to sell them to us, although anything that can cause **Sig** 'Scott' **Yuill** to smile, let alone laugh, is worth it's weight in gold. Then it was to the border itself. The village of Hotensleben has preserved a 400 metre section of the wall and all defences just as it was in the bad old days. As we came over the brow of a hill, it was there (cue dramatic, heart wrenching music!), well some of it was anyway. Built by the Soviet's to hold back the impending onslaught of imperialist, capitalist tanks and men and to keep the population of the Deutsche Democratic Republic from escaping from the pleasures of their workers paradise. It has to be said that the wall looked flimsy. However, when combined with the guard towers, which once sported machine guns and searchlights, not to mention a number of other security devices such as tripods of railway track (collectively known as 'Dragons teeth'), minefields and motorcycle patrols, the flimsiness of the pre-fab concrete wall could soon be discounted.

The team also took time to wander on the immediate 'West' side of the border. We were walking where once, East German border guards sat in a trench system, now half collapsed, with fingers on their triggers surrounded by mines and trip wires, flares and pschyo guard dogs making sure other members of their stag didn't run away. On the way back, the team sampled a little of the friendly eastern German culture. The team sat wide-eyed by the verbal torrent flowing from our waitress/cook/ owner's mouth. Only one man was up to the task of deciphering this language, **SSgt (YofS)** 'Pete' **van den Broek**, speaker of three languages (and a bit of Polish) (and maybe a smattering of French). Much to the envy of others, he sat and chatted with our hostess and translated her jabbering for us less linguistically endowed souls. After a quick lunch we started a trek west.

On the way however we managed to stop at another memorial to the barbarity of man. This time it was a war grave of one thousand and sixteen Jews and prisoners of war at Gardelegen. These people had been forced marched from their respective concentration camps in the outer areas of the Third Reich to the inner areas in an attempt, by the Nazis, to cover up their crimes. Many died on the way, some of those that didn't die were forced into a small barn about 20 metres by 10 metres. Which was then machine gunned and torched. Some are believed to have escaped but the guards, waiting outside shot down those that did run from the blazing inferno. The American forces managed to liberate the area only one day later and organised the locals to come up and witness, first hand, their country's barbarity. After which the locals helped remove the bodies and bury them less than a hundred metres away, in a graveyard. The first thing you notice about this graveyard, other than its vast expanse, is the lack of names on the crosses. The only form of identification, (some have none), on the crosses is a six figure number obtained from the tattooed bodies. The Americans also entrusted the upkeep of this war grave to the local people living near the area. Strangely enough, the Soviet war cemetery in the town is kept in a much more pristine condition although the last Russians left nearly 6 years ago.

A few days later we found ourselves on another long drive only this time it was green orientated. At 0400hrs, on a fine Saturday morning, the team and their vehicles lined up ready and able, if not willing, to deploy to Poland (again!) on Ex Ulan Eagle 1997. After a near 24hr journey we pulled up on the DSG, the traditional convoy release-point in Poland and swiftly removed themselves to their usual secluded hill top location. The team promptly began setting up in the well used site. This time, the location had been marked on every map, when they were produced, as an Out of Bounds area. Nevertheless, this measure had no more effect on the exercising troops than the previous method, by word of mouth. And it wasn't long before we had our first visitors, a Spartan recce vehicle from the engineers. When told he was in an Out of Bounds area the commander was sure he was about a kilometre north, and argued his case. But the team has had experience in this subject which is second to none, except for the local Polish forestmeister. Other interesting visitors included lost divisional recce, lost Bde engineers and lost OPFOR who had the temerity to knock down two of our trees as they thundered past in their tank things. The set up went ahead without difficulty, as it usually does, up to the point the latest addition to the team's arsenal ranged against radio wrongdoers (No, not an MLRS), but a Clark 74 on loan from 30 Sigs. With the entire team stood around its base, the mast soon began its (extremely long) ascent to clear the tree line 90 feet above us. With lots of shouting and mild insults, and the removing of a few branches that were in the way of guys, the mast went up. Then it came down a bit, up a bit, down a bit and finally up. 'What shall we do with these last two sections?' 'Stick 'em in the GS, we don't need 'em'.

The team soon settled into the 12 on, 12 off routine which was frequently broken on occasions by the arrival of visitors, lots of them. The OC, **YofS** and **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** had their work cut out as they briefed each batch on the vagaries of the Monitoring System, with a few hints on COMSEC to personnel from 2 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 1 ADSR and the RLC. We also hosted a large contingent from our own organisation, the Combined Arms Field Training Group (Germany) (CAFTG(G)) including our Commander (ex Royal Anglian) on an at least once daily basis, reps from our Armd Inf Trg Advisory Team (AITAT), Royal Armd Corps Trg Advisory Team (RACTAT), Combat Eng Trg Centre (CETC) and RA (both field and air defence). Every groups' attention was focused at some point on the Clark 73, towering impressively above the site, its twin lights warning passing pilots of the mast's location, as they flew underneath it. The Lion Rampant that fluttered proudly on the highest point in Drawsko Pomorski training area was donated by **Sergeant Major** 'Alec' **Anderson** of 1 RHF, one of our very own armoured infanteers. This influx of tourists had a severe effect on our milk supply which soon dwindled. Every group gets a cup of tea,

even generals, so perhaps there may be a case for a cow or, at the very least, a small goat for next year. We finally received our very own portaloos, not bad going considering the months we have spent in Poland, the family running the business kept it in the family and turned up regularly every day, complete with grandma to clean up this side of life.

The OC and YofS managed to have a close encounter with a high speed Warrior which crested their hill from the other side at precisely the same moment they did, 10 out of 10 for evasive driving! **LCpl** 'Taff' **Edwards** soon became known as OIC disasters, the only man to be involved in every one we had. In the early days of the exercise disaster struck. **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and **Sig** 'Vic' **Vernon** had to be casevac'd away with suspected broken back and ribs and two broken legs, one complicated, respectively. A doctor was flown in and prescribed one flight in a Lynx, and a bit of R and R outside Gazelle Flight's tent, playing cards. No, this doctor is not a quack, both made a speedy recovery and returned to passive duty later that day. But then they were only acting as casualties anyway. **LCpl** 'Ed' **Edwards** ('driving') and **Sig** 'Andy' **Powell** ('navigating') managed to bog the landrover up to its rear axles. As driver, **LCpl** 'Ed' **Edwards** arrived back at location encrusted in mud to beg assistance. We arrived to find the landrover already recovered by a passing homemade Polish tractor. Area cleaning was no problem as we were regularly swept by an extended line of Polish mushroom-pickers, some of whom travelled the length of Poland just to be here. The team was joined by **WO1 (SMIS) Alan Mellor**, of the Combat Engineers Training Centre (CETC), which is another element of CAFTG(G). He advises the Corps of RE on comms matters throughout 1 (Armd) Div and was able to see, or hear, first hand what his own corps was giving away on the nets. This was extremely useful and the lessons learned will be incorporated into signals training throughout the RE as approved by CRE, no less.

The Bde Ex kept us busy before a walk through/talk through of the Div Comd Bde Ex across this, high entertainment value, training area. We've seen Challenger main battle tanks struggle where the Fiat Polski goes with ease! and was followed by the traditional CAFTG (G) curry and warm beer for our Polish hosts and interpreters. The Div Comd Bde ex was extremely busy with the team intercepting and jamming like never before, it was nice to see the COMSEC message being taken on board. Later that day **LCpl** 'GWA' **Edwards** and **Sigs** 'Vic' **Vernon** and 'Scott' **Yuill** went down to the waters' edge and watched the British Armys' new M3 rig in use. These huge vehicles are able to form in to ferries to transport vehicles from one bank to another. If the river is not too wide the M3's can be linked together to form a bridge. The seemingly benign activities of some assault boats on the river soon transformed into a bitter cross-river assault and trench clearing operation. As those taking part in the assault disappeared into the forest and the sounds of battle drifted away, the trio returned to location.

Another arrival, boosting the number of personnel to a record breaking twelve, was **Hilary Farbowski** (yes, the name is Polish) all the way from Blighty. Having flown into Szczecin international airport (which is actually 30km from Szczecin in another unpronounceable place spelled Goleniow) via Copenhagen, she was shown the kit, shown her quarters (sharing with **Sig** 'Andy' **Powell**), and put to work. Amongst other things she was able to give a quick brief of the role and facilities of CESG (AKA 'The Fiction Factory) and other input on the security side of communications. She stared wide-eyed as Challenger and Warrior type vehicles carved their track tracks all over the countryside. She bravely ventured into various battle group HQ where, unknown to her, a story had been planted that she was the inventor of BATCO. **Hilary** enjoyed her time in the field and takes some interesting lessons back to CESG. With all these people in the location, space was at a premium. Especially in the morning, with the day shift coming on (eight in total) and one from the night shift attempting to cook breakfast, the small 12 x 12 soon emulated scenes from the Tokyo underground in rush hour. We really should have brought out a 12 x 24, but then hindsight is always 20/20. To coincide with the visit of the Armed Forces Minister, the REs decided to fire a Giant Viper. This bit of kit, for those who don't know, is a huge rocket fired from a trailer. This is noisy enough, but the rocket tows behind it a not insubstantial length of explosive in a tube. This is then detonated to clear a track through a minefield. Even ten kilometres away the explosion was loud enough to wake the nocturnal night shift.

The team are looking forward to a sailing expedition, ably skippered by **SSgt (YofS)** 'Pete' **van den Broek** and those members of the team not yet acquainted with the sport, **LCpl's** 'Ed' and 'Taff' **Edwards** and **Sig** 'Andy' **Powell**, earning their 'water wings'. Meanwhile, **Sigs** 'Vic' **Vernon** heads off to Bad Lippspringe for parachuting and 'Scott' **Yuill** head to North Wales for a spot of climbing. Of course our four intrepid singlies will be deploying to Blandford for the Royal Signals half marathon. But that's another story, next issue. The team would like to welcome, **Capt** 'Tommy' **Baldwin** from Aldershot, **LCpl** 'Ed' **Edwards** and his wife **Anne-Marie** from 14 Sigs and **LCpl** 'Taff' **Edwards** from 30 Sigs. Farewells go to 3 of our longest serving team members, **Capt** 'Mac' **McCrindle** and **Julie** on posting to Cyprus, **Cpl** 'Mick' **Murphy** and **Carrie** to 30 Sigs and **LCpl** 'Aus' **Gambles** and **Sarah** to 1 Mech Bde, we wish them all the best for the future.

COMSEC MONITORING TEAM (UK) WARMINSTER

OC — **Capt Terry Crosby**
YofS — **SSgt (YofS) Mark Hogan**

COMSEC Monitoring Team (UK) as at October 1997
Back Row (*L-R*): LCpl Geoff Wilman, Sig Renne Stuart, Cpl Steve Smith, Sig Marc Dunbavand
Front row(*L-R*): Capt Terry Crosby, Sig Sara Glasspool, SSgt (YofS) Mark Hogan, LCpl Tony King

Located in sleepy Warminster surrounded by our Infantry friends, the last few months have seen the Team deploy twice to BATUS and on the usual TESEX's run here on sunny Salisbury Plain.

MEDMAN 3/97

Four personnel from CMT(UK) packed their bags (again!) and headed off to BATUS, Canada to assess the comsec of the latest battle group to roll across the prairie. Led by **SSgt (YofS)** 'Barry Sheen' **Hogan** and his 3 disciples, **LCpl** 'Roboleg' **Wilman**, **LCpl** 'Send me to NI' **King** and **Sig** 'Bullet' **Glasspool**, we left sunny Blighty on an Air Canada flight

Departure day MEDMAN 3/97 (7th July 1997)

bound for Calgary taking full advantage of the free liquid refreshments. In theatre and after receiving the various briefings, the Team had a 'joyous' task of bringing the COMSEC det up to working order. Having had hoards of MCL monitoring equipment experience **LCpl Tony King** and **LCpl Geoff Wilman** set about restoring the MCL pack. Not a simple task, especially with limited spares. Once complete, the Team eventually set off to monitor Ex Cassino, a two-day live firing ex for the QDG BG. During the second days activities the flexibility of the Team was again tested as **YofS Mark Hogan** and Team had to switch trades to fix the 'not so operator friendly' generator. After completing the first stint of work, the Team headed off for a spot of R&R aboard the Teams battlebus hired from a friend. We spent one night in Calgary, just in time to catch the end of the famous Calgary stampede, closely followed by three days in Banff. Whilst there **LCpl** 'I wanna be a cowboy and a secret wayonna sue fan' **King** purchased the latest CD to add to his already growing country and western music collection. Days later, hundreds of dollars lighter and a few hangovers in the bag, the Team arrived back in BATUS, refreshed!! and ready to tackle the final working phase of this deployment. Fun was had by all.

MEDMAN 4/97

Two weeks later, the second half of the Team departed in high spirits on Medman 4/97. The det consisted of the OC, **Capt Terry Crosby, Cpl Steve Smith, LCpl Geoff Wilman** and **Sig** (dbv) **Dunbavand**. On arrival at Crowfoot the OC was promptly dispatched to the Officers' Mess, while the rest of the det was forced (under duress) to spend the next three weeks sleeping in the senior officers bunks for the visiting BG (isn't life so hard sometimes). As a warm up, the det deployed on to the prairie to run up the equipment (which had seen better days) and to refine our working practices. This went as well as could be expected with only about half of the kit developing a fault within the first five hours! Five hours was long enough–it was time for R&R! After hiring the cheapest but probably the worst RV (recreational vehicle) on the North American continent we set off (in the pouring rain) to the wilds of the Canadian Rockies. First stop on the way to Banff National Park was an overnight stop in Calgary. With numerous cries of, 'It's okay we're British,' we managed to navigate the one-way system and reversed into our parking space at the ninth attempt (not before draining half of the power steering reservoir). Feeling something like the poor relations, the four of us managed to settle down for the night whilst being overshadowed by all the other RV's in the park that housed two but could easily have taken another fifty. The next day (it was still raining) we carried on with our travels up and into the rockies. A fun time was had by all doing the 'touristy' bit walking around Banff and the surrounding hills, visiting the world famous golf course and the beautiful areas like Lake Louise. Back in Banff the boss was doing his bit for UK/Canadian relations by allowing himself to be used as a participant in a self defence lesson being executed by two ex-members of the Canadian forces. Details are still unclear about what happened next, however it is safe to say that only one slight pinch to the nose was all it took to have the boss reeling backwards off of his chair. It was soon time to head home via a stop off at trails end (adventure training camp) for a spot of white water rafting. We duly arrived at the put in place and casually viewed the calm, supposed grade 3 rapid they called the 'widow maker'. And then they opened the dam! On seeing the foaming caldron, **LCpl Wilman** was a little dubious but soon entered into the spirit of things and even showed off by staying under the water for 18 seconds! Looking like a very nearly drowned . . . no, dead rat he finally managed to surface to a round of applause from the shore. Apparently it was the best scare they had had for ages! A very enjoyable day was had by all with cries of 'good job' from our psychotic guide and the Lords' Prayer from us. We made it back to Crowfoot in time to start Ex Totalize which I'm glad to say passed without incident (and the sun finally came out long enough to get a bit of a tan).

ORIENTEERING

Not content to win the Corps Junior Championships back in May, **Sig Renne Stuart** managed to survive and win the Army Championships as well, all in his first season. Congratulations, it's into the big league next year!

ROYAL SIGNALS IN COMMANDO FORCES

FAREWELLS AND HELLOS

There will have been a large turnaround of people between the last set of *Wire* Notes in April 1997 and when these go to print.

Farewells to: **SSgt Pete Hatton** who is going, on well deserved promotion, to the TA as a PSI with 94 Sqn in Reading (a slight change in pace after 3 years globetrotting with the Cdo Bde). He says he, 'Will be gentle with them.' **Sgt John Watkins** goes to 216 Para in October, also on promotion, after his tour in Commando Logistic Regiment. Then **Cpl Si Mills** and **Sgt Rob Sear** who have both vacated the tech workshops for civvy street and **Capt Neil Fraser** who departs HQ Royal Marines, after two busy years, to join 208 Sqn, 1 ADSR for a year in Germany.

Hellos to: **Sgt Tom Gibbons** from 30 Sigs, returning to Plymouth to run the Cypher Cell. A rather late hello to **Cpl Dave Monger,** also from 30 who, after a short spell in the Cypher Cell, is moving to Cdo Logs. Also hello to **Cpl Dave Field** who moves into **Cpl Monger**'s slot (another from the 30 Sigs club–obviously **WO2 (FofS) Bill McCreath** is doing some networking). The FofS is apparently attempting to 'beef up' his Tech Workshops (his words) to cover a shortfall and deal with all the new equipment coming in. Finally, welcome to **Capt Pete Drew** (wait for it . . . from 30 Sigs), who takes over the Portsmouth desk and hopes to get a break from the in tray with a few weeks at Lympstone in the New Year.

Congratulations to: **Cpl Lou Walker** who successfully completed his All Arms Cdo Course on a somewhat soggy day in June; **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan** who passed his Jungle Warfare Instructors Course in July and to **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge** on his recent marriage.

RECENT ACTIVITIES
EXERCISE SETIA KAWAN 2

This deployment saw 3/4 of the Bde, together with the Royal Bruneian Armed Forces, carrying out amphibious assaults and jungle operations in Brunei from late April to the end of May linked into the Ocean Wave six month deployment. 2 x VSC 501 were deployed from 30 Sig Regt, alas after day 2, Skynet decided to head off elsewhere and the footprint was lost. **WO2 (YofS) Dave Trevelion RM,** from HQRM running the J6 coord desk, masterminded a comms plan with **WO2 (FofS) Bill McCreath** which utilised DUST modems, INMARSAT, STU IIBS, secure faxes, data transfer PCs and (oddly) BT Chargecards!! (taking 'alternative means' to the full). This provided full facilities to the 150 staff at the Joint Operational Command Centre. 3 Cdo Bde RM also deployed the new Data Radio System (based on HARRIS PRC138, BID 1750 and ATacCS machines) both on land and at sea, which was a success in testing communications conditions. Several of the Corps managed to get into the jungle and **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan** liked it so much he went back for the full course.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

3 Cdo Bde RM is now completing a major concentration on SENTA (Ex Rolling Deep) as work up training for the forthcoming Winter Deployment at the end of the year. Almost the whole Bde will deploy (together with 1 Bn RNLNMC) to Norway for 6 weeks and then move to France for 3 weeks 'combat enhancement' training with 9 DIMA (the French Commandos) before finally joining Ex Strong Resolve for 4 weeks in Spain. Needless to say there is a great deal of comms planning to be done and **WO2 Bill McCreath** has to visit Paris, Madrid and Amsterdam with HQRM and 3 Cdo Bde RM recce teams. A hard life and he gets paid for the privilege.

The end of the 30 miler
(*L-R*): Cpl Si Mills, Sgt Pete Hatton,Sgt John Watkins, Capt Neil Fraser, Cpl Mark Jackson, Cpl Lou Walker (in large new beret) and Sgt Deano Cartledge

WIRE PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in The Wire, to be returned, unless they are irreplaceable. Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing a photograph that cannot be replaced.

NEWS FROM UOTCs

Sheffield UOTC

Ex Bavarian Blend, an adventurous training exercise, began in October 1996, and sought to take advantage of the training area in Bavaria, and included staying at Landhaus Engelhof. Initial enquiries were made, and finally in November, firm bookings were confirmed. The exercise itself had a number of aims, one of which was to give an insight into Forces Expedition Organisation, and the planning of this Exercise for **2Lt Kottritsch**, was a very steep learning curve indeed.

The group of thirty cadets left Sheffield on Thursday 24th July, drove to Dover, and crossed on the prearranged ferry. All was going well until one of the hire minibuses swerved, pulled over, and stopped, about thirty miles south of Calais. The whole convoy was forced then to turn around and follow the broken-down vehicle back in to Calais. Of course, at 3am, not many garages are open, so we waited until morning to have the problem properly diagnosed. Communication was not a problem, thanks to **WOCdt Emily** 'French is second nature to me' **Keats**, and once the complications of fixing the vehicle were correctly relayed down the right channels, the decision was reached, such that the group would push on regardless. So all the cadets in the broken-down vehicle were split between the remaining three minibuses. This was cramped, but feasible, and so the party restarted the journey.

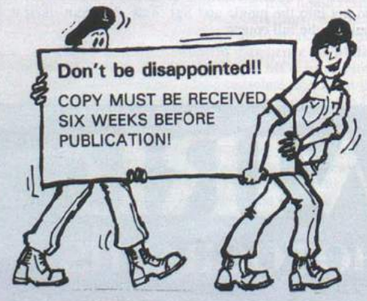
The cadets started the first of two four-day activity packages the Sunday morning, having drawn stores the previous evening. There were three trekking groups, all of which completed an orienteering course, giving **2Lt's Ginn** and **Kottritsch** a chance to recce two routes. The climbers carried out four days of undisrupted climbing, as the weather was perfect. The kayakers also had many a swimsuit/trunk mark from the sun. The kayak package started with a day and a half on the Alpsee Lake, and then moved onto the River Iller, near Sonthofen. Following the training, was an R & R day, and a bus full of cadets went to Munich, the other two buses to Garmisch all with the aim of sightseeing. A barbecue was planned for the evening, but as life would have it, the weather turned, and for the next few days we endured rain.

The top of the Breitenburg, at last! 2Lt Kottritsch, WOCdt Williams, JUO Buckley, OCdt Nolan

The second four-day package ran similarly to the first, with three trekking groups, a climbing group, and a kayaking group. The orienteering groups were a little demotivated by the rain, however they still completed the course. The climbers obviously were restricted by the weather, so until the weather picked up (the next day) were obliged to tie themselves in knots, trying to set up climbs. Fortunately for the paddlers, rain made little difference, as they were to get wet anyway! This package saw slightly more experienced paddlers, so Simmo, the kayak instructor from the Lodge decided to take them on an overnight expedition to Garmisch. Here they paddled on the River Loisach. The second day for the trekkers is usually a map reading exercise at altitude, where peaks are spotted and identified on the map, or pointed out on the ground. So when we reached the training area and found about 50m visibility, the priority of the day soon changed to a cam and concealment practical lesson. The end of the second four-day package saw a fancy dress party, where everyone had to improvise and come along dressed as something beginning with S, L, or M. This stood for Sheffield OTC, London ATC (also staying at our lodge), and Manchester OTC, whom we had invited over for the evening. The evening proved to be a great success, and everyone had an excellent time. The next R & R day was spent recovering by the pool at Missen, and then off indoor karting at Fissen in the afternoon. It was a well-needed rest by this stage, as everyone was starting to feel the strains of the expedition.

OCdts Green and Foran, along with the Lodge Instructor, demonstrating the art of using nature to disguise their colourful waterproofs!

The following day saw the final two-day training package. Two groups went on a ridge walk and stayed in a hut overnight. They all seemed to feel the effects of the altitude, as they were all in bed by 10pm! There was going to be two days of open boating, but due to the instructors breaking the paddles the night before whilst out training, it meant a further two days of kayaking occurred. A further trekking group and climbing group continued with their activities, despite the cracking thunderstorm. The training drew to a close, and a barbecue was permitted to happen, as the weather cleared just long enough. All the instructors, both Lodge and Unit supplied were thanked, and the last night was enjoyed by all.



THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	**Maj Gen J. O. C. Alexander CB, OBE**
Commodore	**Col J. E. F. Kirby OBE**
Vice Commodore	**Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton**
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	**Maj M. Butler**
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Maj D. C. A. Ellis**
Windsurfing (UK)	**Lt Col J. L. Fletcher**
Yachtmasters (UK)	**Maj G. Neil:** Blandford Mil 5664
(Germany)	**Capt I. Gray** Glasgow Mil
Secretaries:	
General	**Capt P. G. M. Atkinson** Blandford Mil 2874
Dinghy & Dayboats	**Sgt Cowell** Blandford Mil 2810
Windsurfing (UK)	**Capt J. Coleman** Colchester Mil 4220
(Germany)	**SSgt N. Finnegan** Osnabruck Mill 2225
Retired Member Rep	**Lt Col (Retd) C. K. Powell** Blandford Mil 5437
Soldier Reps (Offshore)	**Cpl D. Sangster** Bulford Mil
Dinghies & Dayboats	**Sgt P. Downie** York Mil 2346
Windsurfing	**Sgt A. Varney** Bulford Mil

The Royal Signals Yacht Club communicates with its members through the medium of The Wire, *which regularly prints a forecast of events, accounts of activities and contains details for club officials.*

Any member of the Corps who subscribes to the Corps funds is automatically a member of the Yacht Club. If you are an active sailor or interested in becoming an active sailor then register now with your unit Sailing Officer or alternatively with one of the Club Secretaries.

EXERCISE MERCURIAL DIAMOND 1997

Ex Mercurial Diamond is the Royal Signals Yacht Club annual sail-training week (STW) in Denmark. Week is somewhat of an anomoly as the event usually takes 11days and is regarded as one of the most arduous STWs run from Kiel, over the summer period. In all, there were 8 races including a 140-mile passage and an olympic series, 'around the cans'. The overall distance covered was 385 miles, an average daily distance of just under 50 miles.

Hard fought competition, in sunny Danish waters with good winds and lots of fun I hear you cry, why was I not invited? Well, in fact you were. Every UK mainland Royal Signals Regiment, Squadron and Troop from both Regular and TA and all units UKSC (G) based were invited to attend in February. If yours was one of the eight that replied, thank you; if you were one of the 63 that did not please take one of the following actions:

a. Sack your Adjt/Chief Clerk for not passing it on.
b. Sack your RATO/Sailing Officer for not telling you about it.
c. In future open the gate and let the postie deliver the mail.

The entries that did take place are given below:

Ser	Unit	Boat	Skipper
1	Comms Branch HQ 1 Div	*Gannet*	Sgt Avey Hebditch
2	1 ADSR (A)	*Grebe*	Cpl Gale
3	1 ADSR (B)	*Teal*	LCpl Wyman
4	16 Signal Regiment	*Widgeon*	LCpl Patton (ASTC(K))
5	34 Signal Regiment (V)	*Tern*	Capt Turner
6	Comms & Sy Gp	*Curlew*	Cpl Kilgour (ASTC(K))
7	243 Signal Squadron	*Skua*	Maj Niel

And so, on to what happened.

Day 1–Training Day

The UK units arrived by various means and met up with the teams from Germany at BKYC. After a night of briefings and establishing the rules, the boats set off the following lunchtime for Sonderborg. The first day was to be a training day to familiarise the crew with the boats and carry out mandatory drills. Unfortunately, due to a lack of wind the last boat did not arrive until midnight but this gave plenty of time to practice MOB and tying bowlines. On arrival in Sonderberg, we were serenaded by a Jazz Band on the waterfront and then assaulted by bagpipes. (Scots get everywhere.) Most people went to bed but some brave souls braved the delights of the town, only to regret it the following morning.

Day 2 Sonderborg–Middlefart

Day 2 started with the first racing start. 5 out of 7 boats crossed the line on time with *Tern* mistaking the 5 minutes for the 10 and *Teal* missing the windward mark. The wind started with a promising 3/4 from the NE but died off during the day. In the early afternoon, most boats were doing 'Baltic Turns' (a 360' uncontrollable spin brought about through zero wind and a 1 knot current!) After a brief period of swimming, the wind picked up to 4 knots and the fleet proceeded slowly to Middlefart. The course was eventually shortened and the last two boats *Skua* and *Teal* made it with seconds to spare. *Gannet* setting a precedent that was hard to break won the race. It was another late (0200 hrs) finish for some, but they did not miss a great deal in Middlefart.

Day 3 Middlefart–Horsens

Day 3 started calm with the fleet motoring north waiting for the wind. The time was passed with some close boat manoeuvering helping fellow crews wash their upper decks (waterfight). Eventually we started around 1100 hrs with 35miles to race to Horsens Yacht Club, again in light airs. However, the further north we proceeded the more wind we got until we finished in the Horsens Fjords, beam reaching under spinnaker on our cars. *Gannet* won again. The evening festivities started at 1900 hrs with Horsens hosting us in their club house with a couple of free beers and the whole EEC potato mountain. Very generously we helped increase their bar profits celebrating our first early night.

Day 4–Round the Cans

Following a race brief given in a mixture of Danish and English the Round the Cans series started. This was to be the first opportunity for the fleet to get to grips with the new 1997 rules. In the first race *Tern* was pressing *Gannet* hard for the lead on the final downwind leg, until she turned away before the finish line, mistaking an unused buoy for a mark of the course, (2nd to 7th and one very annoyed author!). The wind stayed up for the second race, and again 2 to 5 were hard fought places. By the end of the third race, which *Gannet* won again, it was obvious that the main competition was going to be for 2nd and 3rd place. The fleet hosted the Horsens Race committee at a barbecue that evening which was generously supplied by 1 Armd Div Sig Regt. This time it was the EEC meat-mountain that made an appearance, and was gratefully polished off by all. The selection of beer proved interesting with some obvious winners and losers. Most crews retired for an early evening, in the knowledge that tomorrow was the start of the passage race.

Days 5/6/7 Horsens–Copenhagen

The plan to run to Copenhagen (140 miles) had at first seemed over ambitious but the day started with a good force 4 so hopes were high of a fast race. Some close tacking exiting Horsens Fjord caused numerous place changes. We then turned north for a fast narrow reach around the top of Samso, (all apart from *Grebe*). It was during this lone tack that *Skua* was rammed by a Dane and holed. Regretfully she therefore retired and took no further part in the STW. The remainder of the fleet proceeded north east around Sjaelan's Rev in ever decreasing winds. The first night was quiet, drifting slowly north in the current. With dawn a force 3 came up and hopes were again raised. We proceeded down towards Copenhagen and again the wind died with the light. Many yachts found themselves at anchor in the adverse current over the second night but eventually 5 of the 6 boats finished, the first in 44 hours (*Gannet*) and the last (*Teal*) in 51. (*Wlidgeon* retired–could not handle the pace!).

Day 8 Copenhagen–Presto

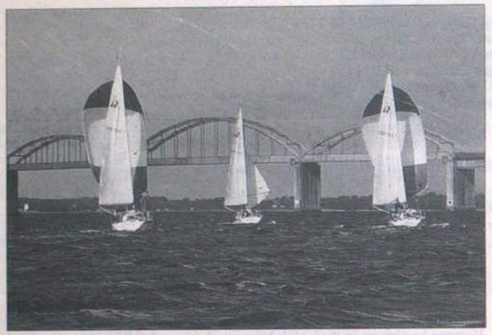
After spending 24 hours in Copenhagen, seeing the sights and reorganising the boats, we departed for Presto (40 miles). The previous sunny weather was now coming to an end and the wind was consequently increasing. Following a beat - run - beat after the start the fleet shot off SW for a long straight run to Presto. The day was somewhat exciting for the novices as it was their first real experience of lots of wind. This was to stand them in good stead for the windward beat the following day. We arrived in Presto late afternoon and had lots of fun tying up. We were later to discover that Presto was a one horse town and someone had stolen the horse! A quiet night for all. Oh, *Gannet* won again.

Day 9 Presto–Vordingborg

The day started with all the skippers changing boats for the novice race. This was to be a long run down through narrow channels to the finish. Due to the wind strength (5 gusting 6) no spinnakers were allowed but this did not substantially slow the fleet down. After a long beat out of Presto in rough seas we turned south into sheltered waters and anchored for lunch. The start was to be from anchor down at 5minute intervals. Most crews had lots of fun getting away and the fleet consequently compacted for much of the race. All were glad to take shelter in Vordingborg, even though it was packed. For a change, *Gannet* did not win and the novice cup went to *Grebe*, well done.

Day 10 Vordingborg–Marstal

With the STW drawing to a close and the fleet still a long way north we decided to make the long run first. Marstal was 60 miles away and so there was a 0600 slip for a 0700 start. There was plenty of wind and the majority of day was to be downwind. So everyone was looking forward to a fast run. The start was closely fought with *Tern* slamming the door on *Gannet* and *Grebe* but the following beat-run-beat soon spread the fleet out. Some hairy spinnaker work followed in ever increasing winds, with some boats (*Curlew*) broaching all the way down Langerland and around the corner. All boats made it in by dusk, with *Gannet* winning again (of course).



Day 11 Marstal–Kiel

The last day again started early (0530) with a 0700 running start. Surprisingly, no one was brave enough to hoist their spinnaker until after the start, but the fleet then split into two groups. Those with b***s and spinnakers and those without. With the rolling swell as we proceeded south there were some more hairy moments and the quick beat in the middle of the course reminded us how strong the wind really was. Needless to say, *Gannet* won again but second was closely fought with *Grebe* beating *Tern* by half a boat length.

Prize Giving

At the prize giving that evening the consensus of opinion was that it had been a challenging and hard fought STW (for 2nd-4th place at least). **Lt Col P. A. Pratley MBE** who had also graciously allowed his Regiment to enter three teams the fortnight before a major exercise presented the prizes. Thank you Sir! The prizes were as follows:

The Dickinson Telescope	First Place	**Sgt Avey Hebditch**
The Cito Cannon	2nd Place	**Cpl Kilgour**
The Mermaid Cup	Passage Race	**Sgt Avey Hebditch**
Round the Cans Trophy	Olympic Series	**Sgt Avey Hebditch**
Don Shaw Memorial Plate	Spirit of the Event	**Capt P.I. Turner**
Jenny Sharp Homeward Bound Trophy	Homeward Leg	**Sgt Avey Hebditch**
Novice Skippers Cup	NoAce Race	**2Lt Skillman**

Many thanks must also go to **Mr Baz Ennets** and all the hardworking staff at the ASTC (K) without whom the event could not take place. The R Signals STW at Kiel remains one of the three main calendar events for the RSYC. It is a challenging and fun series of races but requires your support if it is to continue. This year five units entered out of a possible 71, if this level of support continues the STW will end. The STW always takes place in early July. Look out for the booking proforma in January 1998 and book early to avoid disappointment. Hope to see you there.

SPORT

BADMINTON

The Royal Signals Badminton Tournament took place at Colerne over the period 27th-29th August 1997.The number of Units participating in this years' event far exceeded expectations based on last years' numbers with no less than six Major Units and three Minor Units entering the competition. Operational commitments prevented a further three Major Units from entering teams.

Nearly all the Corps's main players entered the various competitions and many novices were given a display of the high standards that could be achieved from within the Corps. The men's competition was dominated by **Cpl Steve Pengelly** (1 (UK) Div) on his return from JCUFI, who progressed to all the men's event finals (except the Veterans), and only lost one. The women's competitions were once again dominated by **LCpl Rigg** (14 Sig Regt) and **Sig McIntosh** (21 Sig Regt) who have been at the top of women's badminton in the Army over recent years. More than 60 players entered the various events, (three times as many as last year), and there are over 100 players in the Corps at present, which shows that the sport is becoming more popular. The aim of the Corps Squad is to win the Inter-Corps Championships for the first time in November. If there are any closet players in the Corps who wish to play for the Corps Team, contact **Capt Terry Inman** on Blandford Mil.Extn 2661.

The results of the competition are as follows:

Men's Singles Winner	**Cpl Pengelly**	1 (UK) Div
Men's Singles Runner-Up	**Sig Ford**	11Sig Regt
Men's Singles Plate Winner	**Cpl Wyatt**	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Men's Singles Plate Runner-Up	**2Lt Farragher**	7 Sig Regt
Women's Singles Winner	**Sig McIntosh**	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Women's Singles Runner-Up	**LCpl Rigg**	14 Sig Regt
Men's Unit Doubles Winners	**Lt Bowdler/ Cpl Kay**	24 Bde
Men's Unit Doubles Runners-Up	**Cpl Pengelly/ SSgt Shirley**	1 (UK) Div
Men's Open Doubles Winners	**Cpl Pengelly/ Sig Manton**	1 (UK) Div/ 21 Sig Regt
Men's Open Doubles Runners-Up	**Sgt Ball/ Cpl Merchant**	14 Sig Regt/ 11 Sig Regt
Women's Doubles Winners	**Lt Neill/ LCpl Rigg**	21 Sig Regt
Women's Doubles Runners-Up	**Mrs Gurung/ Pte Quigley**	21 Sig Regt/ 11 Sig Regt
Mixed Doubles Winners	**Cpl Pengelly/ LCpl Rigg**	1 (UK) Div/ 14 Sig Regt
Mixed Doubles Runners-Up	**Sgt Ball/ Sig McIntosh**	14 Sig Regt/ 21 Sig Regt
Veterans Doubles Winners	**Capt Imnan/ SSgt Shirley**	11 Sig Regt/ 1 (UK) Div
Veterans Doubles Runners-Up	**Maj Stuart/ Sgt Gibbins**	11 Sig Regt/ 14 Sig Regt
Unit Team Winners	11 Sig Regt	
Unit Team Runners-Up	1 (UK) Div	

Royal Signals Badminton Tournament Winners 1997 with their trophies

Cpl Pengelly receives the Mens' Singles Trophy from Maj John Stuart

CRICKET

ROYAL SIGNALS CRICKET CLUB–1997 SEASON

Following the most successful season of recent years in 1996, expectations were high for success in the Inter Corps Merit Table tournament. With several pre-season indoor nets and three warm up matches competed in May, the competitive cricket started this season with a solid performance against the Gunners. Batting first, **SSgt Terry Gigg** scored 53 and **Sig Steve Fox** made 49 with the Corps posting 171 in a limited over match against some accurate bowling. **LCpl Ross Thubron** then took the new ball and proceded to take 4 early order wickets for 5 runs off his first 4 overs. The Gunners never recovered, being bowled out for 91, and the Corps recorded a win. **LCpl Martin Johnson** and **Sgt Chris Cole** took 3 wickets apiece whilst REME scored 205 from their 50 overs. The top three batsmen from the Corps scored freely (**SSgt Terry Gigg** with 51, **SSgt Paul Gardner** with 47 and **Sig Keith Ford** with 52) to ensure an easy victory for the loss of 4 wickets. The next week in mid June, **Sgt H. Glean** took 4 RLC wickets for 6 runs from 7 overs, holding them to only 102 in a rain-interrupted innings. The inclement weather finally ended the match, so points were shared.

Beating RMCS in a friendly, with **LCpl Martin Johnson** scoring his maiden Corps century, the Corps then played the RAC at Blandford. A close match ensued, with some excellent bowling on both sides. A superb 76 from **Sig Keith Ford** helped the Corps to 169, and accurate bowling together with outstanding fielding restricted the RAC to 156: 3 wins from 4. A second friendly against the RAF Signals saw another win notched against the old enemy. Into July, the Corps batted first against the perennially strong Infantry. With contributions from **SSgt Terry Gigg**, **SSgt Paul Gardner**, **Sig Keith Ford** and **LCpl Martin Johnson**, the opposition was chasing 181. Despite a half century from the Combined Services Captain, the Infantry was always just short of the pace and finished with 169. The final match against the AGC saw **SSgt Terry Gigg** (again) top scoring with 48 and the Corps setting a good total of 210 on an imperfect batting surface. The AGC were 'skittled' thanks to excellent bowling by all the Corps attack, with **Sgt Chris Cole** and **Sgt John Sullivan** capturing 3 wickets each. Having won five matches and having one washed out, we believed we were in with a shout. However, critically, we had two matches totally called off without a ball being bowled and, at the final reckoning, the RLC pipped us at the post by 3 points. This disappointment has not spoiled the enjoyment of a good year of quality cricket by all members of the Corps squad who played through the season. Having played a first year at Blandford after several in the wilderness, and having a wealth of talent in the younger end of the team, hopes are high for success next year and an overseas tour in South Africa in the autumn of 1998.

LCpl Ross Thubron received the Bowler Of The Year award, and **SSgt Paul Gardner,** received the Batsman Of The Year accolade, apparently for his on-pitch adaptation of a well-known weekday morning cookery programme–'Can't Bat, Won't Bat'. **Ross** also scooped the prestigious Player of The Season award.

BATTING ANALYSIS (20 RUNS MIN)–1997 SEASON

	Innings	Runs	Not Outs	Top Score	Average
Ford	4	163	0	78	**40.7**
Johnson	9	299	1	100	**37.4**
Gardner	10	295	0	69	**29.5**
Gigg	11	290	0	53	**26.4**
Chapman	8	142	1	64	**20.3**
Fox	6	120	0	49	**20**
Whitehead	6	99	1	44	**19.8**
Thubron	9	112	2	28	**16**
Winfield	7	99	0	60	**14.1**
Glean	5	28	3	13no	**14**
Smith	2	25	0	14	**12.5**
Sullivan	9	70	1	27	**8.7**
Cole	5	32	1	20	**8**
Clayton	5	24	2	19no	**8**

BOWLING ANALYSIS (2 WICKETS MIN)–1997 SEASON

	Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts	Econ	Avge
Thubron	83	25	195	17	2.3	**11.5**
Glean	57.5	20	129	11	2.2	**11.7**
Sullivan	73	15	225	19	3.1	**11.8**
Johnson	65.5	13	155	12	2.4	**12.9**
Russell	8	0	30	2	3.7	**15**
Fox	45.2	5	149	7	3.3	**21.3**
Cole	79	11	271	12	3.4	**22.6**

A SCOTTISH HERO REMEMBERED

In an Ayrshire churchyard recently an SAS soldier, who had played a part in the liberation of France, was remembered by men of the Resistance who had fought beside him. A group of Maquisard veterans had made the journey to the small churchyard at Sorn to visit the grave of **Maj Freddie Oakes** who died earlier this year aged 73.

In a simple but moving ceremony, the four Frenchmen laid a wreath and a plaque in tribute to the part played by **Maj Oakes** and his colleagues in the SAS in preparing the way for the liberation of of Lorraine and Burgundy in September 1944. Carrying the flag of their local Maquisard group and wearing their medals, they spoke with both gratitude and affection of the young soldiers who had parachuted in, from their bases in England, to help with the work which would free them from the Nazi yoke many months later. **Maj Oakes'** former parish priest, **Father Stephen Bradley**, spoke of the 'quiet strength' which **Freddie** had always displayed. He added that **Freddie** had experienced the kind of wartime duties that most of us only see in the movies, but on the rare occasions that he spoke of them it was in a very matter of fact, every day manner.

Maj Oakes was a signalman with the 2nd SAS Regiment, having trained at Monkton prior to being based at Sorn Castle in the months leading up to D-Day. Late in August 1944, he joined a squadron commanded by wartime hero **Maj Roy Farran** and took part in Operations Wallace and Hardy that meant working behind enemy lines. He recalled, in his private memoirs, a night spent hiding in the tents of the Maquis only to be awakened at dawn by an attack of about 1000 SS and Wehrmacht Troops. The British group managed to fight their way out with the help of their French comrades. Unfortunately 200 of the local Maquis were rounded up and sent to concentration camps, including Dachau, only 83 survived.

Mr Albert Fah, 83, who spent eight months in Dachau said that these were the first Allied Soldiers they saw, in those dark days before liberation. And that we should remember that it was eight months before the Americans finally arrived. **Mr Leon Gervais**, who served with the Maquis in Burgundy, was part of a small group led by the local priest, **Father Noel**. They won fame by sabotaging the main Paris to Lyons railway on three occasions in only nine days. Working in daylight, whilst the priest pretended to mend the wheel on his bicycle. The signal informing them that the coast was clear being the priest turning his bike over.

There was a moment of silence by the grave in memory of **Maj Oakes**, who is buried beside his Ayrshire born wife **Nan**, that was bought to a close by a lone piper playing 'A Scottish Soldier'.

Four Maquisards, bearing the flag of their local resistance group, pay their respects at the graveside of Maj Frederick Oakes in Sorn

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig C. T. Garton Area 1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3;
Brig K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans CBE Area 5; Lt Col J. G. Billingham Wales; Maj R. Sampson CBE Scotland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Nicholson **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow**

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System 737 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System 737 2089 or 01258 48 2089.
All contributions for *The Wire* should be addressed to the Editor and any queries referred to him on extensions 2079 or 2085.

The Association communicates with its branches and individual members through the pages of The Wire, *which contains accounts of Branch affairs as well as a forecast of Association events.*

Branch Secretaries are asked to check that their Branch members receive sufficient copies of The Wire. *Association HQ can arrange for copies to be delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries for further distribution if this is convenient: it helps us save on postage.*

Dates of Branch events can always be published in The Wire *and should be submitted to the Editor. We also welcome letters, requests to contact old comrades and announcements of births, marriages and deaths. We hope that each Branch will contribute a short account of its activities, preferably with photographs, at least once a year.*

NEWS FROM THE AO'S DESK

Branch affairs–Mrs Pat Andrews is the new Hon Secretary of the 219 (Tripolitania) Sig Sqn OCA. **Pat's** address is:'Moorings', 7 The Heath, South Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3HJ. **Mr Steve Jewel** is the new Hon Secretary of the Scarbrorough Branch. **Steve** can be contacted on 01723-375646. Until further notice, all enquiries for the Huddersfield Branch should be directed through the Chairman, **Mr Peter Ling** at 5 Derby Park Drive, Grangemoor, Wakefield, W Yorks WF4 4EE. **Maj (Retd) Dusty Miller** has taken over the duties of Hon Secretary from **Wilf Scurr** at the West London Branch. **Dusty's** contact is 01784 250756. Correction to October's *Wire*; **Mel Dawkins**, Hon Sec of the York Branch is on 01904 415132.

Calling all former signallers living in Australia. **Arthur Kirche** is trying very hard to band as many ex signallers together as possible, to form an affiliated branch in Australia, in order to further the interest of the Corps and Association. He has heard from several interested people already and would like to hear from you. Don't be put off by the distance between addresses. Furthermore, if anyone in UK knows of someone over there, who might be interested, please ask them to make contact with **Arthur**, whose address is: 46A Kendall Street, Sans Souci, NSW 2219.

British Berlin Airlift Association. 1998 and 1999 will see the 50th anniversary of the start and end of the Berlin Airlift, and a celebration is planned. Anyone who was engaged either directly or indirectly on the airlift is welcome to apply for membership of the Association. The annual membership is £5.00. Contact the Secretary/Treasurer: **Sqn Ldr Frank Stillwell**, 9 Barnards Hill, Marlow, Bucks SL7 2NX. Tel: 01628 472625.

A Prisoner of War 1939-45 Liberation Medal has been struck by the French to commemorate the Liberation of all PoWs. It is available to all Allied PoWs who were liberated from German, Italian and Japanese PoW camps at the end of WW2 and may be applied for posthumously by NOK. Full details from: Service Commemoratives Pty Ltd, PO Box 173, Dromana, Victoria, Australia 2936. Likewise, the Allied Ex-Prisoner of War Medal (sponsored by the National Ex PoW Association) is available from: Award Productions Ltd, PO Box 30, Haslemere, Surrey GU26 6UT. Tel 01428 607267.

The National Ex-Prisoner of War Association has issued its inaugural journal. If you are interested, contact the Hon Gen Secretary; **Mr L. Allan**, 99 Parlaunt Rd, Langley, Slough, Berks SL3 8BE

Annual General Meeting. At the time of preparing these notes, confirmation is awaited that the AGM will be held at Venning Bks, Donnington, on Sat 18 Apr 98. Probable start time 1030 hrs. All members are entitled and most welcome (indeed encouraged) to attend, but are asked to give their intention to RHQ, or their branch secretary, in order that sufficient refreshments and seating can be arranged. Branches or individual members with any points for the agenda should get them to RHQ before 1st March. Points, which have not been previously recorded at RHQ, are unlikely to be taken from the floor at the meeting.

'Where did you serve?' Scheme. The unit-register, showing where individual members served in the Corps is gradually being compiled. Over 500 completed forms were received as a deluge in the first 2 months but this is now a steady daily trickle. However, response from branch members is now building up. All members are encouraged to register the units in which they served, you never know, one day you might be glad you did! Forms may be obtained from branch secretaries or by giving RHQ a quick call. Of course memory of the exact title of a unit will fade with time, but entries such as 'In BAOR - 1958/60', 'Egypt, unit not sure' and 'Commando Coys all over Europe' are too obscure to be registered. Mind you, I have been educated too – ie: after listing Boys Trg Regt and 6 Trg Regt as separate units, I learnt that they were one and the same! Likewise, 'BTA' is not the British Telecom Assn. Come on, send your details in, the more who participate, the better the register! Those doubting Thomases who said such a register couldn't be done, have been proven wrong. Please be aware of one thing though: if you haven't registered, don't bother asking for any list!

Can't find your Life Membership card? Give me a call and I will be pleased to issue a replacement.

1998 Reunion. It seems like only last week that we were enjoying this year's Reunion, however a timely reminder that the 1998 Reunion will be held at Blandford over the last weekend in June. The shortage of accommodation on camp, for Reunions, must be accepted as a fact of life. Now is the time to plan ahead–a list of local B & B is available from RHQ. It is regretted that RHQ cannot take bookings for Mess accm. Instructions/application forms will not be issued until nearer the day, but in the meantime, if you would like to be put on the mailing list, let RHQ know. There is always room for constructive criticism, and justifiable comments concerning this year will be acted upon for 1998.

Would you like to trace a former service pal? You will notice that there is scope in *The Wire* for adverts for the whereabouts of former service pals, with whom contact has been lost. This is a free service–just drop a line with the details to either this office or directly to **Jackie** in *The Wire* office. I also hold a list of other useful agencies one can employ to advertise, again just drop me a line.

Seasonal Greetings. Peter Cuckow wishes all Branch Officials and Members a very Happy Christmas and a Safe and Healthy New Year.

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

In September we enjoyed a pleasant Beer & Skittle Night in a friendly hostelry. This was expertly arranged for us by **Carole Thomas**, who is our lady Committee Member and our Advisor on Friendly Hostelries in our area. We have just held our Autumn Luncheon at the Army Golf Club, joined by friends from other Branches including **Maj Ron Miller** and his wife **Pat** from the West London Branch. The sun shone but not quite as brightly as usual, but the company and the curry were just as warming. We have been greatly saddened by the death, after a short illness, of **Lt Col Douglas Crookes, OBE**. Douglas was a stalwart of the Branch and one of our longest serving Members. He devoted much of his time to the wellbeing of others and will be greatly missed. **Douglas** also was our Treasurer and we are grateful to **Capt Peter Sharpe,** already a Member of the Committee for taking over this demanding role at short notice.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

In the merry month of May we had our usual wine and cheese party. **Gordon Holloway** always arranges the wine and **Audrey Chinchen** produces a splendid array of cheeses. We also invite all the expert homemade wine brewers to contribute a bottle (all of which is delicious but deceptively potent!!) Of course, Joe Soap had to comment 'Wine from Australia!' 'No! No! Shall I tell you about the beer at Bonga Bonga?' 'No' we said 'We have all heard it before'. Now Joe generally lapses into his usual lethargic state–but not this time. He came and inspected the homemade wines, he had a little taste, 'Not bad' and getting a pint mug filled it up. 'It won't be very strong' said Joe and downed the lot. A curious thing happened Joe's eyes glazed over and he tottered back to his barstool. Rumour has it that he was still there a month later! But of course rumour was always a lying jade! As for the rest of us we had a splendid time with many thanks to **Gordon** and **Audrey.**

In June **Charlie Barr** gave us one of his super slide shows. It seems there are few places that **Charlie** and of course **Naomi** have not visited. Sad to say they are moving out of our area. They will be sadly missed

Charles and Naomi Barr

The turn out for Blandford was very disappointing. Even your humble scribe could not get there. Frankly it is much easier to get to Catterick from Brighton than get to Blandford, we shall have to think about it next year. A revised timetable might help. In June we had a new idea, we had a beetle drive. It was so popular that we had it in the big hall. Of course, we had problems about how many legs has a beetle. 'Eleven in Australia' said Joe Soap. 'How on earth can a beetle walk with eleven legs?' 'Easy' said Joe, 'Like a three legged cat', at this moment the organisers said 'Four legs and that's that!' as your humble scribe shared the prize he thought it splendid. We do not have a meeting in August but thought about a Barn Dance. The idea did not attract support and was abandoned. However, in September we set off for Pompey, with a 'Ho! Ho! Ho! and a 'Ha! Hee! Hee!' We had a splendid day but could have done with more support. It did seem to clash with some people's holidays. Well folks, your humble scribe has to go and pack for his autumn cruise so here endeth the tale. 'Thank heavens' did we hear someone mutter!

CATTERICK AND DISTRICT BRANCH

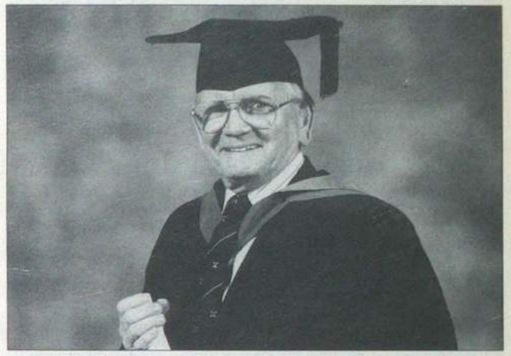
During the early part of this year an invitation was extended to **Maj Gen A. Yeoman CB** to pay a visit to the Branch in his capacity as Chairman of the Association. The invitation was accepted and on the 15th August 1997 **Maj Bill Barnes,** Branch Chairman, welcomed **Maj Gen** and **Mrs A Yeoman** to the Sgts Mess, 19 (Mech) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. The Chairmen and members of the Darlington and Spennymoor Branches of the Association had also been invited to give them the opportunity of meeting the National Chairman, along with **WOI (RSM) John Howell-Walmsley** who kindly, with his members allows the Branch to meet in his mess. After a short Branch Meeting **Maj Gen Yeoman** addressed the members and spoke on Corps matters with regard to the serving Corps and the Association in general with particular attention to Benevolence and its implications. Once the formalities were over the members and their ladies were invited to partake of supper with a choice of Chicken Stir-Fry or Curry and a selection of Sweets. A raffle was held after which **Mrs Ellen Barnes** wife of our Chairman presented **Mrs Barbara Yeoman** with a bouquet of seasonal flowers. **Mrs Sue Kaiser** wife of member **Bob** was pleasantly surprised to be presented with an arrangement of Silk Flowers on her **th Birthday by the Social Secretary on behalf of the Branch. Our thanks go to **Jenny Todd** the Branch Florist.

A day visit by the Branch to the Royal Armouries in Leeds was organised by our Social Secretary. Leaving Catterick/Richmond by coach at 0830 hrs and departing Leeds at 1630 hrs. It proved to be an interesting and enjoyable day with lunch at the Armouries. On Thursday the 11th September the Standard Bearer **Tony Brine** accompanied by **Bill Barnes** and **Eric Brooks** attended St Pauls Church Spennymoor to witness the Dedication of the Spennymoor Branch Standard. An excellent Service conducted by the **Rev Stuart Bain** and attended by the **Mayor** and **Mayoress** of **Spennymoor** and representatives of Police and other organisations. A reception was held after the service at which the Chairman, **Norman Hyland** thanked those attending.

DERBY BRANCH

Mr Dewi Treharne a Derby Branch member for fifteen years and a life member of the Association has notched up two notable successes this year.

His first achievement was the award of the Open University Bachelor of Science Degree in Electronics/Telecommunications. The photograph shows **Dewi** after being presented with his scroll from the Vice Chancellor of the University. The presentation took place at the Derby Assembly Rooms earlier this year.



His second achievement was successfully climbing above 10,000 feet in the Chamonix, Mont Blanc area of France during a walking holiday with the Nottingham Police Fell Walking Club. There is no photographic record of this achievement because **Dewi** said, 'As a result of so many old comrades reunions the photograph would be unprintable.'

Dewi works as a lecturer at the number one Radio School RAF Locking Weston-Super-Mare. He is married with one daughter, **Gemma**, who is currently serving in the Corps at Bulford. **Dewi's** wife **Christine** is also a keen fell walker and accompanied him in his 10,000 feet climb. **Christine** is a member of the Nottingham Branch and is the Branch Welfare Secretary. She is also a life member of the Association.

EAST KENT BRANCH

There were many varied interests at the barbecue that was held in the garden of our Hon.Sec's house and attended by 80 members from far and wide. They came in colourful dress and hats with the Hon Sec intending to look like an Indian Rajah but much more like a bumbling yokel. We had a full bar with Real Ale that helped to assuage the thirst arising from the heat though there was a refreshingly cool easterly breeze. There was an excellent and generous barbecue from a local caterer one of whose assistants was the Chairman's younger daughter. The meal was served on china which members took off to their picnic tables and chairs under the old bramley apple trees or in the next door coppice kindly thrown open by **Maureen** and **Norman Davidson**. The raffle that made £80 was as usual, run with great panache by **Eadie Thomas** and her team. To counteract the weighty barbecue, **John Ballantyne** and **Keith Chambers** inveigled eight teams of eight to play a 'Bat & Trap' knockout competition. (the Branch now has its own 'B&T'). Clearly some members had spent many hours in pub gardens and were able to demonstrate the finer arts of the game to the largely inexperienced. Notable amongst these was the Chairman's wife, **Doreen**, who led her team to victory almost single-handed.

Keith Chambers (our Standard Bearer) showing his prowess at Bat & Trap

To provide for the human needs of such a crowd, the Chairman and Hon.Sec had struggled for some hours the previous day erecting what looked like two very simple 'loo' tents and some elementary ablutions of buckets of water, WD soap and towels. At least the tents did not collapse on the day, though some of those with fieldcraft knowledge were thought to have taken a spade to the paddock car park! It was a fun day for all.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Tom and **Doris Bewsey** recently went on a cruise with his sister and her husband to the Norwegian Fjords. Early on there was a lifeboat drill and who should be in their boat party but **Kit** and **Donald Robathan**. They also then realised that had **Bert Stone** not had his operation at the time both he and **Ann** would have been with them. Small world-big Branch. **Roy** and **Pat Andrews** led a party of the **Bewseys, Savages** and **Castles** to the very enjoyable RMA Sandhurst Dress Rehearsal Parade to join the Aldershot Branch and had a very happy picnic with them afterwards. **Dennis Murphy** and his wife have just celebrated their Diamond Wedding, for which congratulations are in order, by going to the Edinburgh Tattoo. He had earlier been to Bletchley Park and would recommend anyone connected with it to do likewise. Yet another member of the Branch has had a book published. This one has got to be different to the norm. The new book is a true account of Dual Nationality, German/English experience as a member of an elite Royal Corps of Signals Despatch Rider section, during his 6 year voluntary service in WW2. For more details contact: **Jack Dienst**, The Platt, Spelders Lane, Brook, Ashford, Kent, TN2 5PD.

GUERNSEY BRANCH

Our Treasurer, **Dave Bichard,** represented the Guernsey Branch at the Branch Representatives and Annual General Meeting that was held at Donnington on Saturday 19th April. An enjoyable experience and a chance to renew old friendships and make new ones.

On Saturday, 10th May we held our Dinner to celebrate the liberation of Guernsey from the German Occupying Forces. A total of 30 members and their guests sat down and enjoyed a superb meal at St Margaret's Lodge Hotel. It was a change of venue for us but everyone enjoyed the facilities of the private dining room and bar which gave us an enhanced degree of privacy. Our guests included **Susan** and **Roger Stanforth** from the Southport and District Branch who we were delighted to see. Following the meal a presentation was made to **John Rudkin** who, as reported in our last notes, has stood down as our chairman after 19 years. Our new Chairman, **Mike Brock,** presented **John** with a handsome carriage clock, suitably inscribed, on our behalf and with his certificate of Honour Membership of the Association. **Mike** also presented John's partner, **Anita,** with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of her support for all Association activities. Long may their support continue. Our photograph shows **John Rudkin** (right) receiving his clock and certificate from (left to right) Chairman **Mike Brock,** while Treasurer **Dave Bichard** and Secretary **Tom Remfrey** look on.

A Detachment of six Royal Signals personnel from 30 Sig Regt, who were in Guernsey to display modern communications at the annual Army Benevolent Fund Car Festival, were entertained by Association members on Saturday 9th August. Visits were made to Rousse Tower where a tableau depicts the system of island defence in Napoleonic times, to a restored German artillery casement which formed part of Hitler's Atlantic wall defences and to a more peaceful and well known tourist attraction- the Little Chapel at Les Vauxbelets. An enjoyable lunch was taken at Le Fouquet Country Hotel. The detachment, led by **Cpl Sarah Scott,** were a pleasure to entertain and good ambassadors of the Corps. Our picture shows **Cpls Scott** and **Serendra** (Gurkha Signals) and **LCpls Constable, Hoyle, Morrison** and **Rowley** at the entrance to the Little Chapel.

STOP PRESS

The Committee was delighted to welcome **Vera Falia** back to an active role on the committee, at our meeting on 8th October, after a long illness.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

The Branch has taken the 'bull by the horns' and invited members wives and partners to accept Associate Membership. Does this mean that they are no longer guests, and must take their turn at the bar? No, it has to be admitted wives give us tremendous support and provide assistance and food at our various and varied functions throughout the year, and we welcome their official recognition.

On Saturday 2nd July 1997 some 34 members, wives and guests attended the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television at Bradford. The Museum houses Britain's only IMAX cinema and we hardy souls attended the showing of a film featuring the 'Grand Canyon'. Imagine, if you can, a screen five stories high displaying the vast precipices, the raging rapids, the Stone Age travellers, backwoodsmen, and the like all within touching distance. Believe me it makes your hair curl! This excursion was ideally rounded off by a visit to Harry Ramsden's for fish and chips.

By way of a contrast on Sunday 7th September 1997 members of the Middlesbrough Branch and some members of the Royal British Legion joined us on a visit to Eden Camp near Malton to attend an annual Remembrance Parade. This event was attended by numerous ex-service organisations and provided a great spectacle. Over 2,000 veterans attended, and the parade saw 850 veterans march past preceded by a parade of 91 standards, (including our dedicated Standard Bearer **John Grange**). The Camp is a former PoW Camp and it provided a background and an atmosphere that was most impressive for the Remembrance Service given by the **Rev John Manchester**. The Band of The Green Howards (TA) Band marched at the head of the Parade, and mention must be made of the smart turn-out of the ACF and the overall and precise control of **RSM Siddle**, who marshalled the Parade.

Our Christmas/Raffle/Meeting Beanfeast is to be held on 6th December 1997 at Brambles Farm. Our secretary reminds me that this is also Ladies Night–they provide the Buffet.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

The Northern Ireland Branch annual formal dinner was held on 12th. September in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast. After the toasts Branch President, **Maj Bill Douglas** welcomed the guests, **Maj Tony Lomax** and **RSM John Black** represented 40 Sig Regt (V), the guest of honour was **Lt Col D. E. Rowlinson**, CO 15 Sig Regt. who replied on behalf of the guests. Music was provided by the Ballyclare Flute Band. Absent due to illness were Vice President, **Maj Noel Johnston** and **Harry Stanley**. Hon. Sec. **Ian Wolfe** unfortunately had to attend a course the date of which clashed with the dinner. We are indebted to **Debbie Wolfe** who stepped into the breach and supervised the arrangements very efficiently and to **Mr Andy Leishman** for his valuable assistance.

The final task for 1997 is to distribute Christmas gifts to our aged and/or indisposed Members or the Widows of Members. If anyone knows of an ex-Signaller (not necessarily an RSA Member) in Northern Ireland who would like us to visit him/her do let us know. We meet on the third Wednesday of each month in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast and would welcome any new Members.

READING & DISTRICT BRANCH

The smell of snuffed candles signalled it was all over for the next 6 months. With precision and skill like the well trained soldiers they once were, the committee members packed away the decorations that graced the tables at the 27th Annual Reunion Dinner held at Brock Barracks on Saturday night 11th October. It seemed like a race to see who could fold and stow the most table cloths or to gather up the candelabra and the candle sticks in the Corps colours. The Silver Royal Corps of Signals 'Jimmy' like Dracula fearful of the approaching daybreak was gently lowered into his silk lined coffin. Small Groups of old comrades exchanged dates for their diaries before drifting outside to face the driving rain and their journey home. We encouraged our guests and members who can to wear Mess Dress or No.1 Uniform. The resulting 'mix' not only attracted complimentary remarks but 'Wows'. Some of the old soldiers who only knew Khaki were amazed at the grandeur. For those who have always wondered who the glamorous and highly efficient waitresses were, it was revealed that they were some of the Mums of the Sea Cadets whose hall we borrowed for the event. Our sincere thanks go to them.

Our Official Guests were the Assistant Chief of Staff (CIS), HQ Land Command **Brig John Griffin** and **Mrs Griffin**, and the Assistant Regimental Secretary, Royal Signals, **Lt Col Ian Hamilton** and **Mrs Hamilton**. In reply to the traditional 'toasts' both the Brigadier and the Colonel took the opportunity to tell us what the Corps is doing today. Just when it seemed the official bits were over, without fanfare two young ladies of the Branch in smart mess kit marched round the room and to the top table carrying huge bouquets of flowers which they presented to the ladies **Mrs Griffin** and **Mrs Hamilton**. The next shindig (in Reading) is on Friday 5th December and will be the New-style Christmas Social Evening. Outside Reading–Westminster, Windsor, Salisbury, Brighton, and of course the Corps Carol Service at Westminster again, where we hope to meet some old friends from the Corps.

SPENNYMOOR BRANCH

The dedication of the Spennymoor Branch Standard took place on Thursday 11th September 1997 in St Paul's Church Spennymoor. **Rev Stuart Bain** Vicar of St Paul's and Rural Dean of Auckland conducted the service. Attending the service were the Mayor of Spennymoor, **Cllr A. Smith**, the **Lady Mayoress** and **Chief Inspector Rankin** representing Durham Constabulary, **Maj** (Retd) **Bob Jones**, **Maj** (Retd) **Bill Barnes** with the members of the Catterick Branch of the Association and invited guests. Also in attendance with their standards were members of the British Legion, Royal Naval Association, Durham Light Infantry Association and the Royal Air Force Association. After the service a reception was held for all of those in attendance.

The Spennymoor Branch was formed in 1995 and now has 36 members this includes associate members. In his speech the Chairman mentioned that our most senior member is **Ted Smith** (Ser. No. 2320629) who joined the Corps on 21st July 1930. **Ted** saw service in India before the war and was with the British Expeditionary Force in 1940. He was one of the last of our servicemen to be plucked from the beaches of Dunkirk. **Ted** and many of our other members have some wonderful stories to tell of their time in the Corps. The youngest member of our branch is **J. Thornton** aged 24. **John** is our standard bearer.

The thanks of the Spennymoor Branch go out to **Chas** and **Edna Henderson** and **Eliza McCabe** for their very kind donations that enabled us to purchase our branch standard. The Chairman **Norman Hyland,** Secretary **Ernie Cowan** and Treasurer **Brian Robey** would like, on behalf of the Spennymoor Branch to thank the members of the Catterick Branch for travelling all the way from "sunny" Catterick to help us celebrate this our very special occasion.

The photo is of Branch Members and the visiting standards, our new standard is second from the right in the photo

MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

Since our last *Wire* Notes the Association has wined and dined at its 70th Annual Dinner, commemorating the bicentenary of the raising of the Uxbridge Yeomanry Cavalry in 1797. Just think, no planes, trains, cars, fridges, television or mobile phones. How on earth did they manage to survive? The Dinner Committee consisting of **Maj Dusty Miller** and **Capt Sidney Underwood** did their best to make the evening go with a swing. The Guest of Honour was **Maj Gen David Horsfield** accompanied by his wife **Sheila**. Other distinguished guests were the **Right Honourable Earl Kitchener of Khartoum** accompanied by his sister **Lady Kenya Tatton-Brown**, **Capt** and **Mrs Whitehead** (Women's Transport Service, F.A.N.Y.), **Maj Baker** and **Capt Mark Barraclough** (Princess Louise Kensington Regimental Association), **Mr Gordon Tidey** and **Mr Geoffrey Gardner** (The Sharpshooters' Yeomanry Association), and **Maj Paul Willmott** OC the Middlesex Yeomanry Sqn based at Uxbridge.

The President **Col Simon Beazley**, ably assisted by the Chairman **George Key**, managed to control the proceedings. After the formal part of the evening was over, the falling down juice started to work, tales of 'Do or Die' began to be told in slightly bigger dimensions than last year.

The 'Pearson Shoot' this year will be on 9th December. The team being led by **Col Ted Scarlett**, your support would be much appreciated. 1998 will then be with us and the next big get-together will be the Cavalry Memorial Parade in Hyde Park on 10th May 1998. Make a note in your diary to be there, wives, partners and friends are most welcome, please make the effort. Nothing now remains but to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

31 SIGNALS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

It is with regret that we say farewell to former **SNCO Ron Dart** who served with 83 Sig Sqn and was one of the founder members of 31 Sig Regt. **Ron** loved to 'cabby' and was a very good driver, representing the Regiment at various driving competitions. His many friends in the Association will sadly miss him. Also it is with regret that we announce the death of **Col Jim Greenhill** who passed away on the 4th October after a long illness that he fought with courage. **Jim** kept in touch with the Association although living far away on the Isle of Man. He was a highly respected member of 31st Signals and will be sadly missed. Our Chairman **Col Donald Crawford** attended **Jim's** funeral.

On the 7th June the Association supported the charity band concert given by the Royal Military School of Music at the Royal Star and Garter Home, Richmond. The band was conducted by **Capt S. C. Barnwell**. Once again our treasurer, **Maj James Mill** arranged for the Association to partake of light refreshments prior to the concert and entertain an ex-Corps member, **Sgt Claude Allen**, who is a resident at the Home. It was a very windy day and soon 'Sheet Music Recovery Squads' were in action. In spite of these trials and tribulations the Band played on, much to the delight of their audience. Afterwards tea and cakes plus strawberries and cream rounded off a very good day. One of our not too well members **Capt Alan Lafferty** sends everyone his good wishes. On the 7th September we supported West London Branch at the 'Governor's Parade' Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Our picture shows the group assembling prior to 'March Off'. This year the parade was led by **Col John Eversfield** the Standard Bearer was **Harry Ruff**. After the church service several members and their wives visited Buckingham, St James and Kensington Palaces to pay their respects to **Diana, Princess of Wales**.

By the time you read this our Social Secretary, **Dusty Miller**, will be sunning himself 'down under', but do not fret, all social activities will be taken over by **Henry Holman**, **Sally Bentley** and **Sgt Chrissy Mills**. Their first big test will be the Cheese and Wine Party. **Steve Bland** is leading other members of the Association astray with a trip to Ireland. They have joined 'Alcoholics Anonymous' so they can drink under an assumed name.

Our thanks go to the CO **Col Bob Weston**, and the 2IC **Maj Bob Davis** for their continued support of the Association. It is much appreciated. By the time Christmas leave arrives they are ready for a rest after attending mess functions, Squadron parties and various Association Dinners. It's a hard life trying to soldier in the TA!

Our thanks go to **Maj Bob Davis** (2IC) and **Maj Mike Jackson** (OC HQ) for their continued support of the Association. Finally the Chairman, **Col Donald Crawford** and the Committee wish all ex-31st Signals and their families, best wishes for Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

THE "HAMS" OF THE 254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

After the success of the initial get-together in Catterick in 1990 **George Severs** set up the **254 Old Boys Association** for those who joined Boys Training Company, Royal Signals between 1942 and 1948 and whose army numbers began with the numerals 254. There are now some 242 members and typically 80-90 or so get together each year together with their wives for a weekend of natter and noggins with a little solid nourishment to keep things going. At one reunion **Ken Brown** discovered that there were a dozen or so members who were radio amateurs all with A Licences and suggested that we got together on the air a couple of times a week and as a result the following schedules are kept:

Monday	1100am - cl215pm	SSBon 3.750Mhz
Friday	1000am - 1030am	CW on 3.510 Mhz
	1030am - c1130am	SSB on 3.510 Mhz

The photograph was taken recently when a number of the operators met at the re-opened Corps Museum together with **George Severs** and **Don Herring** who kindly organised lunch and generally took charge of admin.

Back row (*L-R*): Don Hazel (MOAUA), John Grigsby(G3WNG), Jim Jenkins (GOVHZ), Jess Weir (G4GJX), Dennis Burge (MWOALG) and Don Herring
Front row (*L-R*): George Severs, Dennis Bowden (G3PNF), Ken Brown (GOPSW)
Missing from the group but on the net when conditions permit are: Bill Cecil (GM3KHH), Jack Batham (G3LNC), Gerry Tremelling (G3FWG) Ken Lloyd (G3XTP), Pat Fox-Roberts (GOTZU) and Ray Evans (G3LQC).

Although the net was set up for 254 members we are often joined by non-members and will always extend a welcome to any other ex-boys who wish to join us for a natter on the air. Incidentally if any of you are wondering what to do with your time after retirement what better than to indulge in a hobby which is both mentally stimulating and a great way of keeping in touch, not just with old pals but with other hams all over the world. *You can still practice your morse too!!*

TASK FORCE BRAVO–HOHNE
2ND BIENNIAL REUNION DINNER

After a very successful reunion in 1996, it is intended to hold the 2nd Reunion Dinner on **SATURDAY 2nd MAY 1998 at the Victoria Services Club in London.**
All ex-members and families are invited.
Let's make it another night to remember

For more information contact:
Graham 'Pikey' **Perch**
Ael y Glyn, Nant Road, Harlech
Gwynedd LL46 2UJ
Tel: 01766 781154

LOST COMMS

Mr Fred Ward is seeking the whereabouts of the former Royal Signals Officer **Kenneth Fee**. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Fred** on: 01923 267589.

Mr John Kay is seeking the whereabouts of **Michael Madge**, who served in 1 Squadron, 9 Signal Regiment in 1981. Anyone who can help, please call **John** on: 01706 367408.

Len Cox is seeking the whereabouts of his old pal **Sig T. E. Quick** from his time in CI Troop, 1 Sqn, 1 Corps Sig Regt, Herford in 1956. Anyone who can help, please contact **Les** on: 01474 328156.

Matt Maylor is seeking the whereabouts of his WW2 pal **Robin Pratt**. **Robin** was last heard of on a posting RSM to Columbo. If you can help please call **Matt** on: 01758 740979.

The whereabouts of the former **Maj (TOT) D. T. LLewellyn** is urgently sought on compassionate grounds. Anyone who can help, please give **Keith Williamson** a call on: 01704 623989.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Mrs J. Vickers** on behalf of **Mr Matthew Kelly**
56 Queens Drive
Walton
Liverpool L4

Dear Editor
I am writing on behalf of my brother, who is registered blind. We were advised by a gentleman in the office of the Archivist, at the Royal Signals Museum to seek your help.
My brother was in 3rd Air Formation Signals in Greece, when GHQ was captured (I believe December 18th 1944), at Kifissia? Fortunately he was not captured, but as he had been with several of the men, he has often said to me that he would love to know what happened to them.
Perhaps if any of your readers has any information about the 3rd Air Formation, they may like to write and let us know. It would give me a lot of pleasure to read it to him. Thanking you I remain
Yours Sincerely

From: **Roger Wollen**
38 Woodbine Road
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1DD
Telephone and facsimile: (0044) 0191 285 5847

Dear Editor,
William Gear (1915-97)
RCS 1940-45; Control Commission for Germany (British Element) 1946/7
I would be grateful if you could publish the following letter in *The Wire*. I hope, as a result, that I will be able to make contact with some former colleagues of **William Gear**. He established an international reputation as an artist and I am researching his life and work for a major exhibition that I expect to take place in this country and abroad in the next few years.
William 'Bill' **Gear** served during the 1939-1945 war in the Middle East and Italy with the Royal Corps of Signals and then in 1946 joined the Control Commission for Germany (British Element). **Gear** did his basic training at Whitby and then Huddersfield in 1940, then went to OCTU in Aldershot. After training he was posted to Bakewell before being sent abroad to a Signals Base at Mahdi, just outside Cairo and subsequently, as a 2nd Lieutenant, to 5 LFC Signals (with the 9th Army) in Jerusalem around July 1941, and later in Haifa (attached to the Cheshire Yeomanry) and then Gaza. His next posting, in 1943, was to Cyprus for a brief period before he moved to Italy. Moving up the country behind the Allied front, through Rome, Sienna and Florence and then, as Signals Officer with a British Liaison Unit to an Italian Divison which was serving with the Allied forces north of Florence. **Gear** concluded his service in Italy in the north near Boizano and Bressanone in mid-1945. After reporting back to the Chief Signals Officer in Edinburgh Castle in Scottish Command he was posted to a Signals Base near Bielefield in Germany. From there he went to the 15th Scottish Division near Hamburg from which he was posted to the Control Commission for Germany (British Element) working in the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section in Northern Germany (based at Celle and extending his activities to Hamburg, Luneberg and Hanover). He was involved in tracking down major art works stored in Germany for safe keeping during the war and played a role in revitalising Germany's cultural life in the Immediate post-war years, before finally being demobbed in 1947 as a Major.
As an artist he managed to keep painting throughout the war and even arranged to exhibit his work in group exhibitions in Jerusalem (1941/2), Tel Aviv (1941/2), Cairo (1941/2), and then solo exhibitions in Sienna (1943/4), Florence (1944) and Hamburg (1947). I am researching a major retrospective exhibition of his work (he sadly died on the 27th of February last, so what was to be a celebratory exhibition has now become a memorial one as well). I am keen to hear from anyone who knew **William Gear** during his war service or can provide me with details of anyone else who they think did know him. I would be doubly delighted if I make contact with anyone who has any paintings or drawings that **Gear** made during the War or knows the whereabouts of any or who saw any of his war time exhibitions. I hope some of your readers will be able to help me and I look forward to hearing from them.

From: **Mr K. Truscott**
23 Willow Wynd
Portlethen
Aberdeen AB 12 4SY

Dear Sir,
Could you please include this letter in the next issue of *The Wire*. I would like to hear from any members of the " Quicksilver " Display Team who were on the tour during the 1966 Season. Currently I am in touch with one person from the team apart from, that is, my wife whom I met on the tour that year and married the next.
The members would include **Staff Rodrigues, Sgt Crosby** (transferred to REME) **Cpls Kett, Smylie, Alexander, Bell, Ferguson, May** (our best man), **LCpls Lilley, Crabb** (transferred to REME) **Sigs Seagrave, Evison, Rivett, Glennon, Perrot,** and WRAC **Pte McCormick**. One person whose surname slips my mind is **Aiden**? a Cpl who married a girl from Bristol and possibly A N Other. This team was the last one to use the Sheds and displayed Mufax, Siemens teleprinters, Tass, a Strowger style Automatic Telephone link, and some static radios. Our showpiece was Magnetron who got us the food at Sheffield.
If you were a member of this team please write and renew our friendship, I am **Cpl Keith Truscott**, who married a team member **Pat Buck**, and I am in touch with the third member of the WRAC contingent **June White**. Thanking you in anticipation of your kind co-operation in this request.
Yours Sincerely

From: **C A Henn-Collins** FIEE sometime Lt Col Royal Signals
33 Les Blanes Bois,
Rue Cohu, Castel,
Guernsey Channel Islands GYS 7SY.
Telephone 01481 56702

Dear Sir,
Many readers will have seen the BBC series of **Michael Palins'** travels.
In his most recent programme he had a number of sequences of his travel through Australia. He made several mentions of the trans Australia telegraph line built in the 1870's. One clip was of quite exceptional interest to me as it clearly showed a pole and a tiny bit of the route. This riveted my attention.
Let me explain why. During the Polish campaign in 1939 I was Signals Offiicer to **Gen Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart VC**. In what was Eastern Poland I saw an exactly similar route. The Journal published the story of this route with the title 'Telegraph Pioneers'. The Sappers engineered the Indo-European–who engineered the trans Australia route or did they just have the same equipment supplier?

DONATIONS

Mr D. A. Brown	£ 50.00
Mr R. V. Baughan	£ 20.00
Mr L. Ladbrooke, Norwich	£ 10.00
Mr M. H. Wall	£ 5.00
Mr J. Cumming	£ 20.00
Mr R. H. Blizard	£220.00
Mr M. H. Wall	£ 5.00
Rev G. H. Paton	£ 10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 30.00
Mr D. R. Pirie	£ 10.00
Lt Col (Retd) B. Beattie in memoriam of Maj Bill Brewin	£ 10.00
In memory of the late Samuel Capon	£105.10
Mrs R. J. Greenhill in memory of Col J. Greenhill TD	£100.00
Frank Stockdale & Friends in memory of his wife Margaret	£275.00
Sheffield Branch RSA in memory of Margaret Stockdale	£ 25.00
Mrs K. F. Spiller in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 20.00
C. E. Tilnyin memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 20.00
Miss M. B. Searle in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 10.00
Mrs Douglas Guest in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 25.00
Mr & Mrs Peter Falconer in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 20.00
Elizabeth Kingcombe (Daughter) in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 50.00
N. Perry in memory of Audrey Peachell	£ 50.00

LAST POST

Barlow–Cpl T.W. Barlow	Served 1942/46	Died Sep 97
Brewin–Maj W. Brewin	Served 1935/75	Died 11/09/97
Briggs–B. Briggs	Served	Died Oct 92
Catherall–J. Catherall	Served 1935/46	Died 1997
Coates–G.E. Coates	Served	Died July 95
Crookes–Lt Col D. Crookes OBE	Served 1944/75	Died 22/09/97
Cunningham–SSgt A.M. Cunningham	Served	Died 10/09/97
Downs–Maj R.L. Downs	Served 1930/59	Died 26/09/97
Elliott–Sgt M. Elliott	Served 1955/68	Died 1994
Fenwick–Sig J. Fenwick	Served 1939/46	Died 01/03/97
Fisher–Miss H. Fisher	Served 1954/84	Died 1997
Flowers–Sgt J.G. Flowers	Served 1935/45	Died 07/01/93
Gebhardt–Sgt J. Gebhardt	Served 1948/56	Died Nov 91
Gosling–WO2 J.C. Gosling	Served 1940/46	Died 20/09/95
Gravenor–SSgt J.E. Gravenor	Served 1957/68	Died 21/09/97
Greenhill–Col J. Greenhill TD	Served 1950/92	Died 04/10/97
Grimes–Sgt J. Grimes	Served 1939/46	Died 12/09/97
Hayes–Sig T.J. Hayes	Served 1961/70	Died 19/09/97
Jones–W.T.B. Jones	Served	Died June 97
Lawrence–LCpl E.D. Lawrence	Served 1936/46	Died 16/10/97
Lowe–LCpl A. Lowe	Served 1956/58	Died 30/11/93
Luttin–Maj F.C. Luttin	Served 1948/78	Died 19/10/97
Meader–Sig Eric Meader	Served 1936/46	Died 09/10/97
Nacey–Sgt Nick Nacey	Served 1936/60	Died 28/09/97
O'Neill–Sig C.A. O'Neill	Served 1953/60	Died 20/09/97
Orchard–Sig H.L. Orchard	Served 1938/48	Died 26/09/97
Pierce–Cpl G.H. Pierce	Served 1943/47	Died 01/09/96
Potter–Cpl G.E. Potter	Served	Died 1997
Purkis–Sgt C.F. Purkis	Served 1940/46	Died 16/06/97
Rider–Sig C.F.G. Rider	Served 193946	Died 02/03/95
Ransom–LCpl R.A.M. Ransom	Served 1944/46	Died
Simpson–Sig R.L. Simpson	Served	Died 1997
Sinclair–Sgt D. Sinclair	Served 1924/56	Died 25/06/96
Smiles–Cpl W Smiles	Served 194958	Died 24/09/97
Smith–Sgt G. Smith	Served 1942/46	Died 070997
Softly–WO1 R. Softly	Served 1927/46	Died Nov 90
Stewart–Sgt G.C.M. Stewart	Served 1969/87	Died 21/09/97
Thain–Sgt H.B. Thain	Served 1939/46	Died 1984
Vanderkolk–Sig B. Vanderkolk	Served 1939/45	Died 28/06/97

Grimes–Sgt J. Grimes had been an active member of the Liverpool Branch of the RSA for many years. His connection with the Royal Signals began around 1937, when he joined the TA in Liverpool. He then became involved in WW2 when he served in the Middle East with the 8th Army. He spent some time in Greece then with the Armoured Corp in Italy where he achieved the rank of Sergeant. **Joe** became an ardent member of the 8th Army Veterans becoming Secretary, Chairman and President. He was very much respected by all who knew him and he will be much missed. **Joe** leaves a son **Charles** and a daughter **Sheila**, his wife having passed away some time ago.

Meader–Eric Meader who lived in Hailsham, East Sussex, died on 9th October. He served for ten years between 1936 and 1946 in the Divisional Wireless Section and was the DOC's personal operator and a specialist on the 399A set.

Nacey–Sgt Nick Nacey lived in Sydenham, London, died on 28th September aged 76. He served in Special Comms in Berlin during the 1939/45 War and was a Sgt PSI with 56 Div thereafter.

Potter–Gerald Edward Potter, born 1935 and died 1997. **Gerry** was one of the founder members of the Swindon Branch of the RSA. He always had a cheery word and welcome for the new members. He was never heard to complain even though it was sometimes very difficult for him to manoeuvre his wheelchair in confined spaces. There are many who will remember a talk he once gave on the subject of the Bentley motor cars and his obvious love and enthusiasm for the Marque. Our sympathies and condolences go to **Gerry's** widow, **Janet** and to his two daughters **Alison** and **Susan**.

23313992 Corporal Potter
REST IN PEACE GERRY

Purkis–Sgt Charles Purkis it is with great sadness that I inform the Corps of the death of **Sgt Charles Purkis**. **Charles** was called up on February 1940, did his basic training at Prestatyn North Wales. After basic training he got married in April 1940 and was then posted to the 7/25 Lancers Tank Regiment, at Newton Stewart Scotland. Posted abroad in 1941 he joined up with the lst Army where **Charles** saw action in Tunisia, Sicily, Italy and Cyprus. He managed to get home for VE Day and was then posted back to Cyprus for another 9 months where he achieved the rank of Sgt of the Signal Troop. **Charles** was demobbbed 1946. **Charles** will be missed by all his friends and especially by his comrades of the Sale Branch, **Charles** leaves a wife and two daughters.

Brewin–Major (Retd) Bill Brewin (TOT). It is with great sadness that I have to inform the Corps of the death of my father on 12th September 1997. **Bill** took the King's Shilling at the Burnley recruiting office on 2 August 1935. His Army Number was 2324281 and he signed on for 8 years with the colours and 4 with the reserve!
He trained as a technician at Catterick before being posted to serve on the North West Frontier in 1936. He was promoted from Cpl to A/CQMS and appointed A/FofS on 8th November 1941 whilst serving with No 1 Tech Trg Bn, STC, Jubbulpore. He was granted a War (Emergency) Commission on 15th February 1943 before returning to Western Europe in time for the D Day landings. During his time in India he earned the 1936-37 and 1937-39 bars to his India medal, an unusual achievement. After training in UK **Bill** served as a Technical Officer Maintenance with 2nd Tactical Air Force, Air Formation Signals which provided communications to and from the Forward Air Bases as they were established behind the advance. These communications were predominantly line and stretched, at the end of the War, from the French coast, through the Low countries as far as Luneburg in Germany. During those hectic times he managed to slip back to Blighty on a weekend pass to marry **Hazel** in Salford on Remembrance Day 11th November 1944.
Bill was demobilised at the end of the war but rejoined and received his second Commission as a Lieutenant (TOT) on 23rd October 1946. His Post War service included tours in Germany, Suez, with the Gurkha Signals in Malaya, HQ NEARELF in Cyprus, the Orkney Islands and mainland UK. Latterly he spent a long and happy 4 years in Catterick as OC of the SWS Section prior to finishing his service as a desk officer in what was then MoD Signals 36. He was a talented sportsman who represented his Unit teams, the Corps and the Army at differing levels in various sports. These included hockey, cricket, rugby and football. After retiring from the Corps he served for 5 years as a PSAO with the Essex Yeomanry in Chelmsford before retiring to Sandwich in Kent where he became a member of the East Kent Branch of the Association soon after it was formed. He was given his RSA award for 50 Years Service to the Corps in 1995.
He will be remembered as a thoroughly professional soldier and officer who looked after his men and the Corps remained in his heart to the end of his life. He had a well justified reputation as a raconteur with a sharp sense of humour and he will be remembered fondly by those in the Corps who knew him well. He was a devoted husband and father and he is sadly missed by his wife **Hazel**, his family and many friends.

Stockdale–Margaret Stockdale It is our sad duty to inform you of the death of **Margaret**, wife of **Frank Stockdale BEM**. Both **Frank** and **Margaret** have a long association with the Corps going back many years to their meeting in Palestine during **Frank**'s service there. **Frank Stockdale** was in Regular service with the Corps from May 1937 until February 1968, retiring as a WO1 (RSM), joining the Sheffield Branch in the year of it's formation in 1968. **Margaret** was loving and kind to all and will be sadly missed from the Branch's activities.

Editor's Note:

We have had to hold over some reports on Reunions.
These will appear in the next issue of *The Wire*.

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